



Cleveland Transformation Alliance
Minutes of Special Meeting of the Board of Directors
March 15, 2021 | 5:30 PM
Via Zoom

In Attendance

Bingham, Anne	King, Brooke	Randel, Erin
Downing, Diane	Klupinski, Stephanie	Ruiz, Victor
Gibson, Richard	Marbury, Shana	Tenney, Turkessa
Gordon, Eric	Mullin, Ann	Williams, Helen
Heard, Robert	Patterson, Jeffery	Zachariah, Sajit
Jordan, Sharon Sobol	Price, Monyka	

Absent

Baumgartner, Mark	Jackson, Mayor Frank	Payton, Kevin
Friedman, Lee	Napoli, Augie	Reyes, Jose
		Rosskamm, Alan

Other Attendees

Green, Courtney
Hoyat, Hailey

Cleveland Transformation Alliance Staff

Marnecheck, Meghann
Stacy, Eli

Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Dr. Monyka Price called the meeting to order at 5:43 PM. Dr. Price welcomed the Board and went over the agenda items for the meeting.

At 5:49 PM, Dr. Price opened the floor for discussion to approve the January 25, 2021 Board Meeting minutes. Hearing no comment, Dr. Price asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Eric Gordon made the motion to accept the minutes. Then, Ms. Diane Downing seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes for the January 25, 2021 Board Meeting.



At 5:53 PM, Dr. Price opened the floor for discussion to approve the February 23, 2021, Special Board Meeting minutes. Hearing no comment, Dr. Price asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Downing made the motion to accept the minutes. Then, Dr. Sajit Zachariah seconded the motion. The Board unanimously approved the minutes for February 23, 2021, Special Board Meeting.

Executive Session

At 6:01 PM, Dr. Price asked for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a performance evaluation. Dr. Helen Williams made the motion to go into Executive Session. Then, Ms. Anne Bingham seconded the motion.

At 6:31 PM, the Board returned from Executive Session.

Capitol Partners Contract Discussion

At 6:32 PM, Ms. Meghann Marnecheck went over the proposed resolution and scope of work to enter into Capitol Partners' contract. Ms. Marnecheck noted that the Communications and Engagement Committee had received a presentation from Mr. Matt Cox on the contract and work scope during the March 5, 2021, Committee Meeting. Capitol Partners would work with CTA from March 2021 through December 31, 2021. First, Capitol Partners would help CTA gain access to Ohio state leaders. Second, Capitol Partners would execute an earned media plan to build awareness of CTA's role in educational policy in Cleveland and Columbus. Third, Capitol Partners would amplify CTA's voice among academic thought leaders in Ohio while collaborating with T Rice Communications and Good Cause Creative on the overarching communications plan. Ms. Marnecheck stated that the Capitol Partners contract amount was \$10,000. Ms. Marnecheck said that CTA chose Capitol Partners for the contract because they specialize in the educational field and know Cleveland's educational landscape.

During the March 5, 2021 Communications and Engagement Committee Meeting, Committee Members expressed concern about Capitol Partners leadership's racial demographics, and Ms. Marnecheck recommended that they attend Racial Equity and Inclusion (REI) training. Additionally, Ms. Marnecheck highlighted that Capitol Partners had worked with Mr. Alan Roskamm at Breakthrough Schools, who serves as a CTA Board Member.

Mr. Victor Ruiz commented that REI training wouldn't fix diversity issues within an organization. Additionally, CTA needed to review an organization's body of work to make sure that it aligned with CTA's values. In response, Ms. Marnecheck reiterated that Capitol Partners had worked in the school choice and high-quality charter school space.

Ms. Ann Mullin stated she looked at Capitol Partners' list of partners and didn't see a lot of resonance with CTA's values. Additionally, Ms. Mullin asked if Advocacy and Communication Solutions (ACS) could do the work. Ms. Marnecheck stated that ACS was not engaged in that type of effort, and ACS would prefer to focus on the Cleveland Plan Refresh and Strategic Planning for CTA.

Dr. Williams said that she did not understand why CTA was trying to build visibility with state legislators and that the Strategic Planning would determine the need for CTA Advocacy. Therefore, Dr. Williams recommended waiting until after the Strategic Planning to engage with Capitol Partners possibly. In response, Ms. Marnecheck explained that she did not anticipate Capitol Partners lobbying for CTA but helping CTA access local media outlets and Ohio thought leaders. Specifically, Capitol Partners would help CTA build relationships with republican legislators in the Ohio statehouse by providing them with updates and narratives.

Ms. Erin Randel stated she was aware that Capitol Partners might not align with CTA's values, but she trusted Ms. Marnecheck's political instincts.

Dr. Price agreed with Mr. Ruiz and Dr. Williams. Moreover, Dr. Price questioned if CTA had difficulty accessing all Ohio state legislators. Concurring with Dr. Price, Ms. Shana Marbury stated she didn't think CTA needed Capitol Partners for access because there were organizations with members on the Board that had access. Furthermore, Ms. Marbury was confused about what service they were offering and if Capitol Partners had a communications department. Ms. Marnecheck clarified that Capitol Partners would help CTA share the narrative through earned media as a part of a complete communications strategy.

Mr. Jeffery Patterson asked Ms. Marnecheck if the contract addressed a pressing need or could the Board decide later. Responding, Ms. Marnecheck said that the Board could decide later, but CTA would leave Capitol Partners out of the communications strategy that would start in May.

Ms. Stephanie Klupinski asked Ms. Marnecheck if CTA had sought proposals from organizations other than Capitol Partners. Ms. Marnecheck said that CTA had contracted with T Rice Communications for more traditional paid advertising and that she did reach out to other organizations that dealt with political advocacy. However, Ms. Marnecheck did not find another organization operating in Cleveland that focuses on media and advocacy in Cleveland and Columbus.

Ms. Turkessa Tenney asked if Capitol Partners operated in Cleveland's educational space, and Ms. Marnecheck said yes. Additionally, Ms. Marnecheck suggested the Board table the Capitol Partners contract for now. Moreover, Ms. Marbury said she wanted to know more about

Capitol Partners' other clients. Concurring, Dr. Williams added that their closeness with the charter sector could taint CTA's unbiased stance.

Ms. Brooke King asked if CTA had the option to do a smaller campaign through Capitol Partners. In response, Ms. Marnecheck stated she would ask Capitol Partners about tailoring a campaign.

Sangfroid Strategy Contract Discussion and Vote

At 6:53 PM, Ms. Marnecheck went over the proposed resolution and scope of work of Sangfroid Strategy. Ms. Heather Lenz with Sangfroid Strategy would do background satisfaction survey research to address potential inequity issues in CTA's current Star Rating System. Ms. Marnecheck would work with Ms. Lenz to complete the work at the Cleveland Plan Refresh work pace. CTA hoped to engage in the work during March or April around the Cleveland Plan Refresh retreat timeframe. In conclusion, Ms. Marnecheck was looking to enter into a contract with Sangfroid Strategy for \$12,000.

Dr. Price asked how Sangfroid Strategy established its fee. In response, Ms. Marnecheck noted Sangfroid Strategy's hourly rate and cost of business served as the basis of the cost. Clarifying, Dr. Price asked if Sangfroid Strategy was increasing their cost due to adding additional staff. Ms. Marnecheck said she could not speculate what went into Sangfroid Strategy's hourly rate. Dr. Zachariah asked how much the price changed, and Ms. Marnecheck said she did not know the amount it changed by.

Nevertheless, Ms. Marbury added that despite the price increase, keeping Sangfroid Strategy would save CTA money because Ms. Lenz has background knowledge and experience of CTA's inner workings and environment. Turkessa Tenney asked if Ms. Lenz's experience forced CTA to work with Sangfroid Strategy. In response, Ms. Marnecheck stated no because CTA has worked with other organizations, but Sangfroid Strategy's expertise is best suited for the work.

Ms. King asked if the Sangfroid Strategy contract was budgeted, and Ms. Marnecheck said that it was.

Ms. Randel asked if ACS could take on the task with the Strategic Planning conversation. Ms. Mullin said that she did not believe that ACS would be the best option to complete the work and that the Sangfroid Strategy team included a person of color at a leadership level and a former CTA staff member.

At 7:01 PM, Dr. Price asked if there was further discussion or comment. Hearing no comment, Dr. Price asked for a motion to approve the resolution to enter into a contract with Sangfroid Strategy to research and redevelop CTA's Star Rating System. Ms. Tenney made the motion to approve the resolution. Then, Ms. Klupinski seconded the motion. The Board unanimously



approved the resolution to enter into a contract with Sangfroid Strategy to research and redevelop CTA's Star Rating System.

School Quality Guide Recommended Timeline

Ms. Marnecheck went over the School Quality Guide timeline recommended at the last Communications and Engagement Committee Meeting. Due to the Cleveland Plan Refresh discussions and uncertainty regarding the Ohio Department of Education's (ODE) testing, Ms. Marnecheck recommended forgoing the printing of a 2022 School Quality Guide. However, CTA would update new school information on the website.

First, CTA would engage with the Cleveland Plan Refresh conversations. Second, CTA would incorporate the Cleveland Plan Refresh conversations' knowledge into designing a new School Quality Guide, and third, CTA would create a new School Quality Guide. Fourth, CTA would gather new state data to add to the School Quality Guide. Last, CTA would release the new printed 2023 School Quality tool and update the website.

Announcements and Adjournment

At 7:06 PM, Ms. Marnecheck noted that she would be continuing conversations with the Board regarding revenue. CTA would have the Cleveland Plan Progress Committee Refresh Retreat on March 30, 2021, and April 23, 2021, for all Board Members. Moreover, the Finance Committee would meet on April 22, 2021, and the next full CTA Board Meeting would take place on April 26, 2021, at 5:30 PM.

Dr. Price asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. King motioned to adjourn, and Dr. Zachariah seconded the motion. Dr. Price adjourned the meeting at 7:07 PM.