



Cleveland Transformation Alliance
Minutes of the Special Board of Directors Meeting

October 19, 2021 | 9:30 AM
Greater Cleveland Partnership
KeyBank Conference Room and Via Zoom

In Attendance

Baumgartner, Mark	Marbury, Shana (virtual)	Tenney, Turkessa (virtual)
Gibson, Richard (virtual)	Mullin, Ann (virtual)	Zachariah, Sajit (virtual)
King, Brooke (virtual)	Patterson, Jeffrey (virtual)	Zitzner, John (virtual)
Heard, Robert (virtual)	Randel, Erin (virtual)	
Klupinski, Stephanie (virtual)	Ruiz, Victor (virtual)	

Absent

Bingham, Anne	Jordan, Sharon Sobol	Reyes, Jose
Downing, Diane	Napoli, Augie	Williams, Helen
Friedman, Lee	Payton, Kevin	
Gordon, Eric	Price, Monyka	
Jackson, Mayor Frank		

Other Attendees

Documentors (virtual)	Margolis, Jen (virtual)	Ricchiuto, Jack (virtual)
D, Mike (virtual)	McCarthy, Daniel (virtual)	Svema (virtual)
Ishida, Evan (virtual)	Murat, Richard (virtual)	

Cleveland Transformation Alliance Staff

Marnecheck, Meghann
Halm, Mary

Welcome and Meeting Commencement

At 9:32 AM, Ms. Meghann Marnecheck called the Board's Special Meeting to order and welcomed all participants. Then, Ms. Marnecheck reviewed the items on the agenda and stated that no votes would take place during the meeting. Ms. Ann Mullin asked if questions and comments should be held till the end of the meeting, to which Ms. Marnecheck stated that questions are welcome throughout. Hearing no further questions, Ms. Marnecheck introduced Ms. Margolis from the Thrive at Work Team.

Ms. Margolis presented a brief overview of the strategic plan, highlighting how the plan was discussed in three working groups. She shared key tasks and provided a brief definition of the working groups' purposes. The working groups focused on the mission, vision, core values, governance, and quality metrics. Ms. Margolis continued to give an overview of each aspect of the plan, including initial projects and their process to get the plan today. After Ms. Margolis concluded her presentation, Ms. Marnecheck opened the floor for questions/comments.

Ms. Marnecheck thanked the core team and noted they might also help answer questions.

Ms. Mullin raised questions regarding wordsmithing and clarification points for the mission. Precisely, the words "find" and "opportunity." Ms. Mullin also raised concern for tone. Mr. Mark Baumgartner noted that the tone was needed to match our current reality. Ms. Erin Randel added her thoughts regarding word choice and personal thoughts as a parent with a child in school. Ms. Marnecheck then raised Ms. Randel's suggested word choices and asked the group for their opinions. The comments were discussed, noted, and addressed while honoring the work of the mission, vision, and core values working group.

Mr. Ruiz called attention to the difference between mission and vision, further asking if things outside of the Alliance's control belong in the mission. Mr. Ricchiuto noted that vision becomes the impact of our aspiration from the mission, and Ms. Margolis added that there is a delicate balance. The group continued to workshop the mission collaboratively and came to a conclusion that was recorded.

Ms. Marnecheck asked if Ms. Mullin's questions were fully addressed. Ms. Mullin confirmed they were. With that, Ms. Marnecheck moved on to raise Mr. John Zitzner's question regarding section five.

Mr. Zitzner questioned the Alliance's ability to weigh in on charter schools. Further clarifying his question, he asked if the applications referred to were about sponsors' or applications for schools. Mr. Zitzner noted that the second bullet under "two-year impact and progress indicators" may not be written into law. Highlighting that we want to make sure we are saying things we can do as an organization.

Ms. Mullin responded, confirming the Alliance's ability to review sponsors once they come up for state renewal. The other is the authority to send sponsors who want to open schools our criteria to open that school, as long as it meets the requirements.

Mr. Zitzner then asked for clarification of "loopholes" in section five. Ms. Marnecheck responded that the intent goes to addressing language in the Cleveland Plan about our education landscape and how the Alliance can play and continue to be a trusted entity so schools, sponsors, etc.

Ms. Stephanie Klupinski asked for clarification on the first bullet point under "projects to Launch." She asked if the conversation about student applications was addressed in the plan. Ms. Marnecheck stated that conversations about uniform or unified enrollment processes is included in the equity section. Ms. Klupinski then noted that the first bullet point should clarify the referenced applications are sponsor applications. Ms. Margolis made this edit.



Moving on, Ms. Margolis raised that Ms. Randel was interested in talking about governance recommendations.

Mr. Ruiz presented the work of the Governance group. One of the biggest things to address was clarity for board members as to their roles and proper committee structure. The second is being clear on what the Alliance can and cannot do related to public meeting laws and expanding the board table to be more representative of parents, students, and other individuals to help with fundraising and get more diversity of thought around the table. Other points of discussion were to define the executive committee better. Mr. Ruiz commented that a strong Governance Committee could play a more substantial role in the nomination of Board candidates.

Ms. Marnecheck added that the other piece to name is saying that this group was interested in an in-depth review of the Code of Regulations to ensure that the structure is set up for the future and be impacted less by the political transitions. Ms. Marnecheck also recalled a conversation around creating a parent advisory group, who might be included, and how it might work. There is also a desire to clarify and codify current practice in the Code and possibly institute a term limit for board members.

Ms. Mullin asked about the size of the Executive Committee and ensuring the membership satisfies the correct balance. Ms. Mullin then moved to the appendix, on the detailed section for the Governance working group, liking the idea of term limits but noting that we may be limited where we have institutional representatives. Ms. Mullin's second comment is that providing the Mayor with a slate of candidates is a good idea to propose. Ms. Mullin concluded with a solid objection to is the idea of representation of parochial and private schools.

Mr. Ruiz thanked Ms. Mullin for her comments and clarified the parochial and private school conversations. Mr. Ruiz informed the group that the discussion started by asking how CTA works for all Cleveland's children. As the conversation continued, it became evident that it was about Cleveland Metropolitan schools, charter, and public schools, and moved away from the parochial and private school conversation. Mr. Ruiz added that regarding Ms. Mullins point to the size of the Executive Committee, it is more about making sure there is a clear and defined role for that committee.

Mr. Baumgartner added that he appreciates Ms. Mullin's comments for term limits, but he has an objection to term limits. Ms. Marnecheck clarified that the appendix represents the Governance Working Group's discussion and is not part of the Strategic Plan. The recommendation is to continue these conversations as one of the first projects to launch and consider the Working Group's suggestions in those future discussions. Ms. Margolis confirmed that this was true

Mr. Jeff Patterson agreed with the group as it related to term limits. Mr. Patterson added it would be worthwhile to look at the historical context of why certain things occurred and base decisions on that. Lastly, Mr. Patterson stated that the Executive Director is the person responsible for continuity. The Mayor should have a right to appoint the Vice-Chair. If the Alliance has recommendations, there is a process for that. The decision should be left to the Mayor.



Ms. Marnecheck agreed with the importance of a historical perspective.

Ms. Randel raised a point to stipend families who may participate in an advisory position to make it more equitable. Additionally, Ms. Randel noted that when considering private and parochial schools, our government and public funds do support them. The Alliance needs to consider reaching out in some way to comment on other publicly funded and subsidized programs and recognize the degree that they are publicly subsidized and the cost to public education.

Mr. Ricchiuto responded that there are many partnership opportunities in the plan, and there are going to be rich opportunities for potential new relationships.

Mr. Zitzner raised a question for the bullet regarding board members and representation for the business community. Mr. Zitzner noted it should be a priority to bring the business community to board membership, and if they believe in our mission, it may lead to corporate financial support. Ms. Marnecheck responded, stating that recommendations to create a Development Committee are included in the Governance Working Group's recommendations and intentionally expanding representation from the business community. Ms. Margolis added that as the groups worked together, a standout topic was how the business community could become interconnected to our work.

Ms. Margolis asked for other questions/comments. Ms. Marnecheck asked if the remaining members felt comfortable moving the plan forward. Ms. Marnecheck noted all attending boarding members indicated that they would be comfortable approving the plan at the regular board meeting.

Ms. Turkessa Tenney raised Mr. Patterson's point to term limits, highlighting the importance of holding on to the Board's current expertise.

Ms. Randel offered that Cle Plan is about to launch a CMSD parent-focused survey to build connection opportunities.

Adjournment

Ms. Marnecheck followed up on Ms. Randel's point to stipends and acknowledged the work of parents. Ms. Marnecheck then asked for final comments/questions and thanked the group for their contributions. Hearing no further comments, Ms. Marnecheck concluded the meeting at 10:56 AM.