

**REFERENCE: APPROVED MINUTES – February 8, 2007 Public Charter School
Commission Meeting**

**PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2007
650 WEST STATE STREET, ROOM 302
BOISE, IDAHO**

A meeting of the Idaho Public Charter School Commission was held by teleconference on Thursday, February 8, 2007 at 650 West State Street, Room 302, Boise, Idaho. Chairman Goesling presided. The following members were in attendance:

Joe deVera Alan Reed Esther Van Wart
Paul Powell Ann Souza

Chairman Goesling called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

1. Commission Work

Chairman Goesling inquired whether there should be any changes to the agenda. No changes were requested.

M/S (Powell/Van Wart): To approve the agenda without changes. *The motion passed unanimously.*

The Commission considered dates and times for the next regularly scheduled meetings and agreed to change the May meeting date from May 31 to May 24.

M/S (Powell/deVera): To set April 5, May 24, and July 19 in Boise, Idaho, as the dates and locations for the next regular Commission meetings. *The motion passed unanimously.*

The Commission considered minutes submitted from the November 30, 2006 meeting.

M/S (Reed/Van Wart): To approve the minutes from November 30, 2006 as submitted. *The motion carried unanimously.*

2. Garden City Community School Update

Barbara Gaston, president of the GCCS board, updated the Commission on the school's ongoing search for a new board treasurer and the school's new facility. She said the board has made many attempts to obtain lease termination agreements from Pacific Mobile but has encountered difficulty in contacting the appropriate person. She

said the landowner of the 44th Street site at which the school was originally intended to be located is conferring with his attorney regarding a proposed release of contract.

Ms. Gaston said current enrollment is 92 and the board is attempting to recruit more students. She updated the Commission on the school's staffing and noted that the board has received a request for release from contract from one of its teachers. The board has approved this request contingent upon finding another teacher, and the administrator is seeking a replacement teacher.

Commissioner deVera asked how the low enrollment will affect the schools' budget.

Ms. Gaston said the school may need to use its Wells Fargo line of credit by the end of the school year. She agreed to submit to staff updated budgets reflecting conservative enrollment numbers and noted the importance of increasing enrollment by June 1 to ensure continued early availability of the federal charter grant. She said the goal is enrollment of at least 117 by June 1.

Commissioner deVera asked whether the school has a marketing plan in place.

Ms. Gaston said the school doesn't have a marketing plan, but is advertising via public service announcements. She said the board and community counsel are considering additional advertising strategies.

Commissioner deVera noted that involving parents is important to increasing enrollment. He said he would like additional assurance of the school's financial stability.

Chairman Goesling asked for staff's recommendation.

Tamara Baysinger, Commission staff, suggested the Commission consider requiring GCCS to submit monthly revenue and expense reports showing beginning and ending cash, due within one week of the end of the month until further notice. She also suggested the Commission require GCCS to submit to staff documentation of finalized lease termination agreements between the school and Pacific Mobile, and between the school and the landowner. Should the other parties prove unavailable, she recommended the Commission require documentation that GCCS has made a good faith effort to reach agreements and make payment.

Ms. Gaston said the school could provide the suggested information.

Commissioner deVera asked for details regarding the money that has already been sent to the lessors.

Ms. Gaston clarified that GCCS has made the land lease payment for one quarter, but negotiations are still in progress regarding the school's request for forgiveness of the early termination penalty. She said Pacific Mobile has offered a lease termination amount of

\$46,000 to be paid off over two years at 10% interest, but the school has not received a payment plan. The board recently elected to send to Pacific Mobile a \$1,000 payment and certified letter requesting a written release.

M/S (deVera/Powell): To require Garden City Community School to submit to Commission staff monthly financial reports showing projections as well as revenue and expenses, due within one week after the end of each month; also, to submit within 30 days evidence of the school's good faith effort to settle the Pacific Mobile and land lease contracts. *The motion passed unanimously.*

Commissioner Souza asked whether the school interviews outgoing students to determine why they are withdrawing.

Dr. Linda Vermette, GCCS administrator, said the school does interview parents. She said the site change and related instability affected enrollment.

Commissioner Souza asked for additional information regarding the teacher who wishes to be released from her contract.

Ms. Gaston said GCCS has approved the teacher's request contingent upon the board's ability to hire a replacement teacher, and that this is consistent with school policy.

Commissioner Souza cautioned that GCCS may find it difficult to enforce this contingency.

3. Vision Public Charter School

Lee Hannah, Chairman of the Vision board, said the board has hired Wendy OldenKamp as Vision's administrator. She updated the Commission on the upcoming enrollment lottery, hiring efforts, and board member changes. She said Vision is negotiating with Bradshaw Construction for a temporary site, as well as a permanent site, near a planned subdivision in the Middleton city limits. She said Pacific Mobile is holding portables to be moved onto the site in early summer.

Ms. Hannah said the Albertsons Foundation has offered a \$100,000 grant pending finalization of the schools 501(c)3 status, and fundraising efforts are progressing well.

Commissioner Powell asked about Wendy OldenKamp's credentials.

Ms. OldenKamp said she has served in teacher, vice-president, and building administrator positions in Idaho, in addition to being a stay-at-home mom and starting two home businesses. She said she is K-12 certified in Idaho and has completed coursework for her administrator's certificate. Her graduate and undergraduate degrees are in the education field.

Commissioner Powell asked whether the school's site change moves Vision beyond its earlier disagreements with the Vallivue School District.

Tamara Baysinger, Commission staff, noted that because Vision was referred to the Commission by the Vallivue School District during the petitioning process, Vision needs to select a location within the Vallivue School District.

Commissioner Powell asked whether the new site is in the Vallivue School District.

Ms. Hannah said the site is not in the Vallivue School District and that she was unaware of such a requirement. She noted that Vision was referred by the Middleton School District as well.

Ms. Baysinger said the Middleton School District's referral is essentially invalid because Middleton was not the correct district to which Vision should have applied at that time. She said that in December 2006, the Commission sent the Vision petitioners back to the appropriate school district, Vallivue, because the charter petition proposed a site located within Vallivue School District borders. She said the school needs to be physically located within the school district to which it originally applied, which in this case is Vallivue.

Commissioner Powell asked staff whether it would be appropriate to ask Vision to obtain a letter from the Middleton School District approving the change in location, or whether Vision should obtain a referral to the Commission from Middleton.

Ms. Baysinger said staff will need to do additional research before providing a definitive answer to Commissioner Powell's question. She noted that the question of whether the site in the Middleton School District is temporary or permanent may be a factor.

Commissioner Powell asked how Vision is progressing its efforts to finalize its 501(c)3 status.

Ms. Hannah said the IRS gave an estimate of 6-9 months for completion of the process and denied Vision's request that the process be expedited in the interest of obtaining the Albertsons grant monies sooner.

4. Compass Public Charter School Update

Chris Jensen, board chair for Compass, provided a general update on Compass in follow-up to a recent oversight visit by Commission staff. She said the school is in the process of finalizing its financing arrangements for purchase of the church facility it is currently leasing.

Commissioner Powell asked whether any kind of disclosure is required due to Commissioner deVera's employment at the bank through which Compass is obtaining

financing.

Commissioner deVera said he has considered this but it is unnecessary because he is not involved in the loan process with regard to Compass and will receive no compensation should Compass obtain the loan.

5. Falcon Ridge Public Charter School

Derry Shaul, director for Falcon Ridge, provided a general update to the Commission in follow-up to a recent oversight visit by Commission staff. He said Falcon Ridge's programmatic audit was recently completed and no significant concerns were identified.

6. Commission Education

Ms. Baysinger and Jennifer Swartz, Commission counsel, provided a brief educational segment regarding the relationship between the Commission and the State Board of Education, Commission funding, Commission officer responsibilities, and the Commission's legal authority and responsibilities.

Chairman Goesling adjourned the meeting at 10:07 a.m.