

**Board of Directors Emergency Meeting Official Minutes**

**Date:** September 11, 2022

**Time:** 7:30 - 8:30 PM

**Location:** 974 Skyline Dr. SW  
Rochester Mn. 55902

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3720627360?pwd=V01uRjhybTdZeWNJWlAyak5mVU1tZz09>

Meeting ID: 372 062 7360 Passcode: RBA1

Call in - 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) Meeting ID: 372 062 7360 Passcode: 579080

**1. Call Meeting to Order: 7:37 P.M.**

**2. Reading of Mission:** The Mission of Rochester Beacon Academy, with the cooperation of parents, is to provide a safe learning community in a secondary (6-12) setting; respecting the individual and differentiated needs of learners, empowering them to reach their full potential and join their community with success.

**3. Attendance: To establish Quorum**

Name	
Pam Johnson, Chair	Present
Kate Dullard, Secretary	Present
Bobbi Kostinec	ABSENT
Deanne Breitenbach	Present
Brenna Salfi	Present (zoom – couldn't make it in)
Stacy Aoudia	Present

Guests
Jim Zacchini, Mn Guild
Glory Kibbel, Mn Guild
Lynn Nordgren, MN Guild

**4. Conflict of interest** (Recognize any conflict of interest for board members or public input.) **NONE**

**5. Approval of Agenda**

**Motion to approve agenda for September 11, 2022**

Move	Second	Vote Aye	Motion
Breitenbach	Aoudia	All	Carried

Name	VOTE
Pam Johnson, Chair	Aye
Kate Dullard, Secretary	Aye
Bobbi Kostinec	NO VOTE
Deanne Breitenbach	Aye

Brenna Salfi	Aye
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Stacy Aoudia
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Aye
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## 6. Public Forum - Public Forum Guidelines

- a. Request sign-in - Record your attendance in the chat section on Zoom
- b. Darcy – Worked for Lake City schools for 15 years and knows one of the directors personally, she would be willing to give the name (Amy Yor)
- c. Elisa Voeltz – Been at RBA for 8 years. We did have an interim at one point and it was a no. Why did this person not accept? With Melissa leaving, how are you, as a board, going to help us? It is now going to trickle down to myself, Vicki, Cat, and then the staff. This is a school that is a haven for the kids, and we are the safe haven for them.
  - Deanne – it’s a scary time. We are all nervous. Being without Nicole was already hard and being without Melissa will had another level of hard. The resources we have on the list and the ones we are willing to connect with and we have a good list of lists and organizations that we are going to tap into to make sure that we stick together. The responses that we have gotten since Friday have been overwhelmingly positive. The candidate that we had interviewed took her name out of the running as there were staff concerns. Additional resources will be put in place to pick up the slack. We need you guys as our experts, as our eyes on the ground, to help us know what we need to do. If you have ideas, please share them.
  - Stacy – We want to hear all your ideas and all your solutions. The online spreadsheet might be the best solution as there people who may not feel comfortable, may not want to be on television, and when you think of an idea, put it on the spreadsheet so you do not forget it.
- d. Carrie Nelson – We’ve lost two directors in three months. Concern as an educator and a parent, what is happening that is making our directors leave? If we get to that root of that problem, then we might be able to fix the problem. You have the support of your staff, and we need to know why people are leaving. When Nicole and Mel leave, as this was their bread and butter, what is the board going to do to ensure that directors are not leaving? What does this mean for the future of our school? My kid needs this school.
- e. Lori Rogers – piggyback off of what Carrie said. I didn’t know Nicole very well outside of the interview I had with her. Melissa is the reason that I came here because I taught her kid. As a person who came because of Melissa, I am terrified. If there becomes conflict between people what is happening? What can you all say? It’s not a good feeling to be in this place and not know what’s going on.
- f. Gabi Hale- what is the timeline to fill these positions before we can no longer operate?
- g. Melissa Walsh – I have stressed over and over again that communication as key. I have been at every board meeting in the past 4 years, so why was I not invited to this board meeting?
  - This was an emergency meeting, and it was not to exclude you.
- h. Elisa- speaking on communication. Just because it was supposed to be an emergency board meeting, she should have been on there. It should have gone out to everyone. It must start now. It is key. I found out about the emergency board meeting through an all staff email.
  - We need to keep improving our communication. It is not only what you speak, but what you hear and what you listen too.
- i. Annie – It seemed like this summer, there was not a lot of communication. I am terrified. I am scared. I don’t want to start over. This is where I belong. I love this school. I love the people I work with. I love the kids. Even if there is nothing to report, can we get weekly emails as an update. Just to touch base with us. Let us know where things are going. Something in the weekly updates. An email.
- j. Carrie – clearly you have a lot of invested teachers. Is there a way we can have access to all the board meetings? Can we find all the meeting notes, where do we find all the

previous board meetings recordings so that we can become more informed members of the public.

- k. Lori- when you be able to interview this new candidate that we have
  - For the next two weeks, we have identified dates that
- l. Lori- when Melissa is gone, who is going to be in charge, who do we go to in the building with problems?
  - The resources would put a physical person in the building
- m. Vicki – I am the front line when families come in. Knowing that the board is in charge in the absence of an ED, how is it going out to families, who is going to be addressing the questions, etc.
  - After the meeting, we will talk about that.
  - What would help you? - Having a physical person here to answer the questions. Knowing that when I send an email or forward a parent concern, it will be taken care of right away.
- n. Why have Nicole and Melissa left?
  - Nicole is not here, so it is not professional to talk about her.
  - I do not feel like the board should be sharing any of their speculation why
  - The board has really taken a hard look as to how and why we operate
  - We are committed to every single staff member, we are fully on board with you, and we are committed to the students.
  - We feel the loses too
- o. Janet – Thank you. I know you are working hard and that it is stressful. What I am wondering when I am listening hear, is are you doing exit interviews? Do you know very clearly why they are leaving? It is astonishing to me that we let people leave and not ask why.
- p. Carrie- Nicole’s not here. We can respect that. Melissa is here. Can we ask her why she is leaving? Can we ask her why? It is like a marriage, and we cannot fix our marriage unless we know what needs to be fixed. We need to know what is broken and how we can fix it.
  - The way I am seeing this, it should be a 1:1 interview. I do not feel like I can ask the clarifying questions.
- q. Melissa – this place is a family. They do deserve to know, and I know that the board knows why I am leaving. I am more than happy to answer those questions. I have fielded more phone calls in the last 48 hours. I want nothing more than to be here.
  - Not sure it is the right format. It is very personal. I am not sure.
  - Jim and Glory said that it is the boards decision to know why
  - What are our gaps? Reach out to Nicole to see what we can do
  - We did get some great insight with Nicole when she left and we have implemented a few things since then based on her input. Deanne volunteers to conduct the exit interviews
- r. Lori – I have a hard time trust board members. We have someone here who is willing to talk and tell us why. Why are we not letting her? It is bringing up anxiety that we are hesitating to let her speak. Invokes anxiety to wait for the exit interview. It’s two people in three months. We still don’t have answers and we don’t know when we will have answers.
- s. Annie – to Melissa. All of us can see how hard this is on you. And it is hard for us too. We have learned and gained so much from you. I personally want you to know that you need to do what is best for you, and I think you are doing that. I have the upmost confidence that you will be very supportive over the next two weeks.
- t. Katrina- Is the candidate we are interviewing, hopefully by the end of this week, is this the only option we have at this time? We need to have someone come in and get that stuff done. We need someone to come in and bring the passion and support that we have felt from Melissa and Nicole. We have been spoiled. A little nerve wrecking that we just have one person.
  - We have had several candidates, but they do not have the proper qualifications. They are missing their administrative license, and this is

something that we absolutely need.

- u. Kate from staff – Why are we not letting her answer? What are we trying to hide?
  - Trying to respect Melissa and her space
- v. Melissa – when Nicole and I first started in 2018 as admin, we took staff out of SOD. When Nicole resigned, she was very open and honest. I was very open with my issues with the board. Their issues continued, and Melissa cannot continue to be a leader under the board of directors until what needs to get fixed gets fixed. I do not want to leave and neither did Nicole.
  - Would Melissa be willing to sit 1:1 to go over some of the things that need to be fixed? Melissa said yes. She really does not want anything to happen to this school.

**7. Teacher / Staff Ideas / Solutions**

- a. Spreadsheet will be shared

**8. Executive Director Search Update**

- a. Interviewed one candidate – that candidate will not work out
- b. We are in contact with a second candidate
- c. Meet as a search committee to review our process, make sure everything is the way it should be, and to make sure that it is fair in process.
- d. While we are interviewing, we are also exploring options for an interim ED
  - Still exploring those options right now, but when details become available, they will be shared

**9. Special Education Director Update**

- a. Sincere appreciation for Melissa
  - Everything she has done for the school, the board, taking on the executive director duties
  - Set us up for success – one of the very few schools in Minnesota that are fully staffed
  - Took initiative along with Traci, our business manager, to make sure that our salaries were competitive with schools around Rochester in hopes to bring in more top-quality staff
  - We are very sad that Melissa is leaving
- b. Pam reached out to Indigo for an interim Special Education Director
- c. Pam reached out to Hiawatha Valley Education District – provide services to area schools
- d. Two of our board members are working on the posting for the Special Education Director
  - Should be available by tomorrow morning and available on our website
- e. Sending a memo out to our families on Wednesday

**10. Working Board meeting tomorrow afternoon**

- a. This is for the admin team and the board to meet so that we can start to work on a transition plan

**11. Talking with Traci, our business manager to discuss the options of payroll and accounts payable**

**12. Adjourn Meeting:**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:49

Move	Second	Vote Aye	Motion
Aoudia	Breitenbach	All	Carried.