

Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative Board

Minutes of March 31, 2020 Board Meeting

(Meeting held by Zoom due to declared State of Emergency)

Members Present: Carole Clifford, Christopher Cotter, Ann Fernandes, Sarah Gomes, Donna McKenna, Christopher Oliver, Michael Shea, Michelle Smith, Suzanne Tseki

Members Absent: N/A

Staff Present: Catherine S. Cooper, Executive Director
Christopher Haraden, Director of Finance and Operations

Others Present: John Nunes, SMEC Treasurer

Mr. Oliver called the meeting to order at 5:36 P.M.

1. **VOTED** To approve the Minutes of the Board's January 30, 2020 meeting as submitted. Ms. Gomes made the motion and Ms. Fernandes seconded. Ms. Clifford and Ms. Smith abstained.

APPROVED

2. **VOTED** To receive, accept and place on file the LEA, SAIL and ADH funded staff appointments, transfers, promotions, resignations, terminations, and reductions as submitted on Agenda Attachment 1. Mr. Shea made a motion which was seconded by Ms. Clifford.

APPROVED

3. **VOTED** The Executive Director and Director of Finance and Operations provided an update to Board members regarding the status of all Collaborative programs, services and staffing under the current State of Emergency and Stay at Home Advisory proclaimed by Governor Baker due to COVID-19. All school and adult day programs and services have been closed since March 16, 2020. Residential services continue to be provided. State guidance regarding revenue is still in flux as of the date of the meeting, however the advisory from DESE has been for districts to continue paying tuitions and services during closure and the verbal guidance received from DDS and MA Health have indicated that we will be able to continue to bill for residential services as provided, and will receive an additional 10% administrative payment per month, for the remainder of the closure period, calculated based on the average of the prior complete 3 mos. of billing, in order to cover extraordinary costs in relation to COVID-19. In addition, if any remote services are provided by the ADH and SAIL day program staff to the clients who would normally be receiving daytime services, we can bill for those remote services and will also receive an 80% administrative fee based on the prior three months average billing for day/employment for both ADH and SAIL, but not including transportation. The Executive Director and Director of Finance requested authority continue to pay all staff, including hourly staff but exclusive of substitutes, as revenue allows, to implement furloughs as needed if final guidance is not as promising or if revenues do not allow us to continue to pay all staff, and to pay the residential direct care staff who are covering the 24/7 residences at the rate of one and one half times their base hourly rate for any shift in the 24/7 residence starting

with the payroll beginning March 22nd until the day programs are allowed to reopen. Mr. Cotter made the motion and Ms. Gomes seconded.

APPROVED

4. **VOTED** The Director of Finance and Operations provided an update on the Collaborative Spending Plan as submitted on Agenda Attachment 2 with proposed line item adjustments but no change to the funding limit as guidance and the situation continued to evolve on the date and week of the meeting. Ms. Fernandes made a motion and Ms. Smith seconded.

APPROVED

5. **VOTED** To allow the Executive Director to sign an updated 403B plan document once complete on behalf of the Board to comply with IRS regulations. Ms. Smith made the motion and Ms. Tseki seconded.

APPROVED

6. **VOTED** To revise the SMEC Use of Company Vehicles, Student-Consumer Transportation, Holiday Benefit, Cell Phone Usage and Agency Vehicle Use policies as submitted on Agenda Attachments 3-7. Mr. Shea made a motion and Ms. Smith seconded.

APPROVED

7. **DISUSSION** The Director provided an update on the status of the proposed Amendment to the SMEC Articles of Agreement which has been delayed by the State of Emergency.

8. **DISCUSSION** The Executive Director asked whether municipal operations would likely be delayed in each member town based on the Stay at Home advisory in effect creating difficulties with processing warrants and payments.

9. **DISCUSSION** The Executive Director informed the negotiation subcommittee that she had not submitted any information regarding her contract renewal as of yet due to the upheaval caused by the State of Emergency and would get something to them as soon as possible.

10. **DISCUSSION** The Executive Director provided a facilities update including the Fairhaven School Committee's willingness to allow the Superintendent and the SMEC Executive Director to negotiate an additional 5 year lease beyond the current lease term for the Tripp School and also an update on the fact that no one submitted a proposal to SMEC's recent RFP for additional space.

11. **DISCUSSION** The Executive Director reminded any Board member who has been on the Board for six years or more of the requirement to retake the Collaborative Board Member mandatory online training.

12. **SCHEDULED** The next scheduled SMEC Board of Directors meeting will be held on April 29, 2020 at 5:30 PM most likely by Zoom as the schools will continue to be closed at that time.

13. VOTED To adjourn at 7:20 P.M. Motion made by Ms. Clifford, seconded by Mr. Cotter.

APPROVED

**Respectfully submitted,
Catherine S. Cooper
Secretary to the Board**

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