

Southeastern Massachusetts Educational Collaborative Board  
**Minutes of January 20, 2021 Board Meeting**

**Members Present:** Carole Clifford, Christopher Cotter, Ann Fernandes, Thomas Khoury, Christopher Oliver, Michael Shea, Michelle Smith\*, Jonathan Teves,

**Members Absent:** Donna McKenna, Suzanne Tseki  
\*Ms. Smith left the meeting to attend a district meeting after the Board vote on the FY21 spending plan.

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

**Others Present:** John Nunes, SMEC Treasurer

**A quorum was reached and Mr. Oliver called the meeting to order at 5:33 P.M.**

1. **VOTED** To approve the Minutes of the Board's December 14, 2020 meeting as submitted. Mr. Cotter made the motion, Mr. Shea seconded.

**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. Ms. Clifford made a motion, seconded by Ms. Smith.

**APPROVED**

3. **VOTED** The Director of Finance and Operations provided an update on the FY21 Collaborative Spending Plan and Revenue projections. An explanation and visual presentation were provided regarding the Covid funding enhancement plans of DDS and MA Health for adult service funding as well as a general projection of estimated remaining monthly revenue expectations based on current billing information and fiscal guidance. It was explained that as of the date of the meeting, we have just received updated written guidance from DDS on the rate enhancement schedule for the remainder of FY21, but only verbal guidance from MA Health, and the two funding plans now differ in implementation. The Executive Director also explained to the Board that the LEA referrals and mid-year school enrollments that would typically occur this time of year have plateaued due to the high rates of remote learning in some districts negating the need for outside referrals. An explanation of the necessity of using additional cumulative fund revenue to balance the budget was followed by the presentation of three plans to address the expected budget deficit. Plan A was to address the amount of entire current projected FY21 deficit by earmarking revenue from the Collaborative's cumulative fund. Plan B was to mitigate the deficit by reducing certain positions through full or partial furloughs and earmarking Collaborative surplus funds for the remaining deficit figure. Plan C was to close certain adult service programs to reduce expenses through additional furloughs and reduced costs. Following discussion, the Board voted to move forward with Plan B; furloughing nine full and partial positions and not filling an additional position through attrition caused by a January retirement to offset some of the projected deficit and to earmark an additional

amount from the Collaborative fund to balance the budget and to approve the amended FY21 spending plan with a revised total of \$8,770,629. The Board restated its prior position that the Executive Director and Director of Finance can take any action necessary based on evolving information as needed between meetings to maintain solvency and operations. Motion by Mr. Cotter, Second by Ms. Fernandes.

- 4. **VOTED** To approve a voluntary Covid leave policy presented to the Board through screen share at the meeting to allow for an additional 10 days of paid leave for certain Covid quarantine situations due to either being Covid positive, being identified as a close contact through job duties while working at SMEC or being identified as a close contact to a household member. This policy is effective at the expiration of the FFRCA on December 31, 2020 and set to expire on March 31, 2021. Motion by Ms. Clifford, second by Mr. Khoury.

**APPROVED**

- 5. **DISCUSSION** The Executive Director gave a brief update on the status of the current operations for each program as well as planned facilities meetings and communications with current and potential host districts for the next school year.

- 6. **SCHEDULED** The next scheduled SMEC Board of Directors meeting will be held on March 30, 2021 at 5:30 PM by Zoom.

- 7. **VOTED** To adjourn at 6:35 P.M. Motion by Mr. Cotter, Second by Ms. Clifford.

**APPROVED**

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