

**CHARMS Collaborative**  
**Open Session Meeting Minutes, May 9, 2017**

**Members Present:** Mr. Zinni (Avon), Mr. Farmer (Sharon), Dr. Rizzi (Stoughton), Dr. Fischer-Mueller (Canton), Dr. Lally (Holbrook)

**Also Present:** Rosalie O'Connell (Executive Director), Marc Richard (Business Manager), Karen Hurley (Charms Administrative Assistant), Gretchen Conlon (Charms Administrative Assistant), Paulajo Gaines (DESE Representative), Sarah Catignani (Attorney), Cari Ann Dufresne (Charms Employee), Barbara Miller (Charms Retiree)

**Open Session**

- **Welcome and Public Comment**
  - **Public Comment**
    - Mrs. Miller – Asked about the deadline for providing proof of insurance
      - Mr. Richard stated that because we are using municipal funds the retirees need to provide a proof of intention
      - Mrs. O'Connell stated the deadline would be May 31, 2017, but if retirees need more time they can let us know
    - Ms. Dufresne – Asked to please submit a letter into the meeting minutes (See attached letter), Then read letter on behalf of the current employees
- **FY17 Budget Update**
  - Mr. Richard – We have lost another student bringing us down approximately \$15,000
    - Deficit is now \$102,823
    - No other changes, tracking all final payments, no concerns
  - MR. Zinni – When can we make line item transfers to balance the numbers
    - Mr. Richard – We can make the transfers whenever, requires board approval
      - If everything goes as planned, no changes, we should have a surplus of \$170,000 just for FY17 alone even with loss of students our spending has decreased significantly
      - Dr. Rizzi – Would like to see final numbers with line item transfers
      - Mr. Farmer – Is the money referenced just FY17 surplus in addition to the other surplus
        - Mr. Richard confirmed but also stated this is unaudited
        - Mr. Zinni – By the end of FY17 will all numbers be zeroed out
        - Mr. Richard – We can make line item transfers to balance the budget, however some numbers won't be final until closer to the end of the year
        - Mr. Zinni asking if we should zero out the budget now

- Ms. Catignani – we can have a balanced budget presented at the next meeting and the line item transfers can be voted on then
  - Mr. Richard will have that for the next meeting
  - Dr. Rizzi does not feel comfortable making any financial decisions
  - Mrs. O’Connell stated that the FY17 surplus should cover any deficit from the closing costs.
    - Dr. Rizzi still not comfortable
- **Charms Dissolution Updates**
  - Update on Closing Tasks:
    - Ms. Catignani – confirmed we pay on an annual pool for unemployment, all employees will be covered
      - If severance is offered:
        - Request release – waive claims, can get both unemployment and severance
        - Do not request release – Can only collect one or the other, unique for each individual
        - No additional expenses for unemployment
  - Health insurance for current and retired staff
    - Ms. Catignani stated GIC will cover COBRA regular coverage
      - Retirees through July 31, 2017
      - Active Employees through August 31, 2017
      - Paperwork will be out in June
  - FY17 Audit should be final audit, district will have to hold money for benefit of Charms
    - FY18 expenditures will then be included in the districts audit
  - Closing Costs reviewed (See outline), fluctuations may occur
    - Harper’s has a one-time fee of \$250 for 3 months access
    - Put aside enough to cover deductible for district who takes on insurance claims
    - Ownership of website will transfer to Sharon, put up section for frequently requested documents
    - Applied a slight buffer on admin costs
    - Reserve fund has to be held in a member district, added business manager expenses (Overestimated)
    - Mrs. O’Connell – Per the boards’ request, all items under \$300 in value were either offered to employees, some unusable items were disposed of, or donated to Pass it On, or some items going with students
      - Ms. Catignani stated we need values for all items for DESE
- **DESE Updates**
  - Ms. Gaines – Nothing new to report
  - Mr. Zinni – Asked if we are in complete compliance

- Ms. Gaines – Stated we're in the process, we still need ending documentation showing where to go to access final records
        - Would like to see at least a draft packet by beginning of June, Must be completed by June 30, 2017
- **Motion to Approve minutes from March 24, 2017**
  - Dr. Rizzi so moved, Mr. Farmer seconded, No discussion, 4 in Favor, Dr. Fischer-Mueller abstained
- **Votes Required**
  - Health Insurance for Current and Retired Employees
    - Dr. Rizzi requesting Executive Session for Health Insurance and Severance Packages for next meeting due to potential litigation
    - Mr. Farmer suggested keeping retirees in open session since the letter is not from them
    - Retiree Health Insurance
      - Mr. Zinni – We voted on 6 months of coverage
      - Ms. Catignani clarified that we are giving retirees a one-time lump sum payment of what Charms would have covered over a 6 month period. There is no legal obligation to provide proof of insurance, but as municipal funds are being used, a letter will be necessary. If retirees cannot get letter from insurance company at least a good faith letter from the retiree that they are looking or have received new coverage. Reach out to any retirees we have not received information from to remind them of next steps.
      - Mr. Farmer stated he would like to see more funds go towards helping retirees if available and will wait for the final financial information.
        - Dr. Rizzi agrees
        - Mr. Zinni – Finite number has already been disclosed in writing to retirees
  - Executive Session meeting will be May 11, 2017, must be posted immediately
  - Financial Storage
    - Mr. Farmer does not have anyone to maintain finances
    - Ms. Catignani clarified that Sharon will hold files, Mr. Richard will work out of Avon to handle Business matters, someone must control money in a revolving account for one year to cover later disbursements
    - Dr. Fischer-Mueller – asked if we can appoint an outside corporation to manage funds
      - Ms. Gaines – Per the collaborative agreement, it must be a member district
      - Ms. Catignani – also because it is municipal money it cannot be held by a private entity

- Mr. Zinni – As of June 30, 2017, leftover pool of money goes to controlling District to manage
- Mr. Richard will still handle all financial aspects but needs a Business manager to sign the Warrants and write the checks
- Dr. Lally suggested bringing in an employee to a district to control the financial account to which Ms. Catignani agreed as long as they have authority to pull down money
- Dr. Fischer-Mueller proposed a random choosing if no district volunteers to take on financial account
- Dr. Rizzi – stated we could hold a brief open session before executive session meeting on May 11, 2017 to discuss, she may have someone in her district to take on the responsibility
- Ms. Catignani stated we must know before letter is sent to DESE before June 30, 2017.
- Mr. Zinni – requested everyone go back to districts and discuss, come up with any and all options, there is flexibility with the stipend
- Ms. Catignani stated to put together non-monetary aspects of what the next steps will be, how to access unemployment, where to access information, etc., pull down all payroll/financial records, decide what documents will be put onto website
- Mr. Zinni has forwarded a job posting to Mrs. O’Connell, Recommends current employees look on School Spring for active listings, presented list of upcoming FY18 open positions in North River Collaborative.
  - Dr. Rizzi asked Mrs. O’Connell to contact special education director for any potential openings.
- Mr. Zinni – Collect packets to send to Sped Directors for consideration for any open positions, Set up accounts on School Spring

#### **Executive Session**

- No items have been presented

#### **Motion to Adjourn**

- Dr. Rizzi so moved, Mr. Farmer seconded, All in favor, So moved

May 9, 2017

Mr. Paul Zinni  
Mr. Timothy J. Farmer  
Dr. Marguerite Rizzi  
Dr. Patricia Lally  
Dr. Jennifer Fischer- Meuller

Dear Charms Board of Directors:

Staff attended the Charms Collaborative Board Meeting on March 24, 2017 and presented a number of points we needed clarified. We are again attending, using time earned, in the hopes that these and other issues can be clarified in a timely manner given that Charms will cease to exist in less than two months. Please admit this letter into the minutes of the Charms Collaborative Board meeting for May 9, 2017. We request that these questions be answered, in writing, and presented to all Charms current employees by the end of May 2017. At the beginning of this process we were promised transparency and open communication. As this has not occurred, Charms staff are prepared to move forward with retaining an attorney to properly advise us of our rights about proper restitution and accurate information about the points made at the last meeting. The staff at Charms Collaborative feels completely abandoned by those who were given the legal responsibility and privilege to support us and our students.

While the Board seems to be focusing on the needs of their individual districts, and we understand this is important, what has undoubtedly been overlooked is the staff at Charms. As the Board has taken zero interest in the employees of Charms Collaborative and our needs, we would like to tell you what the last several months have been like for Charms employees. We have been tasked with continuing to provide excellent academic, social and emotional supports, all the while knowing our employment will be coming to end. In addition to seamlessly performing our regular job duties, we are going above and beyond our job description. We are holding many more parent meetings and IEP meetings to discuss transition. We have been visiting numerous program and schools. Our students and parents are requiring additional personalized time to walk them through their anxieties and the process of moving forward. Out of our current students, only two have been placed for next year. This has resulted in increased work for staff on their own time, sometimes at the expense of their own job search. Staff is overworked and stressed, yet none of the students or parents would know that. At this point no staff have signed contracts for next year and we are faced with the loss of our summer income. We find it insulting that we are being asked to engage in tasks such as inventorying supplies or moving furniture to be trashed. No employee in any of your districts would be required to take on these additional and inappropriate job responsibilities.

Again, at the meeting on May 26, 2016 we were promised transparency and open communication. The following questions were presented at the last board meeting. We have received no formal response to any of these questions. In fact, some of the things promised to staff at the last board meeting have not been fulfilled, for example, internal job postings. We would like formal, written responses by May 31, 2017. Below are the areas of employee concern previously presented and yet unanswered:

- Severance pay
  - Will compensation be based on longevity as well as current salary?
- Accrued sick time

How will we be compensated?

- Employment consideration in member districts promised at Board and parent meetings
  - What is the process?
  - How will we be included in internal postings?
- Unemployment benefits
  - What is the process?
  - When do we file?
  - Who is giving us this information and when?
- Human resource records/personnel files
  - Where can we access future information and records including?
    1. Tax information such as who will send our W2's and address any errors
    2. Employee records for future MTRS claims or purchase of years
    3. Licensure audits
    4. Future liability concerns
    5. Will our fingerprinting records be made available to prospective employers?
    6. We need written confirmation that the Town of Sharon will be holding the Charms records and who the specific contact will be.

As stated in our previous letter, we expect to be afforded the consideration we were promised and that funds be made available to help the Board meet staff needs. Based on the Board approved minutes from the October 26, 2016 Board Meeting, "Mr. Zinni has stated it is not important that the districts make any money back, but more important to take care of current employees as well as retirees." Also indicated in the notes is Mr. Zinni's statement that he is "impressed with the employees' loyalty to the program and thinks the surplus can be used for fair treatment." We are asking that the Charms Board be thoughtful, transparent, and forthcoming about how they plan on handling the above concerns.

We are suggesting that the Board hold additional meetings, where staff are able to attend without using our personal time, until these concerns are addressed. Again, we need these concerns addressed in writing in a timely manner and are prepared to move with legal consultation.

Respectfully submitted by,

Charms Collaborative Staff

**CHARMS Collaborative**  
**Open Session Meeting Minutes, May 11, 2017**

**Members Present:** Mr. Zinni (Avon), Dr. Rizzi (Stoughton), Mr. Farmer (Sharon), Dr. Fischer-Mueller (Canton)

**Also Present:** Rosalie O'Connell (Executive Director), Marc Richard (Business Manager), Sarah Catignani (Attorney), Karen Hurley (Administrator Assistant)

**Open Session**

**FY17 Budget Overview**

- Mr. Richard presented the FY17 budget overview
  - Need more information on insurance, unemployment
  - Teacher salary underspent \$19,000 Math, EA, Nurse due to staffing updates.
  - Mr. Zinni requested accurate numbers before next meeting
  - Mr. Zinni explained all Superintendents are full time with a district that pays them, not CHARMS, and is very uncomfortable making decisions in a short period of time
  - Ms. O'Connell stated all bills have been sent through June 2017.

**Part Time Business Manager FY18**

- Dr. Rizzi indicated that Stoughton has a new business manager and retiree who will oversee Charms financial s if stipend is increased in the amount of \$5,000 for each.
- Dr. Fischer-Mueller has a backup person if needed
- Mr. Zinni thanked the board for coming forth to help
- Dr. Rizzi requested that CHARMS staff leave before moving into Executive Session
- Mr. Zinni asked if Mr. Richard should stay in case there are questions.
- Dr. Rizzi didn't feel the need at this time.
- Mr. Zinni read statement to adjourn the meeting and begin Executive Session

**Motion to Adjourn Open Session**

- Mr. Zinni so moved, Dr. Fischer-Mueller seconded, All in favor, So moved

**Executive Session**