

**Yinghua Academy**  
**Minutes from Board Meeting**  
**January 9, 2006**  
**(as approved at the 1/23/06 board meeting)**  
**6:30 to 8:30**  
**Roseville Public Library**

**Cindy Moeller, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:40 PM.**

**Board Members in Attendance:** Jennifer Yan, Larry Yan, Zhining Chin, Michael VanKeulen, Kristina Schatz, Cindy Moeller, Laura Harris, Jennifer Billig, Doug Parish.

**Members absent:** Danling Cai.

**Financial Status Report: Mr. Parish**

Mr. Parish has been putting together a model budget that can guide the board in determining possible start up costs, enrollment projections and a three year plan.

Key points included:

1. We need to pursue fundraising as soon as possible to support costs in start up. Mike VanKeulen has been asked to take the lead on this. He promises to respond back within the week; he hopes to take this on. He also noted that he has a meeting set up with someone from Best Buy Corp and even more wonderful Mrs. Chin informed the board that she has a relationship with the family of a senior executive at Best Buy. Mr. VanKeulen and Mrs. Chin will work to coordinate their efforts here.
2. Insurance coverage needs to be acquired ASAP to cover the board from liability; we currently have no such protection. Mr. Parish will follow arranging for insurance for the board.

**Motion to the Board:** Ms. Moeller made the motion (2<sup>nd</sup> by Mr. VanKeulen) that the board approve the spending of up to \$1,500.00 to hire and accounting firm to complete a financial analysis of Yinghua Academy's current state and evaluate our projections for the coming school year.

***Motion was passed, Unanimous***

Mr. Parish will work with the accounting firm to accomplish this task.

The board also discussed the current use of funds, including the grant from the Walton Foundation. The board agreed that it is important to inform the Walton Foundation of the transition from Harriet Bishop Academy to Yinghua Academy.

The board is waiting to hear from the IRS about being approved as a 501c3 corporation. The IRS told the former board chair in early December that we should hear from the IRS in about a month. Mr. Parish or Ms. Moeller will follow up with the IRS later in January if there has not been a communication from the IRS.

### **Board Membership Change: Ms. Moeller**

Ms. Moeller contacted Margaret Wong to see if she might be willing to join the Yinghua Academy Board at this time. Mrs. Wong has been very helpful to Ms. Moeller since Ms. Moeller first contacted her in August about the possibility of developing a school with an orientation toward Chinese language and culture. Mrs. Wong affirmed her support for Yinghua Academy and expressed her interest in joining the board. Ms. Chin gave a brief report on Mrs. Wong to review her qualifications. Mrs. Wong started the Mandarin Language program at Breck School 27 years ago. She has been an effective leader in Chinese educational programming at the local, state and national level, including the role of National Chair for Chinese Educational Programming. She has taken many trips to China with students, has been very supportive to the Yinghua board members as we continue to build this program, and has ideas about potential teacher candidates. Mrs. Chin made it clear that having Mrs. Wong join the board was a real honor and a great addition. The full board agreed.

**Motion to the Board:** Ms. Moeller moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Chin and Mrs. Yan) that Yinghua Academy offer Margaret Wong an opportunity to join the Board of Directors effective immediately.

***Motion was Passed: Unanimous***

### **Articles of Incorporation: Ms. Moeller**

A document that showed some of the current articles of Yinghua Academy's Articles of Incorporation as well as some suggested updates was distributed to the board. The only question about the suggested changes was a request for a clarification of the term "First Board of Directors" in the original document. Both Ms. Moeller and Mr. VanKeulen said they would investigate this.

**Motion to the Board:** Ms. Harris (2<sup>nd</sup> Ms. Schatz) moved that the board approve the suggested updates to the document Articles of Incorporation pending clarification regarding the use of the term "First Board".

***Motion was Passed: Unanimous***

(Ms. Moeller subsequently confirmed with the MN Secretary of State's Office that the term "Board of Directors" can be used in the update of this document and that the term "First Board" has no specific meaning. She emailed this information to board members 1/10/06.)

### **By-Laws Review: Ms. Moeller**

Ms. Moeller has asked members of the board to review the By-Laws (in our red binder) before our next board meeting. We should look for possible improvements, concerns, areas of

confusion, and list these and any other questions to Ms. Moeller prior to our next meeting. Ms. Moeller will then compile these and bring them to the board for discussion.

### **Facilities: Ms. Schatz**

Ms. Moeller first reported on three sites: an office space on Minnehaha (not big enough and no handicapped access and no restroom on the second floor); a site a mile north of the Capitol (a possibility, but too far from the board's target area); and a site (near highway 280 and County Road B, the Pacal Steel Building) that has been listed by Eric Rupp, the realtor showing Cindy around. This site seemed to have the most potential as it was large enough, has an interior elevator, has a kitchen, several offices, room to expand, and minimal stairs, mostly one floor. Ms. Schatz will follow up with the realtor.

Ms. Schatz reported on putting an ad in the Methodist newspaper, visiting the Room and Board Building, Snelling and C2, beautiful but too expensive (retail pricing for space). The AAA Acupuncture building was a possibility, though it may be too small. Mr. Yan mentioned that he knew the people of this organization; and he would make contact with them to learn more about the availability/feasibility of this site.

Spirit United Church, near Como and Highway 280, has space available.

Brewster Street MIT on Como and Snelling remains possible, though the Twin Cities Christian Church or a Hmong charter school may purchase building.

Corpus Christi Church, Fairview and County Road B, has a great space, 10 classrooms, a 1950's style building that might be available.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, Snelling and Summit, still a favored site but the elevator seems to be a significant concern. If the board selects this site, an elevator would need to be installed within one year. It is unclear if the Church would be willing to pay for this.

General discussion revolved around the need to clarify a timeline and a "drop-dead date" for choosing a site. There seems to be agreement that we need to focus our attention on 3 or fewer sites and pursue the best of these within the next 30 to 60 days. We agreed to have a set schedule by the next board meeting. Ms. Moeller stated she would work on this.

### **School Issues: Ms. Moeller**

Ms. Moeller distributed a "straw man" as a starting point for discussing each of the following topics:

**What grades should we seek to start in our program?**

The board agreed to accept applications for K, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades. The board is committed to offering at least K and 1<sup>st</sup> and will offer 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> if there is sufficient interest. As the board decided at the 12/19/05 board meeting, K and 1<sup>st</sup> will be full immersion. If 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade are offered, they would not be full immersion. Rather there would be a typical school program with the addition of Chinese language and culture. The board would like to open the school with approximately 100 students, but this will be partly determined by facility and staffing.

**What will the application process be?**

This topic was not discussed in detail.

**Should we have and when will be our Open House meeting?**

The key purpose for an open house is not to show our site or meet staff, but to get the word out about our school and to present information on just what is “full immersion” and “Core Knowledge” and to seek out more potentially interested families and their networks of communication with other families.

**What are we doing about marketing?**

This was the largest portion of discussion. Brochure and logo process were topics as they relate to spending of dollars. Ms. Moeller asked that someone take the lead on the Marketing committee. Mr. VanKeulen said that he would be willing to be in support of a lead or co-lead, he agreed to set up a meeting time within the next week to pull together board members to work on our strategy and timeline. (That meeting has been set for Monday January 16<sup>th</sup> 10AM to 1 PM at Ginkgo’s Coffee Shop on Minnehaha and Snelling in St.Paul) Several agreed to attend this meeting.

**Curriculum: Mrs. Chin**

The three pillars of curriculum for this school were presented: Mandarin Language Immersion (process), Core Knowledge, and MN State Academic Standards. There is evidence that the Core Knowledge and Standards can be complementary; since they are not exactly an overlap, care will need to be taken to be certain that both are fully integrated into each grade’s curriculum. The key is to use the language as a process to get to curricular goals expressed in Core Knowledge and State Standards. There are some samples of this around the country and state for portions of this. A subcommittee has been formed to dig more deeply into this and scaffold the curriculum so that each grade sees clear and reasonable alignment of all three pillars.

The subcommittee will be comprised of at least Mrs. Chin and Mrs. Yan. Margaret Wong and Danling Cai may also be interested, but they were not at the meeting to express their wishes.

**Mission Statement: Ms. Schatz**

Ms. Schatz will e-mail the draft out to board members ASAP for review and possible revision.

### **HR Issues: Ms. Moeller**

The issue of needing a Start-up Coordinator was brought up. Ms. Moeller was asked if she wanted this position, since she has had such a significant role to this point in the development of Yinghua Academy. She said her first priority is to see the school open; and she has concerns about budget constraints. She says she is still willing to do this work gratis as she is now earning income through other work. We discussed possible spending and agreed that the Start-up role is now essential to the school to ensure coordination at this critical juncture. We agreed that Ms. Schatz would be an excellent candidate for this role. Pending her family's approval, Ms. Schatz said she would be willing to take on this role on a half time basis through the winter and spring.

**Motion to the Board:** Mr. Parish (2<sup>nd</sup> Mrs. Chin) moved that Ms. Schatz be hired as the Start-up Coordinator. She would track her hours on a weekly basis, earning \$25.00 per hour, with total compensation not to exceed \$15,000 between now and June 30. The position would begin as soon as possible and run to June 30<sup>th</sup>.

***Motion was Passed: Unanimous***

### **Director of the School:**

We determined that a process and actual hire of a school director should happen no later than April or May of this year. A hiring committee will need to be formed.

### **Teachers:**

Ms. Moeller reports that she has had contact from no less than 5-6 teachers about possibly teaching in our program. She has not seen their qualification, but thought they were capable of bilingual Mandarin/English instruction and communication.

### **Internship possibility:**

Ms. Moeller reported that Laura Lee, an MBA Student at Harvard University, contacted her to see if there would be an internship possibility through Yinghua Academy. She is particularly interested in Charter Schools and would like to help with the start-up process. Her mother is known to many as the director of the Dragon Boat Festival. Ms. Moeller will express the board's interest in her being an intern, especially if it is at no cost to the school; and Ms. Moeller will stay in touch with Laura Lee in the months to come.

***The meeting adjourned at 8:48 PM, with the Board's agenda having been completed and Library staff asking us to leave at 8:48 PM, a motion to leave was made by Michael (2<sup>nd</sup> none) no vote taken as people had already begun to leave.***

***Next Full Board Meeting Scheduled 1/ 23/06 Roseville Public Library 6:30 to 8:30***

**Humbly submitted by**

**Michael VanKeulen**

**1/10/06**