

BEAVER COUNTY EDUCATIONAL TRUST  
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes  
Friday, November 15, 2024

Trustees Present: Michael Jones, Lincoln Kretchmar, Joe Rubino, Dave Wytiaz, Beth Dewhurst, Dan Donnelly. Executive Director, Jamie Connelly  
Trustees Absent: Yvonne Connor, Roger Davis, Joe Guarino, Tina Price-Genes, Victor Raskovsky

President, Michael Jones called the meeting to order at 11:48

**Procedural Actions:**

Minutes from the August 16, 2024 meeting were presented for approval with the correction of Donna Steff's name. Motions to accept the minutes made by Lincoln Kretchmar, seconded by Joe Rubino. Motion carried.

The treasurer's report was presented for approval. Motion to accept the report was made by Dan Donnelly, seconded by Beth Dewhurst. Motion carried. Additionally, Lincoln Kretchmar motioned to draw \$15,000 from the investment account to cover the cost of the STEAM Walk and the Story Walk programs until the expected EITC donations are received. The motion was seconded by Joe Rubino and approved.

**Committee Reports:**

Nominating Committee: Mike Jones presented the officers for the Executive Committee for 2025 to the Board for a vote and approval.

Chairman: Joe Rubino

Vice Chairman: Roger Davis

Secretary: Dave Wytiaz

Treasurer: Lincoln Kretchmar

Executive Director: Jamie Connelly

Motion to approve the offices for 2025 was made by Mike Jones, seconded by Lincoln Kretchmar. Motion carried.

Mike Jones nominated Christine Kroger to the BCET Board of Trustees. Jamie provided brief background on her discussions with Christine and enthusiastically recommended her for approval by the board. Mike Jones motioned for Christine Kroger to be elected to the BCET Board of Trustees, second by Beth Dewhurst. Motion carried.

The class list was presented. Motion to approve the 2023-2025, 2024-2026 and 2025-2027 list was made by Mike Jones and seconded by Lincoln Kretchmar. Motion Carried.

President Michael Jones reviewed the committee assignments. And few changes were made. These will be outlined in the strategic plan presentation at the February board meeting. Trustees were advised to notify Jamie if they would like to adjust their current committee assignments.

Marketing Committee – Lincoln Kretchmar reported BCET has 672 Facebook followers and 159 members in the Facebook teacher’s group. There was a discussion regarding the donor appreciation event. All thought the space (Frank G’s Place) was a central location with good food and service. Mike Jones expressed gratitude for the teacher speakers and thought the event was well attended. Lincoln Kretchmar relayed the marketing committee is working on a newsletter and obtained the Growing with Books database from BCRC and is importing it to MailChimp. Lincoln also noted the BCET DNS was hacked and was corrected. There was a question about updating security measures and Lincoln felt it was not necessary the incident was just the risk of having a website. The website is now fixed and current.

Programs Committee - Jamie Connelly presented that BCET received 10 Story Walk applications, 4 STEAM Walk applications and 83 Mini-Grant applications. There was a brief discussion for some of the grant evaluators about the quality of the mini-grant applications. Some felt the applications were just average. The question was raised about training the teachers on how best to complete grants. The programs committee is going to consider this. Jamie also discussed the success of Growing with Books Fall 2024 mailing with BCRC managing the postage of the books.

Events and Fundraising Committee – Jamie Connelly discussed the need to schedule a meeting for the Hall of Fame. Jamie also reported she and Yvonne Connor are working on a donation request mailing.

Strategic Planning Committee – Mike Jones reported the last BCET strategic plan was an eighteen-month plan that has been concluded. Mike is currently working on a summation of the plan and will be reconvening the BCET strategic planning committee to begin development of a three-year plan. Mike highlighted some big issues to consider; branding, diversifying funding sources, and board engagement.

We then had a discussion around the current BCET programming and topics to consider. Lincoln Kretchmar suggested a review of Growing with Books considering the Dolly Pardon Imagination Library coming to Beaver County. Beth Dewhurst stated she would be willing to do some research on trends, extending learning outside the classroom contrasted to what is going on in Beaver County. We need to consider a way to get metrics on Growing with Books. Joe Rubino suggested a look at mental health and bullying given the recent suicide surge. Beth Dewhurst suggested inviting Susan Smith, Youth Ambassadors Program leader, to come speak to BCET.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Mike Jones acknowledged receipt \$1,000 Tusca Ridge (gardening mini-grant) and receipt of \$15,000 from PA Cyber for the Growing with Books Program.

Mike Jones then addressed the current board engagement. Jamie will send a letter to Tina Price-Genes regarding her lack of attendance at meetings and request she step down from the BCET board. Mike Jones suggested as we are looking for new trustees, perhaps we need to consider people who may not be able to attend board meetings or potentially virtual participation. Lincoln states this would be easy to do.

Lincoln Kretchmar suggested perhaps the need from school districts will increase in the coming years as the current administration attempts to dismantle the Department of Education.

## **OTHER ITEMS**

Mike Jones reviewed the suggested 2025 meeting dates; February 14, 2025, May 16, 2025, August 15, 2025, November 21, 2025.

**UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

Jamie Connelly reminded the trustees of the upcoming meeting dates:

Executive Committee

December 5, 2024 (Thursday)

Zoom

Board of Trustees

February 14, 2025 (Friday)

Wooden Angel

**ADJOURNMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING**

Lincoln Kretchmar motioned to adjourn the meeting at 1:07. Second by Dan Donnelly. Motion carried.