

Pemayetv Emahakv, Inc.  
Board of Trustees Meeting

March 24, 2021

Web Ex

Present: Marcellus W. Osceola, Jr., Mitchell Cypress, David R. Cypress, Larry L. Howard, Christopher Osceola, Jim Shore, Lee Zepeda, Tracy Downing, Michael Strader, Jeannette Merced, Bryan Granie, Michele Thomas, Matthew Galvin, Will Latchford, Larry Rogers, Brian Strader, Cheryl Giacobbe, Cindy Silva, Justin Nguyen, Kris Johnston, Shawn Ray, Dr. Kiswani, Karen Bishop

Chairman Marcellus Osceola called the meeting to order. Lee Zepeda gave the invocation, and Michele Thomas conducted roll call. Christopher Osceola appeared to lose connection at time of roll call but reconnected shortly afterwards. Chairman Osceola stated the minutes from the January 27, 2021 meeting were quite lengthy, so Michele Thomas offered to do a quick review, followed by a review from Ms. Downing of her school update. Chairman Osceola asked for comments or questions, then he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was made by Larry L. Howard and seconded by David R. Cypress, and was approved. Christopher Osceola was unable to vote.

Chairman Osceola introduced item number five, resolution to approve the Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School 2020- 2021 Operating Budget. Ms. Downing presented said resolution. Chairman Osceola asked if we have had any funding issues up to this point with the State or Federal Government regarding the CARES Act monies? He asked if Pemayetv Emahakv Charter School (PECS) applied for CARES Act funding. Ms. Downing responded that PECS did apply for the CARES Act funding in collaboration with the Glades County School District and received \$65,159.37. She reported PECS also applied for and received \$5,987.30 for the CoronaVirus Prevention Grant, \$3,990.00 for the PVK Learning Coalition Emergency Funding Grant and \$56,314.00 for the Office of Indian Education Grant for a total \$131,450.67. The CARES Act and the CoronaVirus Prevention Grant were used to purchase PPE supplies and equipment such as plastic dividers, thermometers, masks, hand sanitizer, etc. Chairman Osceola asked if PECS received any CARES Act funding from the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF). He asked if the CARES Act funding she received was from the Glades County School District. Ms. Downing responded that the Executive Administrative Office (EAO) has provided supplies to PECS that may have been purchased with CARES Act funding. Chairman Osceola redirects the question to STOF Staff Attorney Matthew Galvin. Chairman Osceola asked Mr. Galvin if this could be similar to when the Board received CARES Act funding and had to give it back? Is this going to be an issue for us because PECS received CARES Act funding from the Glades County School District and STOF? Mr. Galvin responded that he had not been involved with the CARES Act funding issues involving STOF but would be happy to research PECS

receiving funding from the Glades County School District and STOF. Chairman Osceola stated he didn't want there to be a double dipping situation. Mr. Strader clarified that the money that's being funneled through Glades County to PECS is money that is Federal CARES Act funding coming from the Department of Education and the school qualifies as a public school and it's based on enrollment. Mr. Strader stated although he was not certain of the other monies Chairman Osceola was referring to he would not anticipate any conflict with any other funds coming from STOF. Chairman Osceola stated he would feel better if this was double checked and confirmed. Mr. Strader stated he would be happy to work with Mr. Galvin and the school to confirm. Cheryl Giacobbe, Executive Director of Finance stated she would be happy to work work with everybody as well to make sure that this the funding is actually okay to be spent and it

isn't double-dipping to ensure there are no issues in the future. She stated some of the funds spent were used to purchase laptops and some other items that are approved and okay however just to be safe she would be happy to take a look and review and work together to ensure compliance. Chairman Osceola asked for a motion to approve. Motion was made by Larry L. Howard, seconded by David R. Cypress, and was approved by unanimous vote.

Chairman Osceola introduced item number six, resolution to approve Amendment No. Eight to the Management/Oversight Agreement Between Pemayetv Emahakv, Inc. and Charter School Associates, Inc. Ms. Downing presented said resolution. Chairman Osceola asked for questions or comments. There were no questions or comments so Chairman Osceola asked for a motion to approve. A motion made by Larry L. Howard, seconded by David R. Cypress was passed unanimously.

#### Discussion Items -

##### Florida Standards Assessment Testing Update / Reopening Plan -

Ms. Downing reported that on March 17th she met with Will Latchford, Dr. Kiswani, and Lee Zepeda to discuss the possibility of a phased reopening at some point in the future. She then asked Board members if they would like to discuss Florida State Assessment (FSA) Testing as part of a possible Phased Reopening? Chairman Osceola responded he thought we may be at the point where we can discuss reopening due to lower Covid positive cases in the communities. He asked Ms. Downing to review her Reopening Plan. Ms. Downing responded with a comprehensive Reopening Plan in compliance with the CDC Guidelines and in collaboration with the Glades County School Board, who frequently communicates with the Department of Health has been drafted and reviewed by EAO and STOF Health Department. She then presented the PECS Reopening Plan explaining this phase would include 3rd - 8th grade students required to take the FSA Test. These students would be required to test between 4 to 7 total days and for no more than 10.5 total hours. If permitted, testing would be by appointment only, a morning shift and an afternoon shift, beginning April 6th and ending on May 28th. Testing groups would be five or fewer students in a group utilizing 16 rooms total. Masks will be required at all times, sneeze guards have been placed on each desks, desks have been spaced 6 feet apart, and there will be one direction foot traffic flow. Temperature

checks will occur at three points of entry for all staff and students and grab and go meals will be provided and served in the classrooms. We have guidelines for responding to a sick child or sick

employee and steps to take in the event that anyone exhibits Covid-19 symptoms. We have cleaning and disinfecting procedures in place, classroom safety checklist that would be adhered to frequently throughout the day, seating charts in order to do any type of contact tracing in the event the Department of Health notified us we had a student or adult testing positive and then of course we have employee and visitor health and safety protocols.

Councilman Larry L. Howard asked if we ever received an answer back from the Department of Education regarding PECS being 100% distance learning. Ms. Downing replied yes, Mr. Strader spoke to Dr. Graham, head of charter school for the State of Florida, she then asked Mr. Strader to respond. Mr. Strader responded it was clear their intention is for all to be able to test students so they were not willing to give an answer on a school that was not going to be testing its students. Chairman Osceola stated he felt like the numbers were trending in a positive direction and he felt like we could open the school in the near future and he would like to see school open to all students for their social and emotional needs. He would like to see a plan for face to face instruction and learning that included all students and not a plan just pertaining to the testing grades for both Ahfachkee and Pemayetv. Ms. Downing stated there were only eight weeks of school remaining and the first phase of reopening was determined to bring back 25% of the student population. She informed Chairman Osceola if it was his desire to have all students return there would be approximately ten or eleven students in each classroom. Councilman Larry L. Howard asked Ms. Downing if she currently had a plan that included all students returning to school. Ms. Downing stated that she did and she was asked to present that plan. She explained that the plan was very similar to the previous plan described, there would not be a morning or an afternoon session, we would do temperature checks at all points of entry, and we would encourage parents to self screen prior to sending their child/children to school by following CDC guidelines. Ms. Downing informed the Board that staff had developed an informative video to share with families and students explaining in detail the protocols and procedures that would take place in the event all students were allowed to return. Before showing the video Michele Thomas asked if any decisions were made for the reopening of the Brighton Preschool. She stated several PECS employees, if asked to return to work, would require daycare for their own young children. Lee Zepeda responded that after speaking with Thommy Doud it was decided the second week of June would be the earliest the Preschool would open and that would be for a summer program with lower enrollment numbers. Michele Thomas stated busing was another concern regarding social distancing because PECS currently did not have enough buses to accommodate 6 feet of distance. Chairman Osceola asked if this would be an issue with the current lower enrollment numbers. Michele Thomas responded the fear is once PECS reopens the students that left PECS will return and the enrollment numbers would quickly increase. Chairman Osceola responded that a good plan would be required to accommodate all students. He stated that Broward County schools had a staggered schedule so that could be an option for a phased reopening. He also stated he

wasn't sure we would be able to open full capacity until the fall. He expressed he felt at this time we could reopen at 25% or many 50%. Michele Thomas stated those percentages would fall in line with the students returning to test on a staggered schedule. Ms. Downing then showed the prepared video. Positive comments were made regarding the prepared video. Michele Thomas asked if the Board was okay with a phased reopening with 3rd - 8th grade students for testing. Chairman Osceola stated he would still like to see any student wishing to return for face to face education be allowed to return working around the challenges that may bring. He stated the next four weeks would give us the opportunity to test run our procedures. Michele Thomas requested clarification from Ms. Downing or Mr. Strader regarding testing and what would occur if a student began testing at one school and then transfer to another school before completing all tests. Ms. Downing responded that if a child began testing at a different school we would need to encourage them to complete testing before transferring. Ms. Downing also expressed she would be happy to receive students back reporting enrollment numbers are down to 212 from 306. After further discussion Chairman Osceola requested Ms. Downing put a plan on paper should she be given the approval to reopen. Ms. Downing responded she prepared a plan and it has been reviewed by STOF Public Safety and STOF Health Department. Council Larry L. Howard asked if we were comfortable rolling the plan out now with the testing students and phasing in the younger students. Ms. Downing responded yes. He then asked when we thought the younger students may be able to return in this plan. Michele Thomas stated they thought they would be doing good to get approval to return the testing grades and felt like this group would give the school the opportunity to test the new procedures and protocol and the younger students would return in the fall. She stated the ultimate goal today was to get approval for the testing grades to return on April 06. Chairman Oseola stated unfortunately they would not be able to grant that permission today, they are close, the Covid testing cycle would be completed on Friday, then they would have a better idea. If the numbers look good on Friday they could potentially give the go ahead to open on Monday. Michele Thomas asked if given permission to reopen on Monday would the Board be okay with reopening with the testing grades first. He responded he would be happy with the school opening in any form, if that means only with testing grades first and the students at a later date, that would be great. Michele Thomas replied PECS would be on standby for a phased reopening beginning with 3rd - 8th grade students first. Councilman David R. Cypress asked Lee Zepeda if there is a plan in place for Ahfachkee School to reopen. He wants to ensure whatever is planned and approved for PECS that there is a similar plan and timeline for Ahfachkee School. At this point Councilman Christopher Osceola informed the Board he would be leaving the meeting but agreed with Councilman Cypress that similar plans for PECS and Ahfachkee School should be in place. Lee Zepeda responded that both schools have plans but Ahfachkee School plan is a bit different. Both schools have plans for summer programs and fall reopenings along with getting through the testing period. Staffing would also need to be confirmed. Dr. Kiswani replied to Councilman David R. Cypress the current Covid positivity rate is at 1.83% which is fantastic compared to where we used to be and we seem to continue trending downward. She stated discussions have begun with other executives in terms of trying

to increase services rendered to the community in a phased approach. As the chairman stated we will not know the actual numbers until the end of the week but everyone is starting to think of how to increase services and capacity to the reservations in a safe fashion to ensure that we can continue to decrease transmission. She stated things are looking very hopeful. Councilman David R. Cypress reiterated his concerns for safety first and both schools reopening at the same time. He stated if STOF Public Safety and STOF Health Departments are good and approve reopenings, he would support it. Will Latchford added from a Public Safety standpoint he feels safe with a school reopening if the projected positivity rate numbers stay on the current downward trend. He stated he and Dr. Kaswani have both reviewed the PECS Reopening Plan and feels it is a solid plan. He applauded the charter school, he reported many of their teachers have been vaccinated and the same for Ahfachkee School. He felt both schools are in a good position to reopen for testing or open fully. He stated his office receives daily complaints regarding connectivity issues and he could definitely sympathize. Councilman David R. Cypress then asked if a parent requested the virtual option for their child would that be made available? Ms. Downing replied two options of learning would be made available. Option 1 is face-to-face instruction and Option 2 is distance learning. Option 2 would be available for families who would opt to keep their students at home. Michele Thomas asked Mr. Zepeda if Ahfachkee School had two options as well and he confirmed Ahfachkee students would have the same two options. Councilman Larry L. Howard wanted to confirm with Mr. Zepeda that both PECS and Ahfachkee School Reopening Plans were similar as far as procedures and protocol, reopening dates, etc. Mr. Zepeda confirmed the goal would be for both schools to have similar plans with a few minor differences regarding testing and space available. He didn't think Ahfachkee School had developed a video yet but they would do so soon. He went on to explain for Ahfachkee School the goal was to do a phased reopening for their Summer Program, the PECS phased reopening would be for testing only, not really for traditional school. Councilman David R. Cypress told Mr. Zepeda he would support different reopening dates as long as parents were well informed. He stated he would schedule a Drive-In Community Meeting in the next two weeks to inform the community.

#### School Update -

Ms. Downing congratulated PECS Employees of the Year. PECS Teacher of the Year: Ms. Renea Finney who teaches elementary science. She provides whole group and small group instruction to our 3rd - 5th grade students. PECS Non-Instructional Employee of the Year: Amber Summeralls who is a tech specialist who has been invaluable during our distance learning. Culture Employee of the Year is Ms. Cari Silva who is our 3rd - 5th grade Creek Paraprofessional who provides Creek instruction to our students. We are very proud of them all. She also announced that Mrs. Stephanie Tedders is our Assistant Principal/Instructional Coach. At the end of last year, Mrs. Vicki Paige, our former Assistant Principal/Instructional Coach retired and when Mrs. Emma Brown our Dean, resigned to begin a career in real estate, Mrs. Tedders began taking on more and more administrative duties. She was an invaluable support to our school, and the transition to her moving into the position was seamless. She has

been with the school since it opened, and the rapport she has with our students, parents, and staff is unmatched. She reported having some thirteen open positions and it is her intention to post those vacancies within the next weeks with the intention of having new hires start at the beginning of next school year. We currently have 108 active employees. Open positions are: dean, reading coach, 5 teachers, and 6 paraprofessionals.

#### Facility Update -

Water fountains have been installed and the playground shading project is moving forward. Drew Bowers and Jody Goodman have been a real asset to us assisting with chickee maintenance, tree trimming, and gutter cleaning. Lamber Hazellief from the Tribal Inspector's Department came out and looked at our roofs on February 23, 2021. A visual inspection of approximately 14,000 square feet of roofing was conducted. It was observed on most of the roofs that there is major blistering, which is caused from water intrusion into the roof, then being heated and as a result swells or blisters the roofing surface. We are in the process of attaining quotes to repair opposed to replacing, because the damage is less than 25% of our total 14,000 square feet of roof. Ms. Downing reported she has been communicating with Mary the Risk Analyst and Rosemary Santiago with the Tribal Insurance Department. We are getting ready to do about \$30,000 worth of work on one roof that caved in while our buildings were closed.

#### Traditional Language and History Program Update -

Ms. Downing reported she and staff have been working with Tribal Community Development and we are slated to break ground on the new Culture/Immersion Building in November. She stated they have worked hard to include all stakeholders because we want their input when it comes to this new building. Jade Osceola suggested that the building contractor and the architect take a look at a high school in North Carolina called Cherokee High School because it was modeled to have a Native American look and our current buildings do not. The architect came up with three different options and the stakeholders chose the building that looks similar to a chickee. Councilman Larry L. Howard said he reviewed the conceptual design and he thought it was nice. Ms. Downing reported she and the stakeholders viewed the virtual tour of the new Betty Mae Jumper Medical Center and were impressed with the murals in the interior design. She is hoping to do something similar with murals, quotes, and pictures from Louise Jones Gopher and Lorene Bowers Gopher. We would like to have a plaque dedication for the building in their honor as well. This building will benefit 100% of our students because it's a culture building that will contain the immersion program.

Chairman Osceola responded he was pleased with the informational video prepared to welcome students back and is happy to see the new building is still moving forward. He feels the future looks bright for our students. He commented that he likes the school motto: Successful learner today..., unconquered leader tomorrow and is a great representation of what is expected. He then asked for any closing comments before adjourning the meeting. No further comments were made so Chairman Osceola called for a motion to adjourn. Motion made by Larry L. Howard, seconded by Mitchell Cypress and was approved.