

**SERC Board of Directors
Draft Virtual Regular Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2024
12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.**

Present: Chairperson Agnes Quiñones, Erin Benham, Diane Clare-Kearney (arrived at 12:20 p.m.), Jeff Leake, and Deputy Commissioner Sinthia Sone-Moyano

Absent: Richard Porth, Stephen Higgins, and Tom Swan

Others Present: Marjorie Davis, Associate Director; Kristy Giacco, Director of Program Budgets and Services Administration; Krystal Hewitt, Human Resources Manager; Michelle Weaver, Legal Counsel; Holly King, Interim CFO; Stephen Proffitt, Director of Special Education Programs Family/Community/Partnerships; Bob Sembiente, Director of Public Relations and Marketing, Ryan White, Director of Information Technology & Media Services; Dr. Jennifer Forman, Coordinator of Professional Learning and Organizational Culture

I. Call to Order –

Welcome - Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Deputy Commissioner, CSDE

Chairperson Quinones welcomed Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano to the SERC Board of Directors. Deputy Commissioner Sone-Moyano briefly introduced herself and stated she is excited to join the Board and looks forward to contributing and learning.

II. Public Comment*

No Public Comment

III. Approval of Draft Minutes of October 31, 2024, Regular Meeting

“Motion to approve the draft minutes of the October 31, 202, Regular Board Meeting.”

Motion: Ms. Benham

Second: Mr. Leake

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 4 (Benham, Sone-Moyano, Quiñones, Leake)

Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

IV. Executive Session – Mr. Leake requested an Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter.

“Motion to enter into Executive Session at 12:09 p.m.”

Motion: Mr. Leake
Second: Ms. Benham

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 4 (Benham, Sone-Moyano, Quiñones, Leake)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

Present in Executive Session: Chairperson Quinones, Erin Benham, Jeff Leak, Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Diane Clare-Kearney (arrived at 12:20), Michelle Weaver, SERC Legal Counsel, and Krystal Hewitt, SERC HR Manager.

“Motion to return to regular session at 12:28 p.m.”

Motion: Mr. Leake
Second: Dr. Clare-Kearney

Vote on Motion:

In favor: 5 (Benham, Clare- Kearney, Sone-Moyano, Quiñones, Leake)
Opposed: 0
Abstained: 0

V. Action Item(s)

VI. Updates from Marjorie Davis, Associate Director

a. Welcome

Ms. Davis invited new SERC Staff Members Ryan White, Bob Sembiante, and Jennifer Forman to introduce themselves and share the responsibilities of their new roles within the agency.

b. Hiring Update – Krystal Hewitt

Ms. Hewitt shared that interviews have begun for the CFO and Fiscal Specialists positions. SERC currently has 45 staff members, and the total staff will not exceed 50. The agency’s organizational chart will updated soon.

c. SFI filings that are due May 1, 2024 – Michelle Weaver

Board Members must file their Statements of Financial Interests by May 1, 2024. Please check your email for a notification from the system. If you have not received an email from the Office of State Ethics regarding the filing, please let Ms. Weaver know.

d. Meeting with Sen. McCrory and Rep. Currey – Michelle Weaver

Ms. Weaver and Ms. Davis met with the Education Committee Co-Chairs to discuss the upcoming Legislative Agenda. The Board will be apprised of additional conversations.

VII. Committee Reports

a. Finance Committee

Ms. King informed Board Members that the Finance Committee met and reviewed the December 2023 Financial Statements in detail. All monies are flowing appropriately, and there are no concerns.

Ms. King provided an update regarding the past issues with SERC's accounting system, MIP. She and Becky Guildner, SERC's fiscal specialist, had an opportunity to meet with MIP representatives to discuss the problems that were occurring. She was pleased to report that they found the solution. The MIP adjustments will be the top priority for the incoming CFO.

Conversation ensued.

b. Program Committee – B/L Curriculum Update

Nitza Diaz and Paquita Jarman-Smith, SERC Consultants

The SERC CT African-American /Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Curriculum Team presented a brief history of the legislation, an example of a course outline, student responses to the course, and updates on past and upcoming events. Board Members had the opportunity for Q&A with the team.

African-American /Black and Puerto Rican/Latino Curriculum information can be found at <https://pa1912.serc.co/>.

c. Operations Committee

The draft SERC Employee Handbook was discussed and approved at its February Committee Meeting. Feedback from all Board Members is requested. The next charge for the committee will be to focus on agency policies such as short/long-term disability and to create an employee travel policy.

VIII. Updates from Dr. Agnes Quinones, Chairperson

a. Appointment of Vice-Chair

The Board needs to fill the Vice-Chair position opening as soon as possible. This is an important seat to fill. Interested Board Members should email her and Jen LeBrun.

b. SERC Board of Directors Retreat – Scheduling

Chairperson Quinones discussed the importance of a full-day retreat. This is an opportunity to discuss SERC's Mission & Vision, the roles/expectations of the Board, and the responsibilities of supporting a Quasi-Public Agency with a third-party facilitator.

Jen LeBrun will send a new doodle poll next week.

c. Planning meeting with Commissioner – Invite forthcoming

A meeting request has been sent to the Commissioner to discuss SERC/CSDE collaboration and SERC's agenda for the short session. Board Members will be advised of the meeting date once it is scheduled.

IX. SERC Foundation Update

a. Update from Jeffrey Leake, Chairperson, SERC Foundation

Ms. Davis provided the update on Mr. Leake's behalf.

In December, SERC was awarded an 18-month grant from the Graustein Foundation to support programming and the 2024 & 2025 Dismantling Systemic Racism Conference.

This year's DSR Conference will be held on Monday, May 6, at the CT Convention Center. Registration for the conference will be open soon. SERC hopes that all Board Members will attend.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.

If you wish to join the public meeting and/or speak during public comment, please email Jennifer LeBrun at lebrun@ctserc.org for the meeting link. If you would like Board Members to receive a copy of your remarks, please email them to Ms. LeBrun 24 hours before the meeting. Each speaker is limited to three minutes.