I. Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance
   A. Commissioner Greg Richmond called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m. and took roll.
   B. Eight Commissioners were present at the time of roll call: Chair Greg Richmond, Angela Rudolph, Kathy Robbins, Jaime Guzman, DeRonda Williams, William Farmer and Rudy Valdez.
   C. Chairman Richmond asked for a motion to approve Commissioner Jacoby’s participation by telephone. Commissioner Valdez moved for Commissioner Jacoby’s telephonic participation in the Meeting, due to pressing business matters, and Commissioner Robbins seconded the Motion. Chairman Richmond asked for an oral vote, and all Commissioners present voted “aye,” thus, the motion carried unanimously. Whereupon, Commissioner Michael Jacoby participated in the entire meeting by phone.
   D. One Commissioner arrived later: Judge Milton Wharton at approximately 3:15 p.m.
   E. Staff present included Executive Director Jeanne Nowaczewski and Deputy Director Karen Washington. General Counsel Lisa Scruggs arrived at 3:20 p.m. Jen Saba, representing the State Board of Education, was also in attendance, arriving at 3:25 p.m. The Sign-In Sheet for Commissioners is attached as Exhibit A.
   F. All rose to say the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Consent Agenda
   A. Section IIA. The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes for the February 18, 2014 Commission Meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Valdez moved that the minutes of the February 18, 2014 Commission meeting as included in the Agenda Book be approved. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rudolph; Commissioner Richmond called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously (8 ayes, 0 nays) and the minutes were approved as presented.

III. Public Participation
   A. Speakers Regarding Prairie Crossing Charter School
      - The Sign-In Sheet for Public Participation is attached as Exhibit B. Approximately 50 persons were present in the audience for the Meeting. The Chair noted that the Meeting was also being video-taped at the request of Woodland District 50. Further, the Chair noted that a court reporter was expected to arrive momentarily to transcribe the meeting.
      - The Chair called first for any persons with comments regarding the Action Item concerning the Renewal of Prairie Crossing Charter School.
        o Laura Fay. Ms. Fay identified herself as a parent of an 8th grader at the Prairie Crossing Charter School. Ms. Fay submitted written testimony, which is attached hereto as part of Group Exhibit C. In summary, Ms. Fay noted that there are many positive things about Prairie Crossing, but that its outreach to educationally disadvantaged students should be improved.
        o Naomi Hershinger. Ms. Hershinger stated that she was testifying for herself as Dean of Environmental Studies at PCCS and on behalf of her husband, also an educator at PCCS. Ms. Hershinger praised the unique environmental curriculum offered by PCCS. Her written testimony is also attached in Group Exhibit C.
        o Dean Thorston. Mr. Thorston stated that he was the President of the PCCS Board, and was also the father of a PCCS graduate, 4th and 1st grader. He stated that the PCCS school
produced accomplished students whose ability to speak and act publically regarding important environmental issues was a unique attribute of the school.

- **Christine Palmer.** Ms. Palmer stated that she was the parent of several PCCS students, and also served on the PSA. She noted that each of her children have unique needs, and that in the small school environment of PCCS, they were very well served. Ms. Palmer’s written testimony is attached with Group Exhibit C.

- **Letters of Support In Lieu of Testimony** were also received into the record at this time, and are attached here to as Group Exhibit C:
  - Tony Zamiar, Educator at PCCS
  - Stephanie Gehrig, Art Teacher at PCCS
  - Mr. Kelly Smith, Educator at PCCS
  - Ms. Kathy Lopez, satisfied mother of 3 children at PCCS
  - Ms. Foster, satisfied mother of a PCCS student with an IEP
  - Janette Siegal, satisfied mother of 3 PCCS graduates, & admin asst. at PCCS

- The Chair then asked if any other members of the public wished to address the Commission on other matters.

- **Stacey MacAuliffe.** Ms. MacAuliffe stated that she represented the Illinois Network of Charter Schools, and wanted to advise the Commission of the successful Parent Lobby Day that INCS had hosted on April 8, 2014 in Springfield. Ms. MacAuliffe also stated that INCS was in support of the renewal of the Prairie Crossing Charter School, based on its solid performance, and visits that INCS had made to the school.

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IV. Reports
A. Chair’s Report
   1. The Chair thanked the LEARN Charter School Network and especially its CEO, Mr. Greg White, for agreeing to host the Commission meeting at its North Chicago campus on the Great Lakes Naval Base in North Chicago, Illinois. The Chair noted that the school had provided a tour earlier to some of the Commissioners, and had explained the history of the formation of the charter school on the naval base.

   2. Chair Richmond noted that the membership of Commissioners in Committees of the Commission for FY14-15 was set forth in the April Agenda Book.

B. Report of the Chair of the Schools Committee
   1. Commissioner Guzman stated that the business of the Schools Committee would be addressed in the Action Item section of the Agenda.

C. Report of the Chair of the Operations Committee
   1. Commissioner Jacoby noted that the Operations Committee would be reviewing the Commission’s financial reports regarding FY14 and budget projections for FY15 in May, for presentation at the next Commission Meeting.

D. Report of the Chair of the External Relations Committee
   1. Commissioner Williams provided a brief update on the status of legislation to eliminate the Commission, referencing materials contained in the April Agenda Book, such as the text of HB3754, and the Senate’s calendar for Spring 2014. Commissioner Williams thanked Commissioner Vice-Chair Rudolph for testifying in Springfield before the House Education Committee on March 5, 2014, and Chairman Richmond and Commissioner Rudolph for attending and testifying at the Senate Charter Subcommittee on March 25, 2014. Chairman Richmond commented that in his experience, many legislators were unaware of the facts regarding the Commission and that there were opportunities to do more education on this front.

E. Report of the General Counsel
   1. General Counsel stated that negotiations with the State Board were ongoing regarding seeking a determination from the Attorney General regarding the TRS/SERS status of Commission employees.
2. The General Counsel stated that no conflicts of interest had been reported by Commissioners to Counsel or staff regarding the vote on the renewal of Prairie Crossing Charter School, and that a statement regarding conflicts was included in the April Agenda Book.

F. Report of the Executive Director

1. Executive Director Nowaczewski stated that staff was developing plans for the Annual Reviews of Commission Schools, which would be submitted to the Schools Committee in May, and undertaken thereafter, with the goal being to publish an Annual Review for each school in July 2014.

2. The Director noted that the Biennial Report had been published on the Commission’s Website, as had the latest Bi-Monthly Commission Update, and that the Model RFP was scheduled to be published on the Commission’s site later in the spring.

3. The Director took a moment of personal privilege to advise the Commissioners that the Commission’s two interns from summer 2012 had recently experienced significant accomplishments: Therese Edmiston had accepted a full time legal position at the Legal Aid Foundation in the Special Education Unit, and Aviva Rosman had received a full scholarship to attend the University of Chicago’s Harris School of Social Policy.

G. Report of the Deputy Director

1. Deputy Director Dr. Karen Washington briefly reviewed her written report from the April Agenda Book, concerning recent accomplishments of the Concept and Southland Schools.

V. Action Items

A. Approval of the Staff Recommendation to conditionally Renew Prairie Crossing Charter School for 5 years at 100% PCTC.

Chairman Richmond asked Commissioner Guzman to lead the Commission on Action Item A.

MOTION: Commissioner Guzman moved that the Commission approve staff’s recommendation to renew the Charter Contract with Prairie Crossing Charter School for 5 years at 100% of the Per Capita Tuition Charge, (“PCTC”), of the two host districts, with the two conditions set forth in the Motion in the April Agenda Book, namely, that PCCS adopt by May 2014 (1) a robust outreach plan to increase its outreach to educationally disadvantaged students and (2) an enhanced management evaluation tool. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Valdez.

Commissioner Guzman explained that the following procedure would be used: Staff would provide details for their recommendation, followed by discussion and questions from Commissioners. Next, Prairie Crossing would present its request for renewal, following which questions and discussion by the Commission would occur. Finally, members of the public wishing to address the question of renewal would be permitted an opportunity to address the Commission, before the Commission voted. Commissioner Guzman thereupon called for staff’s presentation.

Presentation of Staff Recommendation

Director Nowaczewski introduced Deputy Dr. Karen Washington, noting that Deputy Washington had worked for 9 months with Ms. Nowaczewski and the independent evaluation team to arrive at the recommendation for renewal with conditions being presented today.

Dr. Washington presented a Power Point, (attached hereto as Exhibit D), which detailed the basis for staff’s recommendation that Prairie Crossing deserved a full renewal of its charter contract with the Commission for a 5 year term at a rate of 100% PCTC with the conditions regarding outreach and management evaluations noted above. Dr. Washington noted in particular that PCCS had achieved more than 93% exceeds or meets in a total of 166 findings over the 4 year review as set forth in the
Commission’s Final Accountability System Findings regarding PCCS’ Renewal. (Note: the court reporter arrived during Dr. Washington’s presentation, at approximately 4:00 p.m. and at that time, began to transcribe the remainder of the meeting.)

Commissioner Guzman asked if there were any questions regarding Staff’s Recommendation, and Commissioner Jacoby asked whether there had been any interviews of the districts, in order to provide a greater depth of information regarding host district finances. Deputy Washington noted that staff did not speak with the Woodland and Fremont districts personally. Director Nowaczewski noted that it was staff’s judgment to rely on publicly available information from a reliable source, i.e., the State Board of Education. Ms. Nowaczewski noted that Woodland and Fremont maintained the status of “recognition” and in one case, “review,” even while PCCS was a part of those districts for the past 3 years.

In further defense of its finding that PCCS’ continuation was “economically sound” for the host districts per Illinois law, Ms. Nowaczewski distributed a document to the Commissioners showing the 85% of Woodland’s education budget derived from local property tax, such that the dollars which followed the children to the PCCS school (from the GSA allotment), were a modest percentage of Woodland’s overall education budget. (See Woodland Finances Document attached as Exhibit E.)

Commissioner Valdez asked how staff’s recommendation for 5 years at 100% compared to past renewals. Deputy Washington noted that 5 years is what is typically granted to charter schools nationally. Director Nowaczewski noted that PCCS had been renewed 3 times, opening in 1999, and being renewed in 2004 and 2009, each time at 5 years at 100% PCTC by the State Board of Education.

Commissioner Guzman, hearing no other further questions for staff, asked Prairie Crossing to give a brief presentation regarding their school and their request for renewal.

Presentation by Prairie Crossing Requesting Renewal

PCCS Director Geoff Deigan thanked Commissioner Guzman, and presented a power point regarding Prairie Crossing. The Power Point is attached as Exhibit E hereto. PCCS Director Deigan emphasized that Prairie Crossing had a unique environmental mission, and performed very well academically. His Power Point contained a video of parents, students, teachers and others who also spoke in detail about the benefits and accomplishments of the school.

Commissioner Guzman asked if there were questions.

Commissioner Wharton stated that “poor people, some minorities” are “hesitant” to “get involved” with the school. Director Deigan responded that a family that moves into Woodland or Fremont can automatically be put into a district school, regardless of the time of year, but as a charter school with caps, such families may only be placed on a waiting list at the charter, with a promise to be enrolled in the lottery for the next year. Commissioner Wharton asked why low enrollment of some educationally disadvantaged students had persisted for 16 years.

Director Deigan asked Dr. Anita Thomas, a PCCS Board Member, to address the Commission. Dr. Thomas stated that she was a minority, (African-American), parent from PCCS and a member of the PCCS Board. Dr. Thomas stated that transportation was one issue that might inhibit minority families, in that, while PCCS promised transportation, if needed, some families may not feel certain about the transportation, especially for extra-curricular activities. Dr. Thomas also stated that the school does not provide lunch to all students, so even though this aspect is not unique to PCCS, this might be perceived as a barrier. She concluded that she thought that minority families knew about the school, and that the school was committed and dedicated to working through these issues to continue to try to recruit more such families.
Commissioner Guzman asked Director Deigan to identify the items that the school will be looking at as it develops its robust outreach plan to meet staff’s proposed condition. Director Deigan stated that PCCS was planning to work through partnerships with organizations like the Lake County Community Foundation and the College of Lake County to share effective outreach strategies and some “outreach muscle.” Director Deigan also mentioned that PCCS was considering asking the Commission and the State if PCCS could run an alternative lottery to address diversity issues, given the recent pronouncements of the United States Department of Education. Deigan also noted that the PCCS Board also intended to reevaluate and reassign staff and budgets moving forward very quickly to address this issue at the school level.

Commissioner Wharton stated that there was a time when “working in the dirt” was “basically sub-echelon work, and one time it was slave labor…,” and that PCCS had failed “to sell the environmental movement” to “poor minorities.” Commissioner Wharton noted that when Prairie Crossing was formed it was perceived as “hippie stuff from the 60’s” and that there was “need of a direct involvement with poor people who are less astute or less aware of what the environmental movement is all about.”

Commissioner Robbins noted concerns along the same lines, stating that the school seemed to exclude rather than include, and discourage rather than encourage, and asked why greater efforts had not been made in 2004 and 2009, and asked how the school’s efforts were going to be different in the future.

Director Deigan noted that when PCCS opened the demographics had been “very unbalanced,” that the school had been getting more diverse over the years, but not sufficiently so, so that in the course of this renewal, the PCCS Board has been “willing to commit and has committed” to “make every effort.”

Commissioner Wharton noted that in 2003 the State Board had recommended that Prairie Crossing improve its outreach, and cited certain provisions from the earlier agreement, including car pooling and fee waivers, expressing the view that these would not be welcomed by “poor people.” Director Deigan replied that the school had tried to be transparent that no volunteerism was necessary, and that the school was inclusive. Commissioner Wharton suggested that the school’s budget did not show advertising costs, and Director Deigan noted that there were such expenditures, called outreach and marketing.

Commissioner Guzman asked Commissioner Wharton to conclude, and Commissioner Wharton asked whether 100% was appropriate when the school was serving an “overwhelmingly white and Asian, substantially affluent, educationally overachieving student population,” and suggested that a school serving such a population did not need the full 100% funding.

Commissioner Rudolph asked if Prairie Crossing had explicitly identified who at the school would be in charge of the outreach initiative. Mr. Deigan stated that it was the intent of the Board to designate such a person, but that that had not been done yet, but that he would be “100 percent accountable,” for the performance on these measures, and that the specific leader of this project would be identified by late May. Commissioner Rudolph reiterated that she would want to see this person identified, the benchmarks for progress, the periodic dates on which the Commission would be informed, and the specific activities proposed in the May proposal.

Commissioner Robbins admonished PCCS that it should reflect on its performance in this regard as an “ongoing mission,” not as a part of its 5 year renewal submittals. Commissioner Guzman asked if PCCS submitted its plans annually to the State Board in years past, and if so, what the feedback had been. Director Deigan indicated that PCCS had submitted its reports annually, but that there had not been a lot of feedback, and that PCCS had never received any corrective action. Mr. Vasquez, counsel for PCCS, added that information was submitted throughout the year to the State Board. Commissioner Guzman emphasized that the Commission as a new authorizer had different procedures, and Mr. Vasquez noted that the school would work with the Commission on the new procedures, with staff noting that quarterly meetings were anticipated.
Commissioner Farmer asked whether if PCCS was receiving 100% of the PCTC, which has transportation costs factored in, what the amount was that PCCS spent towards transportation in its budget. Director Deigan noted that he would need to review the budget, and Attorney Vasquez offered that the school had expended funds in the past on supporting car pools and cabs for students.

Chairman Richmond asked, based on testimony in the public participation session by Ms. Fay, whether the school had students at PCCS who did not live in Woodland or Fremont. Director Deigan stated that PCCS had one out of district student currently enrolled in the 5th grade, and explained that there were 165 lottery applications, 133 from Woodland, 12 from Fremont and 20 from out of district. Director Deigan stated that the one out of district family paid tuition, a hybrid between Woodland and Fremont, from their own pockets to attend Prairie Crossing. Chair Richmond asked General Counsel if this arrangement was legal, and Counsel replied that in general, when a student from another district attended a school, that student was required to pay the per capita tuition if not a resident of the district. Counsel noted that she would need additional details regarding the lottery, whether additional students were available to fill seats, to determine if acceptance of such a student complied with charter laws. Counsel Vasquez noted that typically, the district in which the child resides should pay the other district, but some families choose not to seek reimbursement from the home district. Commissioner Richmond asked how there could be a waiting list but a student from out of district in the school, and Director Deigan explained that the waiting list was kept by grade, and that there were not waiting lists in each of the upper grades. Commissioner Robbins noted that in 2009, ISBE had alleged that PCCS took students from outside the district, but Counsel Vasquez stated that ISBE had not actually found such to be true.

Commissioner Williams asked if outreach efforts could be explained in more detail, especially outreach outside the districts. Director Diegan referenced the PCCS map on the fourth page of the PCCS power point, showing the school’s location at the corner of the Woodland and Fremont districts. He noted that there are many day care centers, churches, businesses that are outside of the two districts, and that PCCS advertised there because they provided a good outlet to reach persons who did reside in the districts, noting that families do not always attend churches or frequent businesses that are only in the school district in which they reside.

Commissioner Wharton drew on data found in internet reports, and asked questions regarding the cost of operating PCCS vs. the cost of operating schools in Woodland and/or Fremont, asking if PCCS was trying to “make a profit.” Director Deigan denied that the school was making a profit, and responded that by asking for 100% PCTC, the school wanted to provide “100 percent of the value for the child that chooses to come to our school.” Counsel Vasquez noted that the charter school was not a bonding entity, and thus needed more funds proportionally to reach equity on financing terms as compared to districts.

Commissioner Guzman noted that the discussion had gone on for one hour and 20 minutes, and asked if there were further questions.

Commissioner Jacoby commented that he had expressed a serious concern about specific dollars being targeted to ELL or poverty that disproportionately spread to the charter from the school district, and that while he was not prepared to argue the point at this meeting as it was not part of the Commission’s protocol, he believed the Commission should address this policy question at its upcoming finance retreat to look at student demographics when determining per capita tuition charges.

**Statements from Host District Representatives**

Whereupon, there being no further questions or comments heard from Commissioners, Commissioner Guzman asked if anyone from the Woodland or Fremont districts sought to address the Commission.

Ms. Terry Hall spoke, identifying herself as a Gurnee resident, a CPA and a member of the Woodland Board, noting that 30% of the Woodland students in the primary school are low income and minority. She noted among other items that Woodland had received the Silver Leaf award for environmentalism,
that enrollment has been declining from 7,500 to 6,600 students, that no new textbooks had been purchased in the past 6 years, and that the district transports 100% of its students due to challenges with sidewalks, and that funding should be less than 100% PCTC. Chairman Richmond asked whether Ms. Hall was stating that PCCS shouldn’t exist, or that it should exist and receive less funding per student, and Ms. Hall responded that the school does exist, and “that there is a demand for the services of Prairie Crossing, clearly.” Whereupon, Commissioner Wharton posed a question to Ms. Hall, which was intercepted by Attorney James Petrunkaro, who stated that as Counsel to Woodland, he had serious concerns regarding questioning Woodland Board members, and was going to direct board members present on advice of counsel not to answer questions.

Commissioner Wharton referred to statistics from the internet, and Mr. Petrunkaro stated that the Woodland District had recently laid off approximately 75 teachers and another dozen support staff. Mr. Petrunkaro reminded the Commission that they had the authority to set the PCTC as low as 75%. Mr. Petrunkaro also reiterated that for the past 15 years, at each renewal, issues of outreach had arisen. Mr. Petrunkaro then challenged demographics statistics presented by staff, indicating that the disparity between the percentage of certain categories of students attending Woodland vs PCCS was greater than staff had stated. Mr. Petrunkaro further stated that there had been no community forums in the Woodland or Fremont communities to ask the taxpayers for their input, alleging that the “first time” Woodland had been asked to make a comment was when Commissioner Guzman asked for the same. Mr. Petrunkaro agreed that the “millions of dollars” were going to PCCS to “educate a bunch of rich white and Asian kids” and concluded by stating that if the Commission authorized this charter renewal, it would be in violation of the Charter Schools Law, also noting that Woodland was willing to accept all of its students back, should PCCS be closed. Commissioner Wharton then asked Mr. Petrunkaro if in his opinion it would be appropriate for the Commission to meet at traditional public schools.

Commissioner Guzman then welcomed Ms. Jill Gildea, Superintendent of Fremont, to address the Commission. Ms. Gildea asked for transparency, noting that her district has 70 students who attend Prairie Crossing, and for shared services and support, possibly regarding transportation.

Commissioner Guzman asked staff for any response to comments made. Deputy Washington also noted that the demographics she cited previously regarding Woodland and Prairie Crossing were from 2012-13.

Commissioner Guzman asked General Counsel Scruggs if she would review legal next steps, and Counsel stated that in the event of a vote to renew, counsel and staff would prepare a written decision that would more fully explain the rationale for the Commission’s decision which would be made public and then promptly negotiate a new contract with PCCS that would reflect any conditions imposed. Following agreement on a new contract, the Commission and PCCS would forward that contract and related matters to the State Board of Education for certification.

Commissioner Wharton asked for clarification regarding the original motion, and Commissioners Richmond and Guzman stated that the original motion was the motion contained in the Agenda Book, proposing 5 years at 100% PCTC with two conditions. Whereupon, Commissioner Farmer inquired if it would be in order to modify the motion concerning the PCTC amount, and Chairman Richmond responded in the affirmative. Commissioner Farmer indicated that he desired for the sake of discussion to consider reducing the PCTC, because he was concerned that some of the funds were allocated for transportation, but transportation was not being provided. Deputy Counsel Saba of ISBE clarified that if there were state transportation dollars, those would be backed out of the PCTC calculation. Counsel Vasquez representing PCCS noted that funding mechanisms that go to school districts are not the same funding mechanisms that go to charter schools. After discussion on this point, Commissioner Farmer made the following Motion:
MOTION: Commissioner Farmer made a motion to amend the motion on the floor to a motion for a 5 year renewal at 95% of the PCTC. Commissioner Rudolph seconded the motion. Chairman Richmond asked if there was any discussion on the proposed amendment.

Commissioner Guzman stated that any amendment of the PCTC during the meeting would be an arbitrary number without the level of discussion needed, and that had been proposed for the Finance Retreat. Commissioner Williams agreed that there should be further analysis and data to study before voting on a different number. Commissioner Jacoby noted that a decision at 100% could also be seen as unfair. Commissioner Rudolph asked a member of the audience from the Illinois Network of Charter Schools whether current legislation concerning charter school funding would impact this discussion, and Ms. Stacey MacAuliffe of INCS replied that there was legislation being discussed to narrow the range from something other than 75% to 125% of the PCTC.

Commissioner Guzman stated that the use of 100% per capita was not arbitrary because it was the Commissioner’s practice to fund at 100%. Commissioner Wharton stated that the number of years should also be considered as a part of the amendment. Chairman Richmond stated that the area of funding is one on which better understanding is required, in terms of what is included in the PCT and what isn’t, but that there has been precedent for 100% funding, not only by the Commission, but by the State Board in prior years. Chairman Richmond also noted that the fact that the State Board uses the PCTC for other purposes, and that it has been so used for decades, gives it some inherent meaning or value.

The Chair then asked Commissioner Farmer whether he would consider amending the current motion to amend to keep funding at 100% for the first year, until a new percentage could be studied, noting that he was reluctant to lock into any percentage for a further period of years. Director Nowaczewski stated that it was national best practice to provide charter school contracts that had stability and security in their funding due to the fact that the school is an ongoing concern and children and families rely on the school, and that the school, as most businesses, had adopted a 5 year strategic plan which relied on a measure of certainty regarding funding. The Director noted further that the Illinois Charter School Funding Task Force had just recently criticized districts that were not transparent in what the rate of pay would be for the term of the contract, that the Task Force had called for transparency in the future on this matter, and that the Commission, as an entity set to model best practices, should set a term certain for five years.

Commissioner Robbins stated that renewal at one year for 100% was fair so that the Commission could study the matter, and then decide in a year whether a 5 year term was appropriate if PCCS showed evidence of moving forward. Commissioner Jacoby stated that there are 4,000 schools in Illinois still waiting to know what their funding would be for next year, and that, in that sense, PCCS could be more secure regarding its funding than other schools in the State. Whereupon, Commissioner Farmer offered to amend or withdraw his previous motion, no vote having been taken on the same.

MOTION WITHDRAWN WITHOUT VOTE: The foregoing motion was withdrawn, and Commissioner Farmer made a new motion as follows.

NEW MOTION: Commissioner Farmer amended his motion to renew Prairie Crossing for a 5 year term with 100% PCTC in the first year, with the PCTC in the remaining 4 years to be determined at a later time. Commissioner Rudolph seconded the Motion as amended. Chair Richmond asked General Counsel to comment.

General Counsel Scruggs stated the ambiguity for the last 4 years raised policy issues, especially if done annually, rather than for one year, and then the remaining 4 years. Deputy Counsel Saba stated that from an ISBE perspective, certification requires ISBE to find that the contract is legal, and if funding in the permissible range was not provided in the contract, there could be a legal problem with certification where only one year of a five year contract was specified. Chairman Richmond asked if this problem
would be cured by setting a default and General Counsel responded that it could be. Commissioner Williams suggested a date whereby determinations would be made would be important.

Whereupon a discussion was had as to whether to amend the motion to provide that the PCTC would not go below 75% in the last 4 years. Director Nowaczewski noted that negotiating a contract with such a wide range over a 4 or 5 year term was not best practice, and that no one had at the meeting proposed a figure as low as 75%. Noting the time was now 6:10 p.m. and urging against acting in haste, Director Nowaczewski suggested a default to 100% in the last 4 years unless by a date certain some other amount was agreed to as more fair, after a finance retreat had been held. Chairman Richmond asked if Commissioner Farmer if he sought to amend or withdraw his motion, and Commissioner Farmer withdrew his previous motion and made the following new motion.

**NEW MOTION:** Commissioner Farmer made a new motion to renew Prairie Crossing for a 5 year term with 100% PCTC in the first year, and then default to 100% in the remaining 4 years unless some other PCTC amount were determined within the permissible range by one year from today’s date. Commissioner Rudolph seconded the motion. The Chair called for discussion.

Commissioner Guzman noted that, in his experience as an authorizer, this uncertainty was not best practices in authorizing.

The Chair called for a roll call vote:

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<td>Commissioner Farmer:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Guzman:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Jacoby:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Robbins:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Rudolph:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Valdez:</td>
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<td>Commissioner Wharton:</td>
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The Motion to amend the Motion on the floor failed by a vote of 4 ayes and 5 no’s.

The Chair asked if the Commissioners sought to vote on the original motion. Commissioner Guzman asked if there was a desire to discuss a different term of years, whereupon Commissioner Robbins made a new motion

**NEW MOTION:** Commissioner Robbins made a motion to amend the motion on the floor to approve the renewal of Prairie Crossing for one year at 100%. Commissioner Jacoby seconded the motion. The Chair called for discussion.

Commissioner Rudolph asked Commissioner Robbins what the thinking was behind a one year renewal and Commissioner Robbins explained that this would give the Commission time to study whether the outreach and transportation policies were paying off. Commissioner Williams stated that she was concerned because Prairie Crossing performed very well against the Performance Framework and that the Commission was possibly changing the rules and that she was uncomfortable changing the term or the percentage of the contract.

Commissioner Rudolph expressed discomfort both with the short term of the contract giving undue pressure and responsibility to go through the process again on all the parties. Further, that one year was not a sufficient time to address the issues regarding diversity that were on the table, and that especially
since the Commission was a new body approaching these issues, perhaps differently than ISBE, that five years was a better term in which to do this.

Commissioner Williams agreed, adding that if this was an important concern, the Commission could also amend its accountability system during this time.

Commissioner Valdez stated that if the term were one year, it would not, on a practical level, help to attract educationally disadvantaged persons to the school, and that it might discourage anyone from attending the school.

Commissioner Williams stated that the concerns of demographics were important, but that they were addressed in the proposed conditions to the original motion and would be included in the contract, if the original motion were adopted.

Chairman Richmond clarified that Commissioner Robbins’ motion kept the two conditions of the original motion, but changed the term from five years to one year.

Commissioner Wharton stated that the school had been underachieving in the area of diversity for 16 years, and this was synonymous with underachieving for 16 years academically. Commissioner Guzman stated that the Commission’s conditions addressed these concerns more dramatically than past conditions, and that the school’s actions, such as allocating additional dollars to the issue, showed a greater urgency. Commissioner Guzman stated that he believed the school would be held accountable to these conditions through a different level of oversight.

Whereupon, the Chair took a roll call vote as follows:

- Commissioner Farmer: No.
- Commissioner Guzman: No.
- Commissioner Jacoby: Yes.
- Commissioner Robbins: Yes.
- Commissioner Rudolph: No.
- Commissioner Valdez: No.
- Commissioner Wharton: Yes
- Commissioner Williams: No.
- Commissioner Richmond: No.

Whereupon, the Chair declares that the vote was 3 ayes, and 6 no’s and thus, the motion to amend the motion on the floor fails.

The Chair called for further discussion on the original motion as stated in the Agenda Book.

Commissioner Valdez stated that he believed that there would be new accountability under the Commission, and he would give the schools and the students a chance before disrupting things. Commissioner Wharton noted that he wanted to see consistency, and Commissioner Williams asked if there were any other conditions Commissioners wanted to discuss.

Whereupon, the Chair restated the Motion to be voted on as follows:

**ORIGINAL MOTION:** The Chair called for a vote on the “original motion made by Commissioner Guzman, seconded by Commissioner Valdez, which is to approve the recommendation of staff to renew the Prairie Crossing Charter School at five years at 100 percent PCTC as presented in the Agenda Book … with the conditions presented in the book … (and) no others.”
Whereupon the Chair called for and took a roll call vote as follows on the Motion as contained in the Agenda Book:

- Commissioner Farmer: No.
- Commissioner Guzman: Yes.
- Commissioner Jacoby: No.
- Commissioner Robbins: No.
- Commissioner Rudolph: Yes.
- Commissioner Valdez: Yes.
- Commissioner Wharton: No.
- Commissioner Williams: Yes.
- Commissioner Richmond: Yes.

The Chair declared that the original Motion as presented in the Agenda Book carried, with a vote of 5 ayes and 4 no’s.

The Chair sought a moment of personal privilege to state for the Prairie Crossing representatives as well as representatives of both school districts and members of the audience that there had been a lot of input and important observations on the proposal, and that, in the Chair’s opinion, every speaker had the intent to do the right thing for kids. The Chair thanked and complimented all involved for participating in this manner.

B. Action Item: Approve Amended Policy Regarding Commissioner Travel

Chairman Richmond noted that the Travel Policy regarding Commissioner Travel had been previously voted and approved at the February 2014 Meeting, and asked for a Motion and an explanation of the amendments proposed, as outlined in the April Agenda Book.

MOTION: Commissioner Wharton moved that the Travel Policy be adopted as amended and contained in the Agenda Book and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Valdez.

The Chair asked the Executive Director to explain the proposed amendments. The Director noted that when reimbursements had been submitted, State Board personnel had informed the Director that unless the policy explicitly included coverage for gas mileage reimbursement, such requests could encounter difficulty in processing. General Counsel added that in assisting with the amendments, explicit coverage for air, rail and other modes of transportation were also included, and these amendments could be viewed in the Motion and proposed amended policy in the April Agenda Book.

Chairman Richmond called for a voice vote on the Motion. The motion to amend and adopt the travel policy as presented in the April Agenda Book passed unanimously (9 ayes, 0 nays), with all Commissioners voting including Commissioner Jacoby, present by phone.

VI. New Business

The Chairman asked if there was new business, but none was raised.

VII. Announcements and Reports

Director Nowaczewski alerted Commissioners to the press packet at the back of the April Agenda Book. The Director also noted that the 2014 Meeting Schedule was included in the Agenda Book, and that the May 20 Meeting was scheduled to be held in Springfield, although the venue was subject to change.

VIII. Adjourn.

The hour after 6:00 p.m., Chair Richmond asked if there was a motion to adjourn.
MOTION: Commissioner Farmer moved to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Jacoby by phone. Chairman Richmond called for a voice vote. The motion passed unanimously (9 ayes, 0 nays), with all Commissioners present and voting, including Commissioner Jacoby voting by phone.

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:32 p.m.