



# Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools

## Minutes

### September 2023 Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Monday September 25, 2023 at 5:30 PM

#### Location

Gary Lighthouse College Prep Campus  
725 Clark Rd  
Gary, IN 46406

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#### Directors Present

A. Briggs, A. Brown Thirston (remote), A. Nicholson, A. Payne, J. GEORGE, M. Robinson, S. Caruthers

#### Directors Absent

M. Maldonado, M. Swope

#### Guests Present

A. Franz, C. Jackson, D. Jones (remote), D. Sevier, J. Holmes, K. McGuire, L. Franklin, M. Platt, S. McCombs, Sharonda Kimbrough

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### I. Opening Items

#### A. Record Attendance and Guests

#### B. Call the Meeting to Order

A. Payne called a meeting of the board of directors of Northwest Indiana Lighthouse Charter Schools to order on Monday Sep 25, 2023 at 5:32 PM.

### C. Vote on Minutes

M. Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes from June Special Meeting for the NWILCS Board of Directors on 06-26-23.

J. GEORGE seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

A. Briggs	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
M. Robinson	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye
M. Maldonado	Absent
M. Swope	Absent
S. Caruthers	Aye

M. Robinson made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 05-22-23.

J. GEORGE seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

M. Robinson	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
M. Swope	Absent
M. Maldonado	Absent
A. Briggs	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye

## II. Finance

### A. East Chicago

S. Caruthers made a motion to accept the financial report for East Chicago.

J. GEORGE seconded the motion.

None

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

A. Payne	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye

#### **Roll Call**

M. Maldonado	Absent
M. Robinson	Aye
M. Swope	Absent
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye

#### **B. Gary**

S. Caruthers made a motion to accept the Gary financial reports.

J. GEORGE seconded the motion.

None

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

M. Maldonado	Absent
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye
M. Swope	Absent
S. Caruthers	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
M. Robinson	Aye

#### **C. Primary Construction Project**

S Caruthers:

Due to the constraints of the Primary Campus, we are looking to build on, add some space. We are at a risk due to being in a flood zone. During the finance committee meeting, we discuss that there should be a survey of the property. Wanting to add some classroom space, bathrooms, etc.

Total cost to move forward is \$33,000.

M Robinson stated we should wait to that survey report before making a further decision.

A. Nicholson made a motion to Get the Civil Engineering Survey for the Primary Construction Project.

J. GEORGE seconded the motion.

M Robinson stated that the paperwork stated a diferent amount than the present4ed amount.

S Caruthers stated the amount was \$33,000 as presented.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

M. Swope	Absent
M. Robinson	Aye
M. Maldonado	Absent
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye

### **III. Governance**

#### **A. Removal of Board Member**

Melvin Swope has let us know he is no longer able to serve in this capacity as a Board Member. He was very integral in our separating from the management company.

The recommendation to remove comes to the board.

I am recommending the removal of Melvin Swope.

S. Caruthers made a motion to remove Melvin Swope from the Board.

A. Briggs seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

M. Maldonado	Absent
M. Swope	Absent
A. Payne	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye
A. Nicholson	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
M. Robinson	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye

#### **B. Nomination of Vice President**

I make a recommendation to appoint Alyse Nicholson to the vice-president of the board. I believe she will be a person that will work well with the schools.

M. Robinson made a motion to approve Alyse Nicholson as the vice-president of the board.

A. Brown Thirston seconded the motion.

M Robinson stated re there concerns?

A Payne stated I need a thought partner I can count on and she is a good person for this.

A Briggs asked if she wants the position

A Nicholson said she wants to support these schools and this board in any way she can so yes, she will take the position.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

A. Nicholson	Aye
M. Swope	Absent
A. Payne	Aye
M. Maldonado	Absent
M. Robinson	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye

**C. Appointment of Secretary**

With the removal of Melvin Swope, we are in need of a new Secretary. I spoke with Jackie and she stated she may be willing. She stated that she wanted to be a part of the Governance Committee and you can only do that if you are elected.

A. Briggs made a motion to nominate Jacqueline George as the secretary.

A Payne sated she would like to table this at this time until Jackie is fully able to consider the position.

The motion did not carry.

**D. Appointment of Academic Excellence Committee Chair**

I have to bring a slate to the board and I will table these committees at this time

**E. Appointment of Development Committee Chair**

I have to bring a slate to the board and I will table these committees at this time

**IV. Committee Reports**

**A. Academic Excellence Committee**

K McGuire stated that there is additional information in the Comprehensive Tracker as well.

**B. Development Committee**

One fundraising event for the schools as a board.

Jessica mentioned our work with Friday to develop one pagers, etc. to support the schools.

Also continuing to support with the Lead Crisis

## **V. NWILCS District Reports**

### **A. District and Building Level Reports**

Karin McGuire gave the report on Academic Health. Just closed the IReady window, data was presented in the packet. We have taken photos of all staff for the website. We are working on marketing. Project Aware Grant was received. Yellow House Project is in full swing.

A Shaw gave the report on East Chicago. Attendance is a little lower in primary grades than upper grades. We do have a parent meeting on Thursday for 8th grade regarding expectations and graduation. We do have some staffing openings. Data is just coming in from the IReady testing. More information next month. Enrollment is going forward and increasing daily. In terms of infractions, we have 16 this month. Working on the school culture. Won the EC Public Library summer reading challenge.

Opening are currently being filled by permanent building subs, which is 2.

A Franz gave the report on Primary Campus. She stated that attendance started out slow, but is building now. We are still working to enroll our scholars at this point and hope to be able to get as many scholars in as possible. We do have a partnership with Rose Counseling. And we did have Grandparents' Day in early September. Some photos are posted in my report.

Rose Counseling took the place of Brighter Day to support our scholars needing counseling services. This is o cost to the school.

C Jackson gave the report on Upper Campus. We are using Dojo as a PBIS program we are usiing to promote attendance and behavior. We have a plan to reschedule the way we are doing things in order to accommodate the open positions that are still open. We are constantly trying to our approved applications seated and registered so we are able to make our enrollment. Had a wonderful open house that was very well attended. Quarterly Arts and Music Showcase will be held in October.

A Briggs asked, How can we support with enrollment?

Getting the word out about Lighthouse. Reaching out to the community and making events more inviting to strangers.

A Briggs asked, Is there a person to contact to get through the red tape?

We will walk you through the process and make it as easy as possible to get your child in quickly.

J George said she appreciates the notion of going to homes and knocking on doors. Do we know if the results are a result of new students coming in? New teachers? How can we close the gap of these students who are behind?

Intervention is going to key on what each group needs most. 4th grade is phonics, each grade is individual to the issue they are facing.

J George asked about partnering with tutoring facilities.

A Nicholson asked how many sections are in each grade level?

Dr Holmes gave the report on CPC. Are missing 4 positions. Building sub for Biology. We are using our talent recruiter to interview and look for new candidates for these subjects. 414 is our enrollment and the budgeted enrollment is 503. Largest issues in terms of infractions, is at the freshmen level. First Town Hall was with the freshmen. Pastries with the Principal is on Friday. Want to reach out to parents. This is College Go week. 25 student will be attending a visit to IUN and 35 will be attending a visit to PNW.

A Briggs asked if we have a family coordinator?

Yes we do. We have asked for an RSVP to Pastries for the Principal.

M Robinson asked in regard to the retention of the juniors and seniors, what is the drop out rate?

We expected low numbers in those cohorts, which is why we had front loaded the 9th and 10th grade years

M Robinson stated the Northeastern Illinois University is offering free tuition to qualifying families which most of our kids would qualify for.

S Caruthers asked if we have sent a survey for the high school?

Holmes stated we have not sent a survey yet. She also stated that we are having conversations with kids although it is not documented.

J George asked about academic growth data

Holmes stated that was information and carry over from the end of the 22-23 school year.

J George asked about the trip.

Holmes stated we are doing a team building for 9th and 10th and then separately with 11th & 12th graders.

M Robinson asked what is the vision of the school?

Holmes stated we are going to keep your kids safe and you are going to learn. We are not doing a one size fits all here and that will be our caveat. Excellent education every day for every student. We will keep pushing it and we will get there.

M Robinson asked is there is any experience we are able to send the freshmen away for an experience that will set us apart from the other schools.

A Payne said that we should look into a new idea for our schools to do some forward planning.

## **B. Operations Update**

L Franklin gave the report on operations. Numbers are fluctuating day to day with enrollment and staffing. We are sending out our first staff satisfaction survey on October 6th. We are making a conscious effort to keep the people we have.

EC has made a big drive since last week.

First count Day is October 2. We are using signage marketing at Southlake Mall.

Yellow house project is projected to be finished by January of 2025.

Primary Construction project will be hopefully finished by January of 2025.

SROs have had training.

Transportation has been an issue with behaviors so far this year.

We have been working on SOPs and currently working on Onboarding/Offboarding SOP.

S Caruthers asked when the lease is up at the District office?

December 2024

J George asked what the bus accident reports look like.



L Franklin stated the process.

A Nicholson asked how many applications are in our que?

M Platt stated we have about 85 applications, all of which are SpEd scholars and we are at a 20% enrollment of SpEd at each building.

## VI. Closing Items

### A. Public Comments

Thank you for your attendance today.

### B. Executive Session

M. Robinson made a motion to go into executive session.

A. Briggs seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

S. Caruthers	Aye
M. Swope	Absent
M. Maldonado	Absent
A. Nicholson	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
M. Robinson	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye

### C. Adjourn Meeting

A. Payne made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

A. Nicholson seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

M. Robinson	Aye
A. Payne	Aye
S. Caruthers	Aye
A. Briggs	Aye
J. GEORGE	Aye
M. Maldonado	Absent
A. Nicholson	Aye
A. Brown Thirston	Aye

### **Roll Call**

M. Swope                      Absent

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
M. Platt

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### **Documents used during the meeting**

- 2023\_05\_22\_board\_meeting\_minutes (1).pdf
- 2023\_06\_26\_board\_meeting\_minutes (1).pdf
- East Chicago Financial Packet June 2023 (1).pdf
- East Chicago Top 10 Non-Payroll Payment 6-2023.xlsx
- Gary Financial Packet June 2023 (1).pdf
- Monthly Balance Sheet - NWI June 2023.pdf
- Gary Top 10 Non-Payroll Payment 6-2023.xlsx
- EC Sept 23\_24 Board Report.docx.pdf
- UPPER Board Report. Aug\_Sept. 23-24 docx.docx.pdf
- August GLCS Primary Campus Board Report-August.docx.pdf
- September Executive Director Report 23-24.pdf
- 2023-2024 GLCPC\_Sept\_Board Report.docx (2).pdf
- September SY2324 Operations Board Report .docx.pdf