



# Palisades Charter High School

## Minutes

### Board Meeting

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#### Date and Time

Tuesday March 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM

#### Location

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android:

<https://go.palihigh.org/BoardOfTrusteesLive>

#### Phone one-tap:

+16699009128,,89681016181# US (San Jose)

+16694449171,,89681016181# US

#### Join via audio:

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

+1 669 444 9171 US

+1 719 359 4580 US

+1 253 205 0468 US

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 309 205 3325 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 360 209 5623 US

+1 386 347 5053 US

+1 507 473 4847 US

+1 564 217 2000 US

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 646 931 3860 US

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+1 689 278 1000 US

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 305 224 1968 US

Webinar ID: 896 8101 6181

International numbers available: <https://palihigh-org.zoom.us/j/kdyAad3eXI>

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**REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY:**

*Pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, any individual with a disability who requires reasonable accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting of the Governing Board of Palisades Charter High School may request assistance by contacting the Main Office at (310) 230-6623 at least 24 hours in advance.*

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:**

*Supporting documentation is available at the Main Office of the School, located at 15777 Bowdoin Street, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272, (Tel: 310- 230-6623) and may also be accessible on the PCHS website at <http://palihigh.org/boardrecords.aspx>.*

**ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE PROVIDED FOR CONVENIENCE ONLY:**

*Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice. All items may be heard in a different order than listed on the agenda.*

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**Trustees Present**

Amir Ebtehadj (remote), Andrew Paris (remote), Maggie Nance (remote), Martha Monahan (remote), Minh Ha Ngo (remote), Nicholas Albonico (remote), Roger Crystal (remote), Sara Margiotta (remote)

**Trustees Absent**

Jessica Recinos, Kiumars Arzani, Kristina Irwin

**Ex Officio Members Present**

Dr. Pam Magee (remote)

**Non Voting Members Present**

Dr. Pam Magee (remote)

**Guests Present**

Charlie Speiser (remote), Diana Kim (remote), Jeff Roepel (remote), Joseph Lin (remote), Rafael Negroe (remote)

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**I. Opening Items**

**A.**

### **Call the Meeting to Order**

Sara Margiotta called a meeting of the board of trustees of Palisades Charter High School to order on Tuesday Mar 18, 2025 at 5:05 PM.

### **B. Record Attendance and Guests**

### **C. Public Comment**

Brian Butler: Father of 10th grader, expressed dismay regarding Coach Rob Hockley's removal from track and field and cross country coaching positions. Praised Coach Rob as a winning coach, leader, role model, and mentor. Raised concerns about lack of transparency and requested reinstatement.

Kevin: Parent of a student athlete, advocated for Coach Rob's reinstatement for next year's cross country season, citing his positive influence and coaching abilities. Noted the impact on team members, including top runner Blake Sigworth.

Farnaz: Parent of a student runner, criticized how Coach Rob's dismissal was handled. Initially told he would return for fall cross country, but now will not. Emphasized Coach Rob's continued support for students after the fires and his importance to the team's success and students' well-being.

Amrita Bessin: Mother of a sophomore runner, expressed shock at Coach Rob's dismissal after being assured in December he would coach in fall 2025. Stated her family is reevaluating their decision to attend Pali High and urged reconsideration.

Heather Christofk: Parent of 9th grade talented runner, credited Coach Rob for her daughter's training. Family lost their home in the Palisades fire and emphasized the importance of continuity that Coach Rob provided. Noted this decision affects their future high school choice.

Kayce Mammon: Parent of multiple athletes, praised Coach Rob's coaching talents and connection with students. Emphasized his importance to students' mental health support after the fires and requested his reinstatement.

Owen Lewicky: Student coached by Rob for 3.5 years, expressed frustration at the unexplained dismissal. Emphasized the negative impact on students who have already experienced significant losses due to the fires.

Zachary Cohen: Three-year team member, praised Coach Rob's supportive approach and continued communication with students during challenging times. Expressed concern about lack of transparency regarding his removal.

Emily Ames: Cross country parent, emphasized Coach Rob's exceptional character and commitment to developing both athletes and individuals. Stated he has been the only constant for her daughter through recent challenges.

Jackson Taylor: Student runner, described how Coach Rob created a supportive environment that improved his mental health and motivation. Expressed concern about the impact of Coach Rob's absence on the team.

Molly Lieberman: Senior and four-year team member, praised Coach Rob's leadership and the community he created. Despite graduating soon, urged reconsideration of his removal.

Lajus Collins: Student athlete, highlighted Coach Rob's dedication, including unpaid weekend practices and personal support outside of scheduled times. Noted Coach Rob's professionalism when removed from track.

#### GOOGLE FORM RESPONSE:

Reginald Gilyard: "My comment relates to the firing of Coach Rob Hockley. I am a parent of two cross country and track athletes, a resident of the Palisades, and a former University administrator. I would like to see the Pali Hi administration bring back Coach Hockley for both the cross country team and for the distance program on the track team.

Coach Hockley is a very special person in the lives of our young people. Having volunteered with the cross country team I've witnessed up close that Coach Hockley is more than a Coach, he is a character builder. Also, Coach Hockley goes above and beyond in both his time commitment and caring for the athletes. He is an honest, good-hearted person who served as a role model for our students. Lastly, Coach Hockley is a highly successful Coach with teams winning LA city championships, going to state championships, and winning Coach of the Year.

I'm unavailable tonight as I'm attending the Mayor's fire recovery meeting. That said, I would be very happy to have a follow up call or meeting to elaborate on my comments."

#### **D. Approve Minutes**

Minh Ha Ngo made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 03-13-25.

Andrew Paris seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Sara Margiotta Aye

Martha Monahan Aye

**Roll Call**

Roger Crystal	Absent
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Absent

**E. Approve Minutes**

Maggie Nance made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 02-25-25.

Minh Ha Ngo seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Roger Crystal	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Martha Monahan	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Absent

**F. Approve Minutes**

Sara Margiotta made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 02-25-25.

Andrew Paris seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Roger Crystal	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye

**Roll Call**

Kristina Irwin      Absent

**II. Organizational Reports**

**A. Student Report**

Charlie Speiser reported receiving supply donations from University High School in Fresno and Highland High School in Bakersfield through their school drives. The donations included notebooks, pencils, composition books, and other school supplies needed for restart. He announced an upcoming Haus Labs event, sponsored by Lady Gaga's makeup/cosmetics company. The event will be hosted at UCLA's main quad with free tickets for students. Charlie mentioned they are preparing for upcoming ASB elections and meetings, and expressed excitement about returning to in-person instruction.

**B. Parent Report**

**C. Represented Classified Staff Report**

**D. Unrepresented Classified Staff Report**

Martha Monahan reported that the LAUSD Fund is waiting for signature approval, with Rene Rodman ensuring distribution. Dr. Monahan expressed hope to get funds to teachers within the next week. She explained that people who lost homes or were evacuated for more than seven days will receive a \$1,000 grant from the LAUSD Fund.

**E. Faculty Report**

Dr. Minh Ha Ngo expressed appreciation for families sponsoring faculty and staff members for the upcoming Pali Boosters community benefit event. She shared concerns about personal property in classrooms being discarded during cleanup rather than saved for later retrieval. The faculty requested consideration for sound dampening measures in the temporary classrooms at the Sears location, possibly through carpeting or other soundproofing materials. Dr. Ngo inquired about the timeline for accessing relief funds for faculty and staff who lost their homes. Faculty members expressed concerns about the elimination of the pods, which would be discussed later in the meeting.

**F. Human Resources Director (HR) Report**

Dr. Monahan reported that the Raptor volunteer link is operational and working well, allowing for almost instant volunteer approval through the screening process. The link is available on the website and through teachers for those planning field trips.

**G. Director of Operations Report**

Mr. Negroe organized his report into four key areas.

**Pali Campus Cleanup:** The cleanup start meeting is scheduled for March 20th at 8 AM, with an estimated timeline of 30-45 days. The aquatic center is included in the initial decontamination. A professional company has photographed and inventoried classroom contents. Porous items (paper, cloth) will be disposed of during cleanup, while non-porous items will be wiped and preserved. Faculty access to the campus will only be permitted after environmental clearance. When Mr. Albonico asked about picture frames, Mr. Negroe stated they would be wiped, sanitized, and kept.

**Pali Campus Temporary Arrangements:** LAUSD is planning a three-phase approach for a temporary village: utilizing existing structures, demolishing bungalows to create space, and constructing a new complex to replace J and U buildings. Board members expressed concerns about using the baseball field for the temporary village, noting potential impacts on athletics programs and enrollment.

**Temporary Sears Location:** Final meetings with the City of Santa Monica are underway, with classroom build-out beginning. The facility will utilize three floors with 75 classrooms total. Faculty raised concerns about classroom acoustics and suggested organizing classrooms by grade level to minimize student movement. Student parking will be available on 4th Street with limited on-site parking; students who previously paid for parking will not incur additional costs.

**General Operations:** Security personnel are monitoring Pali from 6 AM to 12 AM daily. Efforts are underway to secure AP testing locations for May 5-16. Uni continues to serve as the delivery address and transportation hub for field trips noting students will be held inside a closed campus at Uni and escorted to buses. Food service planning with Chartwells for the Sears location has begun.

#### **H. Director of Information Technology Report**

Nothing to report at this time.

#### **I. Director of Development Report**

Fundraising efforts are primarily focused on supporting the temporary location buildout. Sara Margiotta clarified that while the messaging centers on the temporary facility, other support initiatives are in place. Andrea King is coordinating donations and collections to support teachers, while Renee Rodman is focusing on fundraising dollars through Raise Pali. Dr. Ngo encouraged support for the Booster Club at the Pali Community Benefit event, as those funds go directly to supporting faculty and staff.

#### **J. Chief Business Officer (CBO) Report**

The insurance carrier discussions continue with almost daily conversations, though a final agreement is forthcoming. Mr. Lin clarified that while Pali requested a three-year hold harmless provision, they will likely receive only a one-year approval. He explained this is

due to legislative processes, as such provisions must be voted on by the legislature. Dr. Magee noted they could potentially go back to request additional years to maintain consistency with promises made by elected officials early in the disaster response. Mr. Lin also mentioned that budget templates have been released and conversations regarding 2025-26 budget development are currently underway.

#### **K. Executive Director/Principal (EDP) Report**

EDP Magee reported that a Town Hall was held the previous Friday, which was recorded and posted on the school homepage. The Town Hall featured LAUSD facilities personnel and environmental experts who discussed campus conditions and potential reopening timelines. An FAQ document is being finalized and will be posted on the Pali homepage in the news section.

Dr. Magee shared photos of the Sears location interior showing the blank slate condition, as well as prototype classrooms. She noted that these spaces are still raw with no paint on the sheetrock, and welcomed the idea of parents and students helping to create a warmer classroom environment.

Regarding enrollment, Dr. Magee reported that Pali is currently holding steady at approximately 2,400 students, compared to their normal enrollment of 3,000. She emphasized that Pali is accepting students for 9th grade and beyond for the coming school year. When Dr. Ngo asked about accepting returning students who had checked out this semester, Dr. Magee confirmed that due to emergency legislation, families can return if they choose.

### **III. Board Committees (Stakeholder Board Level Committees)**

#### **A. Academic Accountability Committee Update**

Dr. Ngo contacted the committee and reported that there are no updates at this time. The committee will meet next Thursday and anticipates receiving two departmental presentations along with updates from the bell schedule ad-hoc committee.

#### **B. Budget & Finance Committee Update**

The minutes of the Budget & Finance stand as submitted. The meeting could not be convened yesterday due to lack of quorum.

#### **C. Election Committee Update**

The Chair provided details about the board positions up for election in this cycle:

Two Community Representative seats (currently held by Kiumars Arzani and Sara Margiotta)

One Parent Representative seat (currently held by Kristina Irwin)

The Represented Classified Staff seat (currently held by Andy Paris)



One Faculty-elected Faculty Member seat (currently held by Minh Ha Ngo, who was elected to complete the remaining one year of the term)

The Student-elected Teacher seat (currently held by Maggie Nance)

The Chair will work with ASB advisor Rob King to coordinate board elections with student body elections. Once finalized, information about nomination procedures, timelines, and voting processes will be shared.

#### **D. Charter Committee Update**

The committee has not met due to the postponement of the charter renewal.

### **IV. Board Committees (Board Members Only)**

#### **A. Board Members Only - Committee Updates**

Audit: Has not met.

Survey: Has not met.

Grade Appeal: Nine grade appeals have been received. Appeal hearings will be held on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday beginning next week.

### **V. Academic Excellence**

#### **A. Facility and Temporary Relocation Planning Updates**

Information and updates were covered in the Director of Operations report. No additional details to report at this time.

#### **B. Request to Waive PE State Testing Requirement**

Director of Activities, Athletics, and Discipline Adam Licea requested waiving the PE state requirement for 9th graders this year due to challenges from fires, student displacement, and the temporary campus location lacking necessary materials and space for authentic test administration.

He reported that 92% of 300 parents surveyed via ParentSquare supported waiving this requirement. When Dr. Ngo asked if attempting to test students would still be required (as with the CAASPP waiver), Mr. Licea confirmed that his communication with parents and collection of feedback satisfied the attempt requirement. He also clarified that students not tested in 9th grade would take the test in 10th grade instead.

Maggie Nance made a motion to Request to Waive PE State Testing Requirement.

Amir Ebtehadj seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Sara Margiotta     Aye

**Roll Call**

Maggie Nance	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye

**C. Updated Graduation Requirements**

Counselor Heather Schon presented proposed changes to graduation requirements, prompted by Susan Ackerman's retirement from teaching health and upcoming state requirements for ethnic studies and financial literacy. The administration recommended removing health, technology, and computer requirements from graduation requirements while keeping them as electives. This would create flexibility in student schedules and help accommodate new state mandates without compromising academic competitiveness.

Diana Kim explained that Pali's current 230 credit requirement exceeds LAUSD's 210 credits, and noted that health is being phased out as a requirement across California schools. She added that technology skills are now integrated across the curriculum as students have school-issued devices.

Dr. Ngo raised concerns about the potential impact on the tech department and questioned why these changes weren't first reviewed by the Academic Accountability Committee. Heather Schon and Dr. Magee clarified that the proposal had been discussed in Curriculum Council, and explained they were trying to be responsive to upcoming state requirements while maintaining scheduling flexibility for students.

The Chair confirmed that the administration had followed proper procedures in bringing the proposal directly to the board, as the board had not specifically tasked the Academic Accountability Committee with reviewing these changes. EDP Magee emphasized the time-sensitive nature of making these adjustments to better prepare for future state requirements.

Amir Ebtehadj made a motion to eliminate the PCHS graduation requirement of one semester technical art, one semester computer class, and one semester of health for the class of 2026 and beyond.

Martha Monahan seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Roger Crystal	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye

**D. Change in Elective Opportunities**

Randy Tenan-Snow, Co-Chair of the English Department presented a proposal to eliminate the pod system that has been in place for many years at PCHS. Currently, pods link 9th grade English classes with elective courses, creating learning communities for incoming freshmen. The recommendation is to decouple these classes to provide greater flexibility and opportunities for students.

Key advantages of eliminating pods include:

- The ability to offer Advanced Placement courses (such as AP Human Geography and AP Computer Science Principles) to 9th graders
- Increased flexibility for students to choose electives based on interests rather than pod assignments
- Opportunities for students to take West LA College dual enrollment classes
- Better accommodation for students with IEPs who currently face scheduling constraints
- Enhanced ability to develop Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways
- Flexibility to complete new state requirements like ethnic studies and financial literacy earlier

Randy Tenan-Snow acknowledged that this change was challenging for those who had invested years in the pod program. Dr. Ngo expressed concerns about the process, noting that not all pod teachers or VAPA teachers were involved in discussions, and the Academic Accountability Committee hadn't been tasked with the recommendation.

Several board members expressed support for the change, including Amir Ebtehadj who recalled how taking AP Human Geography as a senior would have been good foray into Advanced Placement courses. The student representative, Charlie Speiser, seconded Amir's sentiments, noting that having AP Human Geography in freshman year would help students build confidence for future AP courses. EDP Magee noted frequent requests from parents of motivated freshmen who want access to advanced classes.

Sara Margiotta made a motion to replace the existing pod structure by decoupling the pod elective courses from 9th grade English classes, these elective offerings will continue to be available to all grade levels.

Amir Ebtehadj seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye

**VI. Finance**

**A. 2024-25 Second Interim Report**

CBO Joe Lin presented a budget update projecting a net deficit of approximately \$17,000 for the remainder of the year. He explained this figure reflects a reduction in services for January through March and excludes costs of reimbursable items. When the Chair sought clarification about the overall deficit, Lin confirmed it was projected at \$17,000 for the entire 2024-2025 fiscal year, significantly less than the originally budgeted surplus of approximately \$597,000.

Ms. Nance questioned the purpose of maintaining reserves when facing significant challenges like the school fire, suggesting that soundproofing the temporary campus might warrant using some reserve funds. Ms. Margiotta explained that maintaining certain reserve levels is legally required for the school to be considered fiscally sound, and expressed optimism about finding additional cost savings and fundraising opportunities.

Dr. Ngo raised questions about decreased permit funding due to inability to rent facilities and the expiration of ESSER funds. Mr. Lin confirmed that the budget projects no revenue from permits for the remainder of the year and that all ESSER funds had been expended by September 2024. Margiotta noted that ESSER funds were primarily used for one-time expenses, though some funded temporary positions with clear end dates. She explained that continuing any ESSER-funded programs would require review by the Budget and Finance Committee and board approval.

The Budget and Finance Committee will convene in the coming weeks to review the report.

Sara Margiotta made a motion to approve the 2024-25 Second Interim Report conditional to the Budget and Finance Committee approval.

Martha Monahan seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Martha Monahan	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye

**B. FSMC Contract Renewal - Chartwells**

Joseph Lin presented information regarding the proposed renewal of the Chartwells food service contract for year 4 or 5. He provided comparative data points to help the board evaluate the proposed price increase:

- The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for "food away from home" in Los Angeles as of February was 4.88%
- Chartwells proposed a cost increase per meal of approximately 3.8% from the previous year
- The Governor's budget has a proposed cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) of 2.43%

This means the proposed increase is above what the school will receive from the state's COLA, but below the current food inflation rate measured by the CPI.

Sara Margiotta noted that while this specific proposal hadn't gone to the Budget and Finance Committee, the committee had previously approved extending the contract for an additional year without going through a new Request for Proposal (RFP) process, given the current circumstances and timing.

Dr. Ngo inquired about potential cost changes for food service at the temporary location. Lin explained there might be additional costs due to limited options at the temporary site. He outlined two possibilities being considered:

- Using food trucks to provide meals
- Producing food off-site and bringing it to the temporary location (there is a culinary school in Santa Monica Place)

Mr. Lin noted these options might result in "noncompliant meals" that don't meet required nutritional ratios of dairy, protein, fruits, and vegetables, which could potentially increase costs if they need to cater or produce different quality meals.

Martha Monahan made a motion to extend the Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Contract Renewal with Chartwells contingent on the Budget and Finance Committee's approval.

Roger Crystal seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye

**VII. Consent Agenda**

**A. Finance Items: School Organized Conferences/Trips**

**B. Personnel Items**

Amir Ebtehadj made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Sara Margiotta seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Kiumars Arzani	Absent
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Andrew Paris	Abstain
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	No
Maggie Nance	No
Martha Monahan	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Absent

**VIII. New Business / Announcements**

**A. Announcements / New Business**

The next regularly scheduled board meeting in April 22 at 5pm via Zoom.

**B. Announce items for closed session, if any.**

**IX. Open Session**

**A. Return to Open Session**

The board returned to open session at 7:59pm.

**B. Report Out on Action Taken In Closed Session, If Any.**

In closed session the board discussed afterschool athletics and the public comments made today.

**X. Closing Items**

**A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Amir Ebtehadj