

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### October 2019 Board Meeting

---

##### **Date and Time**

Tuesday October 1, 2019 at 6:00 PM

##### **Location**

City on a Hill - Dudley Square (Forum), 2179 Washington Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

---

##### **Trustees Present**

Callie Slocum, Cara Stillings-Candal, Gary Morton, Greg Vasey, Jeff Jablow, Lori Stevens, Melisa Lemire, Sarah Griffin (remote)

##### **Trustees Absent**

Alex Valdez, Karin Wall

##### **Trustees who left before the meeting adjourned**

Jeff Jablow

##### **Ex Officio Members Present**

Kevin Taylor

##### **Non Voting Members Present**

Kevin Taylor

##### **Guests Present**

Amber Donell, Andres Tejeda Soto, Elizabeth Dignan, Jackie Hayes, Jordan Lopez

---

## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance and Guests

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

Cara Stillings-Candal called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Oct 1, 2019 at 6:25 PM.

### C. Celebration of Service for Lori Stevens

Cara Stillings-Candal announced that this would be Lori Stevens' final Board Meeting as a Trustee after three terms, and Board members thanked Stevens for her service.

## II. Consent Agenda

### A. Approve August 2019 Meeting Minutes

Cara Stillings-Candal made a motion to approve minutes from the August 2019 Board Retreat on 08-14-19 August 2019 Board Retreat on 08-14-19.

Jeff Jablow seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Melisa Lemire	Aye
Greg Vasey	Aye
Karin Wall	Absent
Lori Stevens	Abstain
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Alex Valdez	Absent
Gary Morton	Aye
Callie Slocum	Aye
Cara Stillings-Candal	Aye
Jeff Jablow	Aye

### B. Vote to Approve Monique Dillon and Andres Tejeda as Board Members

Cara Stillings-Candal, Chair, re-introduced Andres Tejeda and Monique Dillon as candidates for the Board of Trustees. Stillings-Candal provided an overview of the process used to familiarize Tejeda and Dillon with the Board, including meetings with Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, and other members of the Board and City on a Hill staff. Stillings-Candal then requested a vote to approve Tejeda and Dillon as members of the Board of Trustees.

Jeff Jablow made a motion to approve Monique Dillon and Andres Tejeda as Board Members.

Greg Vasey seconded the motion.

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

### **C. Approve Updated CoaH Fiscal Policies & Procedures**

Elizabeth Dignan, Chief Operating Officer, introduced the updated CoaH Fiscal Policies & Procedures document and provided an overview of changes since the last Board-approved version, including updating of titles for recently changed roles and restriction of issuance of credit cards to Principals, Directors of School Operations, and the Executive Leadership Team. After the changes were reviewed, Stillings-Candal requested a vote to approve the updated CoaH Fiscal Policies & Procedures.

Jeff Jablow made a motion to approve Updated CoaH Fiscal Policies & Procedures.

Greg Vasey seconded the motion.

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

## **III. Finalized New Bedford Needs Action Plan**

### **A. Finalized New Bedford Action Plan**

Jordan Pina, Deputy Chief of Staff, re-introduced the New Bedford Needs Assessment Action Plan, which was presented to the Board of Trustees in draft form at the June 2019 Board of Trustees Meeting for feedback, and confirmed that the Action Plan had been approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Board members probed on the accountability mechanisms for the Action Plan, including how staff would be messaging out progress internally and to DESE. Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, and Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel, listed the ways in which the plan has been mapped onto City on a Hill New Bedford's priorities, such as the professional development schedule and meetings with leadership and staff.

## **IV. The COAH Effect**

### **A. The COAH Effect**

Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, presented The COAH Effect, which is a staff-created dashboard designed to update the Board on the Network's results - academic and operational. Taylor highlighted trends, including City on a Hill's continued enrollment challenges and 2019 MCAS results, both of which he announced would have deeper dives later in the meeting. Board members probed on recruitment and retention of teachers and staff, focusing on reported reasons for leaving and timeline for filling open roles. Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel, listed currently used strategies and those planning to be implemented by the newly formed Human Capital Team. Additionally, Hayes shared context around the current competitiveness for school-based roles across the state, highlighting that both Boston Public Schools and New Bedford Public Schools are also still hiring for similar roles, and that the majority of the currently open roles had previously been filled at the start of the year and recruiting this late in the cycle is not ideal.

## **V. Governance Committee Update**

## **A. Governance Committee Update**

Melisa Lemire, Governance Committee Chair, reiterated committee structures and requested that any final feedback about assignments be sent to the Governance Committee within a week. Lemire then requested that Committees review dates currently in Board on Track, and either confirm or request changes from Jordan Pina, Deputy Chief of Staff. Cara Stillings-Candal, Chair, also requested that both new and returning Board members to review the City on a Hill Charter Public School Board of Trustees Bylaws, which are saved on Board on Track.

## **VI. 2019 MCAS Results**

### **A. 2019 MCAS Results**

Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, and Amber Donell, Chief Academic Officer, reintroduced the 2019 MCAS results first presented in The COAH Effect. Taylor provided an overview of his letter to families, which included the MCAS results of all three City on a Hill schools in addition to the scores of peer charter schools in Boston and New Bedford and the highest performing districts in the state for comparison. Taylor reminded the Board that Donell reviewed her takeaways which identified lack of rigorous curriculum as the most clear concern. Taylor and Donell then described a partnership with Achievement First, a regionally recognized, high performing charter network, to adopt their open-source curriculum. Furthermore, Donell walked through the six-part academic strategy for the school year described in the letter to families:

1. Extensive data analysis;
2. Focused teacher training around instructional and culture priorities;
3. Frequent monitoring of student progress;
4. Remediation/Targeted Intervention/Catch-up Learning Time;
5. Strengthening curriculum materials, instruction and assessments;
6. And leadership capacity building.

Board members probed on initiatives for social-emotional learning in addition to the academic strategy. Taylor described another partnership with NorthStar Learning, a New Bedford-based non-profit based to provide additional support and wrap around services.

## **VII. Enrollment Update**

### **A. Enrollment Update**

Elizabeth Dignan, Chief Operating Officer, reintroduced the method she and the Finance Committee used to develop the SY20 Budget based on projected enrollment, which accounted for the exiting Class of 2019, summer attrition, and projected 9th grade lottery applicants. Dignan explained that while known strategies, such as open houses and placement fairs, are being utilized by the Operations Team which executes student

recruitment, SY20 enrollment is lower than previously projected. Dignan then explained that given the time of year, the strategy will be to prioritizing retaining students as given that recruiting students becomes more difficult as the school year continues. The Board discussed the trends, and probed on what steps were being taken to retain students. Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, named that in addition to implementing exit interviews across campuses with fidelity to collect additional data, the partnerships described throughout the MCAS Results session and City on a Hill's Diversity, Inclusion, Citizenship and Equity (DICE) initiatives were strategies to retain students. Jeff Jablow left.

## **VIII. 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 8:11 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cara Stillings-Candal