

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### January 2020 Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Tuesday January 21, 2020 at 5:00 PM

**Location**

City on a Hill - Circuit Street (Forum), 58 Circuit Street, Roxbury, MA 02119

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**Trustees Present**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Cara Stillings-Candal, Gary Morton, Greg Vasey, Jacqueline Bennett

**Trustees Absent**

Jeff Jablow, Karin Wall, Melisa Lemire, Sarah Griffin

**Ex Officio Members Present**

Kevin Taylor

**Non Voting Members Present**

Kevin Taylor

**Guests Present**

Elizabeth Dignan, Jackie Hayes, Jordan Lopez, Katie Kline, Sonya Pratt

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**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 Jan 21, 2020 at 5:15 PM.

## **II. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Approve November 2019 Meeting #2 Minutes**

Greg Vasey made a motion to approve the minutes from November 2019 Board Meeting #2. November 2019 Board Meeting #2 on 11-25-19.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

### **B. Approve December 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Greg Vasey made a motion to approve the minutes from December 2019 Board Meeting. December 2019 Board Meeting on 12-09-19.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

## **III. CoaH New Bedford Closure Update**

### **A. CoaH NB Closure Checklist Update**

Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel, presented an update on the progress to completion of the City on a Hill New Bedford (CoaH NB) Checklist Update. Hayes confirmed that all action steps due at this time, including notification of community stakeholders and vendors, were completed. Hayes noted that notifications to sending districts were delayed in being sent out, but that those notices are now complete.

The Board questioned why the auditor proposed to be retained pursuant to the closing checking was more expensive than previous years' audits. Elizabeth Dignan, Chief Operating Officer, confirmed that City on a Hill's historical auditing partner, AAF, has been contracted based on their familiarity with CoaH's finances to perform a closing audit for CoaH NB. Dignan explained that the audit required for closing had more steps than a typical audit, which was leading to the additional cost.

Hayes explained the need for an authorizing vote to be taken, which was done.

Additionally, Hayes shared that CoaH New Bedford was released from its lease at William Street and will be fully housed in the Acushnet Avenue building. Dignan confirmed that all nonessential purchases have been frozen in New Bedford.

### **B. CoaH NB Culture Discussion**

Cara Stillings-Candal, Chair, introduced the City on a Hill New Bedford Culture Discussion. Stillings-Candal requested an update on current culture in New Bedford and the implementation of the new online curriculum and classes, APEX Learning, in New Bedford.

Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel, confirmed that enrollment as of January 17, 2020 was 97 students, and while confirmed that additional staff were lost over the Winter Break, the school is still able to function with the new virtual learning curriculum. Furthermore, Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, shared that during his time in New Bedford, students and staff shared the feedback that the new program is going well.

Hayes next introduced the need for a schedule amendment in New Bedford. Board members inquired on the impact on families, particularly those whose parents/guardians work until early evening. Taylor shared that, as high schoolers, many students have after school commitments such as part-time jobs, and most are not picked up by a parent. Hayes confirmed for the Board that this amendment is primarily being made at the request of our teachers and their union. Hayes further confirmed that the amendment is intended to support our staff and the in-school student experience to help reduce the number of teachers who decide to leave CoaH NB in the coming months and to, consequently, reduce the number of students who leave CoaH NB in the coming months. Hayes confirmed that we have sought limited to no feedback from families on whether they would like this amendment.

#### **C. Vote to Contract with an Independent Auditor**

Gary Morton made a motion to to authorize management with an independent auditor, subject to OCSSR approval, to conduct a final close-out audit of the school.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

#### **D. Vote to Approve the CoaH NB Schedule Amendment**

Gary Morton made a motion to approve the schedule amendment, to submit the amendment on behalf of the Board, and to work with the Department on any technical changes that may be needed to make the amendment compliance with Department guidelines.

Jacqueline Bennett seconded the motion.

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

### **IV. Boston Co-location and Consolidation Update**

#### **A. CoaH Boston Culture Discussion**

Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, introduced the CoaH Boston Culture Conversation, and requested Senior Leaders in attendance share updates. Sonya Pratt, Chief Schools Officer, announced that the transition has been easier for the Upper School, which

includes the 11th and 12th graders now housed at the CoaH Dudley Square campus. Pratt noted that the Lower School, consisting of 9th and 10th graders, however, is experiencing behavior management challenges. She attributed these challenges to being understaffed, having younger students, and lack of behavior models from upperclassmen.

Jackie Hayes, Chief of Staff & General Counsel, then reviewed the CoaH CS and CoaH DS Schedule Amendment. Hayes stated that while the day would be reduced for students, both charters would still achieve the required hours of instruction. Under this new model, teachers would also receive additional common planning time.

The Board inquired about how this would impact families and students given the later start time. Hayes stated that the school would offer a study hall for students on Tuesday and Thursday morning so that students could still come to school at the regular start time.

The Board inquired about the loss of instructional time. Hayes explained that this amendment request was originally conceived of by our teachers and that the leadership team, after discussion with our teachers and their union, have come to understand and agree that this is a high positive potential change that we could make to improve academic outcomes for students. This change will result in no change to teacher schedules. Instead, teachers will take the time and use it to focus on preparing stronger classroom material and working together in common planning time. While there would be a loss of direct instruction time, we believe that the loss will be off put by better use of remaining instructional time.

#### **B. Vote to Approve the CoaH CS and CoaH DS Schedule Amendment**

Gary Morton made a motion to approve the schedule amendment, to submit the amendment on behalf of the Board, and to work with the Department on any technical changes that may be needed to make the amendment compliance with Department guidelines.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

#### **C. Vote to Delegate Approval of the CoaH Boston Consolidation Amendment**

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to ?

Gary Morton seconded the motion.

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

#### **D. Omnibus Votes**

Greg Vasey made a motion to authorize Cara Stillings-Candal, Board Chair and Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer (each an "Authorized Signatory") to execute, deliver and file any and all documents to effectuate the foregoing votes in such form and containing such terms, provisions and conditions as any Authorized Signatory may deem necessary,

appropriate or convenient, in his or her sole discretion (including, without limitation, changes to any amounts described therein), on behalf of the Schools.

Gary Morton seconded the motion.

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

Greg Vasey made a motion to authorize the Authorized Signatories are, and each of them, acting singly, to take such further action or to cause such further action to be taken, to make such determinations, and to provide such information to other parties, as may be deemed by the Authorized Signatory, in his or her sole discretion, to be necessary or convenient to effectuate the purposes of the foregoing votes, including any consents, approvals and payments, on behalf of the Schools.

Andres Tejada Soto seconded the motion.

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

Gary Morton made a motion to ratify and confirm any and all previous actions taken in connection with the foregoing votes by any officer or trustee of the Schools, or an Authorized Signatory on behalf of the Schools.

Andres Tejada Soto seconded the motion.

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

## **V. 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 important trends, including City on a Hill's continued enrollment challenges, Quarter 1 Academic Results which are not yet on track to meet set goals, and the need for additional development work.

## **VI. 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 6:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cara Stillings-Candal