

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### December 2021 Board Meeting

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

Tuesday December 7, 2021 at 5:00 PM

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This meeting took place remotely pursuant to An Act Extending certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency signed into law by Governor Baker on June 16, 2021.

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##### **Trustees Present**

Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Edelyn Contreras (remote), Gary Morton (remote), Jack Gearan (remote), Jessica Yang (remote), Massiel Eversley (remote), Ted Gildea (remote)

##### **Trustees Absent**

Jacqueline Bennett, Melisa Lemire, Robyn Shahid, Sarah Griffin

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

Sonya Pratt (remote)

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

Sonya Pratt (remote)

##### **Guests Present**

Jordan Lopez (remote), Kevin Taylor (remote), Maddie Collins (remote)

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#### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Record Attendance**

#### **B. Call the Meeting to Order**

Andres Tejeda Soto called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Dec 7, 2021 at 5:10 PM.

#### **C. Approve October 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the minutes from October 2021 Board Meeting on 10-26-21.

Gary Morton seconded the motion.

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

##### **Roll Call**

Jacqueline Bennett	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Absent
Jessica Yang	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Gary Morton	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent

### **II. Circuit Street Construction Update**

#### **A. Circuit Street Construction Update**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Board Chair, shared that Circuit Street construction contract with contractor NV5 was executed after the October 2021 Board Meeting. Tejeda Soto shared that the construction process is moving forward, and NV5 is working closely with the COAH Leadership Team to stay on track.

Tejeda Soto shared the project plan and schedule, reminding the Board that the project will happen in two phases. He shared that the first phase will start in Summer 2022, with plans for renovations to be made in the current building in order to maximize the space.

Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, shared that the school team continues to work closely with NV5 as they draft plans for phase 2 construction, which will involve expanding the current building.

### **III. Open Meeting Law Refresher**

#### **A.**

## **Open Meeting Law Refresher**

Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, shared an Open Meeting Law presentation with the Board as a refresher for both experienced and new Board members. Pina shared that these responsibilities are in accordance with the Board's Governance Action Plan.

Pina shared the Board of Trustees purpose, responsibilities and bylaws, Open Meeting Law requirements, as well as the Board of Trustees and Foundation Board's relationship. The Board asked management more specifically about conflict of interests with other nonprofits. Pina reminded the Board that all Trustees must disclose any financial interest they may have for the previous calendar year as well as any conflict of interest. These disclosures are submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Pina also reminded the Board of how City on a Hill's governance is evaluated DESE, as governance is one of the 10 performance that DESE uses to evaluate charter school performance. Pina shared that during COAH's former school site, New Bedford's, renewal cycle in SY18-19, the Board received "Exceeds" as a measure of governance but in the Circuit Street renewal cycle in SY19-20, it received "Falls Far Below" as a measure of governance, citing lack of proper financial and academic oversight and was named a major contributing factor to COAH's current probationary status.

## **IV. Board Committee Updates**

### **A. Governance Committee Update**

Jessica Yang, Governance Committee Chair, shared that the Committee met to discuss Board growth as well as discuss enrollment updates as they pertain to City on a Hill's Enrollment Plan. The Committee agree to continue to reach out to their contacts who might be interested in joining the COAH Board of Trustees.

Yang shared that the Committee also spent time discussing potential Committee restructuring, due to some Committee members having conflicting schedules, to allow for more opportunities to meet at the Committee level.

### **B. Development Committee Update**

Jack Gearan, Development Committee Chair, shared that the Committee rescheduled their December 2021 meeting for January 2022 to allow for a potential Director of Development candidate to be hired.

Jordan Pina shared that she and Sonya Pratt interviewed three candidates before Thanksgiving break. After the initial interview, two candidates who have great backgrounds in marketing and development were selected to move forward.

Pina shared that next week these candidates will engage in a second interview with the COAH Foundation Board, where the candidates will be asked to give mock development pitches and answer questions from the Foundation Board. If the Foundation Board chooses to hire a candidate, management foresees this role hired by January 2022.

#### **C. Academic Excellence Committee Update**

Edelyn Contreras, Committee member, shared that the Academic Excellence Committee met in December 2021 to do a deep dive of Academic Data from Quarter One. Contreras shared that Laura Edouard, Principal, presented data trends and action plans to the Committee. She also shared that COAH plans to re-launch a Teaching Fellowship program this school year, under the supervision of COAH's Director of Teacher Development and Compliance.

The Board asked when the next administration of NWEA MAP, a nationally normed growth-based exam, would take place at COAH. Sonya Pratt shared that the second administration will take place in February 2022.

#### **D. Executive Director Support Committee**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Committee member, shared the the Executive Director Support Committee met in December 2021 to go over Sonya Pratt's Executive Director goals and measures to confirm them.

Tejeda Soto shared that the second portion of the meeting was to discuss they second half of the bonus for Kevin Taylor, Chief Executive Officer. Tejeda Soto reminded the Board that this half of Taylor's bonus would be paid out according to the academic performance of COAH in SY21.

At the meeting, Taylor shared metrics of academic data including SY21 MCAS scores, MAP data, and metrics published on the DESE website. Tejeda Soto shared that the Committee agreed that all of these measures are impacted by the effect the pandemic had on students and that because of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the measures were unprecedented. The Committee acknowledged that there was a need for more performance data to award the full bonus, which might not be available due to COVID-19 and with the data provided, the Committee voted to recommend the payout of 95% of Taylor's bonus to the Board of Trustees.

The Board asked the Committee to clarify more specifically why the payout was 95% of the bonus. Tejeda Soto shared that while the school year was unprecedented because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Committee would've liked to see more mitigations or supporting data alongside the data presented in order to award the full amount.

The Board asked management what the impact was financially of the 95% bonus payout. Pina shared that the total bonus is \$10,000 and that 95% of that bonus would amount to \$9,500.

Ted Gildea made a motion to Vote to Approve the payout of 95% of Taylor's bonus following the Executive Director Support Committee's recommendation.

Jessica Yang seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Sarah Griffin	Absent
Gary Morton	No
Jacqueline Bennett	Absent
Jessica Yang	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Absent
Robyn Shahid	Absent

### **E. Finance Committee Update**

Ted Gildea, Committee Chair, shared that the Finance Committee met in December 2021 to discuss the meeting that members of the COAH Leadership Team and Finance Committee had with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regarding COAH's FY21 audit.

Gildea shared an update that City on a Hill will be contracting with AAF, COAH's audit partners, in order to fulfill responsibilities of the open Business Manager position at COAH. COAH is also contracting with an additional external contractor for Accounts Payable services.

### **V. Executive Session Related to Union Bargaining**

#### **A. Executive Session Related to Union Bargaining**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Chair, shared that there was not currently a need to further discuss bargaining strategy and that the Board would not enter Executive Session

### **VI. The CoaH Effect**

#### **A. The CoaH Effect**

Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, shared the purpose of the CoaH Effect, a snapshot of school data that can be read like a dashboard. It is created to allow for understanding of

key measures at the school and steps the organization is taking to move forward towards school year goals.

Pratt walked through COAH Effect dashboard and provided explanation of the progress towards each goal, including additional context for goals that do not have data available yet in the School Year, including MAP growth data and ACT results. Pratt shared that ongoing action plans have been implemented as they relate to academic achievement, all which were shared with the AEC Committee at the December 2021 AEC meeting.

Pratt shared enrollment updates, sharing that enrollment at COAH for SY21 has stabilized and that COAH has hired a new Student Recruitment Coordinator to work on enrollment. Pratt shared that COAH continues to hold monthly lotteries to backfill open seats until February 2022.

Pratt shared additional context for the attendance rate, as COAH has asked parents to keep students who are displaying COVID-19 associated symptoms home and to be tested for COVID-19. The Board asked management if DESE has given schools academic guidance for students who stay home due to COVID-19. Pratt shared that all COAH students who are at home due to COVID-19 are assigned work, however, the attendance rate turned into DESE does not allow for COAH to code an excused absence.

Pratt shared that she will be meeting with the Commissioner this week with the Charter Leaders of Color cohort to ask for additional guidance regarding staff retention, staff burnout, and the effects of COVID-19 at Winter 2022 approaches.

## **VII. CEO Transition Finalization**

### **A. Kevin Taylor Recognition**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Board Chair, reminded the Board that it was Kevin Taylor's last meeting as Chief Executive Officer, as Sonya Pratt was named Executive Director in June 2021.

The Board shared appreciations for Taylor's hard work and dedication to City on a Hill and its students.

## **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 6:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Andres Tejeda Soto