

APPROVED



City on a Hill Charter Public School

Minutes

May 2023 Board Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday May 16, 2023 at 5:00 PM

This meeting took place remotely pursuant to a supplemental budget bill which, among other things, extends the temporary provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2025 signed into law by Governor Healey on March 29, 2023.

Trustees Present

Alekz Hirschmann (remote), Andres Tejada Soto (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Danielle Canty (remote), Edelyn Contreras (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Kimberley Thai Small (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote), Ted Gildea (remote)

Trustees Absent

Michelle Allwood, Robyn Shahid

Ex Officio Members Present

Sonya Pratt (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

Sonya Pratt (remote)

Guests Present

Asha Ibrahim (remote), Jordan Lopez (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Melisa Lemire called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday May 16, 2023 at 5:15 PM.

C. Approve April 2023 Board Minutes

Melisa Lemire made a motion to approve the minutes from April 2023 April 2023 Board Meeting on 04-11-23.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Danielle Canty	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Aye

II. School Updates

A. General School Updates

Melisa Lemire, Chair, directed the attention of the Board to the General School Updates. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, shared that much of the School's traditional end of year preparation, such as graduation and enrollment are in motion. She noted the School is at the middle of the 4th quarter, with progress reports just sent out to families. She lastly highlighted the School's graduating class has two weeks remaining, and noted she would share post-secondary plans for the graduating class at the June meeting.

B. Enrollment Update

Next, Pratt provided updates on current enrollment status and student recruitment efforts. While the School is continuing to hold lotteries through the spring, she shared that the School has accepted 74 new students with a goal of 104 overall. Pratt noted the School is continuing to work on recruitment efforts such as community events, radio ads, bus ads, and shelter ads.

C. Strategic Planning Update

Pratt shared that the Strategic Planning Committee has been working towards completing the Strategic Plan. Pratt noted that the Committee has been reviewing the School's mission along with the school goals through this process. She thanked the Committee for their efforts in completing the Strategic Plan, and shared a goal of engaging two students. Pratt lastly mentioned the Strategic Plan should be completed by June, with the hope to approve it at the June Board Meeting.

D. School Year 2023-2024 Recruitment Update

Finally, Pratt provided a brief update on the School Year 2023-2024 Recruitment Cycle. Pratt mentioned that hiring is underway, with several new hires already, including Executive Coordinator. She noted that the School currently has openings in english, math, science, and operations. She also noted the Schools efforts in hiring new staff. Pratt mentioned the School is currently working with Teach for America (TFA) and City Year and Green Heart Exchange. The Board members raised a question about the process of recruitment and possible areas for improvement. Pratt explained the pool of applicants have not been large, making the process of hiring difficult. Board members shared interest in engaging further on this topic, and Pratt agreed to bring additional ideas to future discussions.

III. School Year 2023-24 Budget Discussion & Vote to Approve

A. School Year 2023-24 Budget Discussion

Next, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the SY2023-24 Budget. Pratt noted that the School's overall Budget has been extensively discussed with the Finance Committee. Pratt mentioned the School's finances remain in a healthy position. Pratt then geared the attention to a few slight changes in the Budget. She noted a slight increase in tuition, a decrease in IT Services, and a change in Transportation Services. She also noted the current investment in student recruitment and a slight reduction in staff. Pratt reminded the Board that this reduction would be done through natural attrition, rather than layoffs, and the staffing model reflects the projected number of students for the next school year.

Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, briefly mentioned an expected surplus, which will be reinvested into the school programming, and will require a Board vote. The Board members mentioned they appreciated the updates and had a good understanding of the Budget.

B. Vote to Approve School Year 2023-24 Budget

Ted Gildea made a motion to Approve School Year 2023-2024 Budget.
Melisa Lemire seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Melisa Lemire	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Abstain
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Danielle Canty	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye

IV. Circuit Street Campus Updates & Discussion

A. Circuit Street Loan Update

Next, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the Circuit Street Loan Update. Pratt mentioned the School will be moving forward with First Citizens Bank. The refinance would include the School and Foundation both paying down the loan to ensure that, despite the interest rate increase since the School's last refinance, the monthly mortgage payments would remain sustainable for the School. A kickoff meeting was held between participating members on 5/16/2023 and will occur weekly. Pratt noted the School is on target to refinance before the deadline of June 30, 2023. Pratt noted Marie is working on a tax free bond for the loan which would provide further savings over the life of the loan. She also noted the School is on the right track, with expectations to own the building within 10 years.

B. Vote to Recommend Mortgage Refinance Option

Ted Gildea made a motion to WHEREAS: The School has received a Term Sheet dated April 14, 2023 (the "Term Sheet") from First Citizens Bank and Trust Company (the "Bank") , a copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A, regarding, among other matters, (i) a loan by the Massachusetts Development Finance Agency (the "Agency") to the Bank of the proceeds of the Agency's tax exempt bonds (the "Bonds"), (ii) a loan by the Bank to The City on a Hill Foundation, Inc. (the "Foundation") in connection with the Bonds, (iii) the School executing a guaranty in favor of the Bank of the Foundation's obligations under that loan; and (iv) the School granting to the Bank security interests in the assets of the School to secured its guaranty; and WHEREAS: The Term Sheet provides for (i) a loan in the amount of \$500,000 from the Bank to the School; (ii) obligations under that loan; and (iii) the School granting to the Bank security interests in the assets of the School to secure its guaranty. NOW THEREFORE, this Board hereby resolves as follows: 1. Sonya Pratt, in her capacity as Executive Director of the School (the "Executive Director"), acting singly, is hereby authorized in the name and on behalf of the

School to execute and deliver to the Bank the Term Sheet outlining the loan facilities in connection with the Bonds, loan agreement, guaranty, and other documents described in the Term Sheet, and to execute and deliver all other documents, instruments and certificates as may be required by the Bank or bond counsel in connection with the foregoing that the Executive Director determines to be necessary and appropriate to effectuate the same, all such documents to be in such form as the Executive Director may in her discretion deem to be in the best interest of the School. 2. That the Executive Director, acting singly, is hereby authorized in the name and on behalf of the School to take all such further actions as may be necessary or desirable to carry out and give effect to the Term Sheet and the foregoing resolution. 3. That the execution and delivery of the Term Sheet by the Executive Director shall be conclusive evidence for all purposes that the same were within the authority of the Executive Director, that the Executive Director has deemed the same to be necessary, proper or advisable and that the same have been authorized and approved by this Board. 4. That the foregoing Resolutions shall take effect immediately.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Melisa Lemire	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Danielle Canty	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Abstain
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Kimberley Thai Small	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent

C. Circuit Street Construction Update

Then, Ted Gildea, Vice Chair & Treasurer, began an update on the Circuit Street Construction. He noted that the contractor had recently conducted a site visit on campus. He also noted the School is waiting on a permit from the City. Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, included the School has made all adjustments necessary to push the project forward. The board members inquired about flexibility regarding the start date of the project. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, mentioned the School has provided an extra week for the possible start date and back up plans are set in place.

V. Fiscal Policies and Procedures Updates Discussion & Vote

A. Approve Updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures

Next, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the Fiscal Policies and Procedures Updates. Pina addressed the group and confirmed that while the Board had approved two updates to the Fiscal Policies and Procedures, a recent procurement discussion with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education highlighted the need for updates in the School's language related to adherence to Chapter 30B Procurement regulations. She also shared that these updates had been approved by the Department. Additionally, Pina mentioned the need to designate the Chief of Staff/Chief Operating Officer role as the Operations Team would be restructuring following team transitions. She explained the Chief Procurement Officer's role in school procurement, and confirmed that she is undergoing the proper training with the state to act in the role. The Board thanked Pina for her review, and shared that they were prepared to take related votes.

Ted Gildea made a motion to Approve Updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Ted Gildea	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Danielle Canty	Aye

B. Vote to Designate Chief Procurement Officer

Ted Gildea made a motion to designate the Chief of Staff/Chief Operating Officer role as Chief Procurement Officer for City on a Hill Charter School.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Robyn Shahid	Absent
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Danielle Canty	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Aye

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Governance Committee Update

Melissa Lemire, Board Chair, directed the attention of the Board to Committee Updates. She began by sharing that the Governance Committee had a meeting on 05/16/2023. Lemire mentioned the committee discussed compliance updates. She also mentioned Department of Education has brought to the Committee's attention that moving forward the School's line of unused credit and any debt should be looked at by the Committee, though the School does not currently carry any debt. Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, mentioned moving forward the Committee has planned accordingly. Lemire also presented a proposed SY2024 Board meeting calendar, and requested members to provide scheduling feedback via google form sent out by Pina.

B. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Alekz Hirschmann, Committee Member, shared that school leadership presented Quarter 3 results to the Committee at their previous meeting. He confirmed that while there continued to be areas of growth in science, trends were generally positive. Pina, who was also in attendance at the committee meeting, shared that since that meeting the School has continued to work through an initiative shared with the committee where school leadership and teachers are meeting with families of students at risk of not being promoted with the goal of making an individual turnaround plan. Pina and Pratt shared that initial feedback has been positive, with both families and students appreciated having the conversation early enough in the spring to make change.

C. Executive Director Support Committee

The May 2023 Executive Director Committee Meeting is being rescheduled. The Committee will provide an update following the meeting.

D. Finance Committee Update

Ted Gildea, Board Vice Chair & Treasurer, thanked the board for approving the Budget. He reminded the members that there is a 300,000 dollar line of credit not being used and the School is currently not in debt.

VII. Organizational Goals Dashboard

A. Organizational Goals Dashboard

Finally, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the Organizational Goals Dashboard. Pratt shared that given the previous updates, this section would be mostly review of material already discussion. She began with the School's academic progress, sharing that while final MAP Growth Testing results were not available due to the test

administration timeline, the leadership team is preparing for end of the year programmatic reviews, which will include a full day of review for this data and that an update will be shared at the August Board Retreat. Next, Pratt reviewed the school's attendance goal, and shared that the school continues to exceed the goal, while still seeing a high chronic absenteeism rate. She reminded the Board that this rate describes the amount of students who have been absent for more than 10% of the school year, and will likely be the focus of the school's goal next year given the success with the average daily attendance rate. Then, Pratt noted that while there was an increase in the out-of-school suspension rate since the last meeting, it is still below the schools goal of fewer than 10% of students having received a suspension. Further, Pratt shared that while the events that lead to the suspension did not take place on campus, the School is engaging with students and families to prevent escalation. Then, Pratt confirmed that while the school did see a small number of transfers, they were all related to the family moving, and the school remains at 192 students. Transitioning to the school year 2023-24 lottery process, Pratt shared that the school has received 389 unique applications, which was an increase of over 20 since the last meeting, and Pina confirmed that this was also an increase of roughly 60 applications when compared to the same point of the school year 2022-23 lottery process. Pratt then confirmed that the remainder of the operations updates, such as the building updates, staff recruitment and loan refinancing, had been shared.

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 6:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melisa Lemire

Documents used during the meeting

- Statement_of_Activity_with_FY23_Projections_and__FY24_Budget.pdf
- CoaH Policies and Procedures (updated 05.10.pdf
- Proposed SY24 Board Calendar.pdf
- March Statement of Net Position School.pdf
- Organizational Goals Dashboard_May23.pdf