

APPROVED



City on a Hill Charter Public School

Minutes

October 2022 Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday October 31, 2022 at 12:30 PM

This meeting took place remotely pursuant to An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations signed into law by Governor Baker on July 16, 2022.

Trustees Present

Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Jack Gearan (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Massiel Eversley (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote), Robyn Shahid (remote), Ted Gildea (remote)

Trustees Absent

Edelyn Contreras, Ollie Osinubi

Ex Officio Members Present

Sonya Pratt (remote)

Non Voting Members Present

Sonya Pratt (remote)

Guests Present

Alekz Hirschmann (remote), Annie Azarloza (remote), Danielle Canty (remote), Jordan Lopez (remote), Michael McGean (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 Monday Oct 31, 2022 at 12:34 PM.

C. Approve September 2022 Meeting Minutes

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the minutes from September 2022 Board Meeting. Brooke Fincke seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Ted Gildea	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Absent
Edelyn Contreras	Absent

II. Board of Trustees Membership Votes

A. Vote to Approve Alekz Hirschmann and Annie Azarloza as Board of Trustees Members

Melisa Lemire, Chair, reintroduced Alekz Hirschmann and Annie Azarloza as candidates to join the City on a Hill Board of Trustees. She reminded the Board that all candidates had spoken with Board and School Leadership to learn about the School and fiduciary responsibilities of being a Trustee. Following these conversations, and their shadowing of the September 2022 Board Meeting, Lemire shared that the Governance Committee was recommending both be appointed.

Lemire asked both Hirschmann and Azarloza to speak more to their experience and drive to join the Board before calling for a vote on their appointment.

Melisa Lemire made a motion to approve Alekz Hirschmann and Annie Azarloza as Board of Trustees Members.

Ted Gildea seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Jack Gearan	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Absent

B. Vote to Approve the Second Term of Andres Tejeda Soto

Next, Lemire notified the Board that the first term of Andres Tejeda Soto had ended, and shared that he intends to carry on his service pending Board approval. Lemire thanked Tejeda Soto for his support of the School over his first three years of service, and called for a vote to approve his second term.

Melisa Lemire made a motion to approve the Second Term of Andres Tejeda Soto.

Ted Gildea seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Brooke Fincke	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Absent
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye

III. FY22 City on a Hill Financial Audit

A. Review FY22 City on a Hill Financial Audit

Next, Lemire directed the Board's attention to the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (FY22) Financial Audit. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, reminded the Board that as a public charter school, City on a Hill is audited annually and due to COVID-19 related federal funding, there was also additional federal elements this year. Additionally, Pratt reminded Trustees of the several transitions that took place in the Finance Department following the departure of the School's Business Manager in October 2021. The School contracted initially with former auditors AAF CPAs, before eventually contracting with the School's

current financial vendor, Central Source. Given the use of AAF CPAs as the School's accountant during the fiscal year, the School contracted with Daniel Dennis for this audit.

Pratt also noted while this section of the meeting is intended to align the Board on the overall results of the audit, the Finance Committee met previously to dive deeper into the report, results, and follow-up. Pratt shared that while there were no material weaknesses for the FY22 audit, as there had been in previous years, there were significant deficiencies found in the School's payroll process. Pratt reminded the Board that the School was aware of the possibility of this finding this winter, as discussed previously with Trustees, and has already addressed the concerns through several mitigations, including an overhauled payroll process which requires review by CentralSource and the Chief of Staff before final approval by Pratt, hiring a Human Resources Coordinator to manage the input process, and adding a quarterly review of Pratt's paid time off (PTO) by the ED Support Committee. She also noted that both findings from the School's Fiscal Year 2020-2021 (FY21) Audit, which related to MTRS Enrollment and General Ledger Maintenance, had been resolved. Finally, Pratt shared that the Committee also discussed the School's most recent financials, which continue to be on track to remain on budget.

Members of the Finance Committee agreed that the audit went well, and the School remains in a strong financial position. The Board thanked Pratt and her team for their work despite the disruptions of the year.

B. Vote to Approve the FY22 Financial Audit

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Financial Audit of City on a Hill Charter Public School.

Brooke Fincke seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Ted Gildea	Aye
Robyn Shahid	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Ollie Osinubi	Absent
Jack Gearan	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Massiel Eversley	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Absent

IV. School Updates

A. General School Updates

Pratt shared that Quarter 1 ends on October 31st, so while final quarter grades were not yet ready, the School has had a strong cultural start to the year for both students and staff. She noted the return of several culture events, such as dances, sports and clubs, as well as academic incentives, like field trips and raffles, as key elements of this strong start. She also noted it is a return to City on a Hill's traditional use of Boston as the School's classroom.

Pratt stated that while Quarter 1 grades were not yet final, the School Academic Committee, which consists of all Lead Teachers and any other education who would like to join, has been consistently meeting to review interims and passing rates. She also reminded the Board of the School's commitment to using NWEA's MAP Growth Test to help determine student academic growth over the year, and shared that all students have now taken the baseline test, with growth data being able to be calculated following the winter and spring administrations of the test.

Next, Pratt shared that the School continues to have a goal around reducing the overall number of annual suspensions, and currently has not had a single instance of In-School Suspension (ISS) or Out-of-School Suspension (OSS).

Then, Pratt transitioned to speaking about the School's enrollment. She reminded the Board that the School is currently under-enrolled, but has continued to place a strong emphasis on recruiting. She also noted that given the time of year, the School is also beginning to look towards recruitment for School Year 2023-2024, for which the School already has 70 applications. Pratt thanked the Board for the ideas to expand the School's enrollment efforts generated from the Board's last meeting, and noted that School Leadership will be meeting with the enrollment team to discuss further. Pratt also reminded the Board that School Leadership is engaging with a consultant to produce a multi-year strategic plan, which will consider enrollment trends and goals, and anticipates interviews involving all stakeholders to begin in the next few weeks.

Board members asked when School Leadership anticipated being able to have a strategic conversation about enrollment. Pratt shared that she and Jordan Pina, Chief of Staff, would be preparing the necessary data to have the conversation within the next month. Trustees also asked to confirm whether enrollment is currently a financial risk. Pratt confirmed that it is not an immediate concern due to conservative budgeting, but needs to be addressed for long-term stability.

V. Circuit Street Renovation / Construction Update

A. Circuit Street Renovation / Construction Update

Then, Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the Circuit Street Renovation and Construction Update. Pratt reminded the Board and guests that the School is continuing to deal with space constraints, and is attempting to move forward with a project that would 1) install operable panels into classrooms to create smaller breakout spaces and 2)

add additional office space. This work was intended to be completed in Summer 2022, but following permitting issues, the School was unable to begin renovations before the start of school.

Pratt shared that following the last update to the Board in September 2022, where she and Board Officers proposed shifting the timeline of the project to Summer 2023 with the intention of rebidding the project in January 2023, the project managers have returned with an anticipated budget of roughly \$1.2 million. This budget is roughly six times the initial budget proposed in early 2022. Several Trustees, including those with previous experience in real estate development and school renovations, noted their surprise at the number and inquired as to whether the School should contract with a different vendor.

Pratt shared that the partitions and architectural drawings are already owned by the School, but she would need to work with the Finance Team to determine total costs to make a recommendation at the next Board meeting.

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Governance Committee Update

Melisa Lemire, Chair, shared that some updates had been covered through the votes taken earlier in the meeting, but that additionally the Governance Committee has been discussing Board engagement. She noted that there have been several cancelled meetings due to lack of quorum this school year, and encouraged Board members to reach out to members of the Governance Committee if availability has changed. Additionally, she welcomed members to join in conversations held at the Governance Committee whether or not they were an officer.

B. Finance Committee Update

All Finance Committee Updates were discussed during the FY22 Audit Discussion.

VII. 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 1:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melisa Lemire

Documents used during the meeting

None