

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### October 2023 Board Meeting

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#### **Date and Time**

Tuesday October 24, 2023 at 5:00 PM

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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. The meeting was held via Zoom at <https://cityonahill-org.zoom.us/j/81315100800>.

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#### **Trustees Present**

Alekz Hirschmann (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Danielle Canty (remote), Edelyn Contreras (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote), Ted Gildea (remote)

#### **Trustees Absent**

Andres Tejeda Soto, Kimberley Thai Small, Michelle Allwood

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

Sonya Pratt (remote)

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

Sonya Pratt (remote)

#### **Guests Present**

Asha Ibrahim (remote), Cynthia Marie (remote)

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Record Attendance

### B. Call the Meeting to Order

Ted Gildea called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Oct 24, 2023 at 5:04 PM.

### C. Approve September 2023 Meeting Minutes

Melisa Lemire made a motion to approve the minutes from September 2023 Board Meeting on 09-26-23.

Ted Gildea seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

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

## II. School Updates

### A. General School Updates

Ted Gildea, Board Vice Chair & Treasurer, directed the attention of the Board to the General School Updates. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, shared that the end of Quarter 1 is approaching. She provided updates on the school's efforts to improve academic achievement and behavior. Pratt noted the Academic Excellence Committee met and reviewed academic and MCAS data from Quarter 1. She mentioned the data showcased growth academically but also the need to improve MCAS achievement. Pratt shared the school's action steps to improve MCAS achievement which included 1) restructuring the 9 & 10 grade English classes 2) switching 9 & 10 grade English classes to a book based curriculum 3) switching to MCAS based lesson plans, and 4) connecting with other stand alone Charter Schools who have been able to see growth and achievement on their MCAS scores. Pratt then discussed the need to structurally address the behavior concerns from 9th grade students which she believes is connected to the culture shift. She noted the School is having more culture events in hope to shift the culture in the 9th

grade. Pratt shared details on the School's last culture event, Halloween Game Night, and encouraged the Board to take a look at the School's social media.

## **B. SY24 Enrollment Update**

Next, Pratt provided enrollment and attrition updates. Pratt noted the enrollment team was able to reach their goal and are currently still running lotteries. Pratt stated that although the goal was met in terms of enrollment she had concerns around attrition. She mentioned the attrition team has noticed a turn around in 9th grade students related to the culture of the School. Pratt stated she is working with Laura Edouard, Principal, to the stabilize the culture.

The Board asked Pratt how many students the School currently has enrolled and what the goals for the upcoming years are. Pratt shared the School currently has 190 students enrolled. She noted the goals for the following years will be discussed by the Finance Committee in conjunction with the School's financial vendor, CentralSource, with the intention of a full Board discussion in January or February 2024. Following the conversations of the Finance Committee, Pratt stated the budget and goals would be shared with the Board.

Trustees then inquired as to the School's plan for philanthropy. Pratt shared that the City on a Hill Foundation is beginning to look into re-launching fundraising, but noted that philanthropy will not be a core component of the budget.

## **C. SY23 Academic Results & SY24 Academic Goals Discussion**

Next, Gildea directed the attention of the Board to the School Year 2022-23 Academic Results & School Year 2023-24 Academic Goals Discussion. Pratt noted that she shared the majority of the updates were shared in the General School Updates section, but invited Alekz Hirschmann, Academic Excellence Chair, to share any other updates from the Committee. Hirschmann agreed that the updates were covered, and emphasized the impact of learning loss across the state. Pratt also noted that the SY24 goals were being finalized with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), but would be a refreshed version of the previous year's goal with new targets in mind based on the previous school year's results.

# **III. Finance Updates and Discussion**

## **A. General Finance Updates**

Then, Gildea directed the attention of the Board to the General Finance Updates.

Cynthia Marie, CEO of Central Source, displayed the School's Budget vs Actuals as of September 30, 2023, and noted that the School was on track for spending based on the time of year. She noted that the School's tuition payment would be adjusted in December, given the School is tracking to be slightly below projected pre-enrollment numbers submitted to DESE in March 2023. She noted that given the School's surplus, the School

is not concerned about continued ability to meet all responsibilities. She noted that further discussion related to management strategy would be held in the next Finance Committee. She also displayed the School's Statement of Financial Position as of September 30, 2023 and noted the School's strong position in terms of cash on hand, with at least 6 months of operating funds available. She also noted that the School continues not to use its \$500,000 Line of Credit nor does it carry any debt. The Board thanked Marie for her presentation, and had no concerns.

#### **B. Review FY23 City on a Hill Financial Audit**

Next, Gildea directed the attention of the Board to the Fiscal Year 2022-23 Financial Audit, and shared that for the first time in multiple years, the School did not receive any findings and resolved all previous corrective actions from previous fiscal years. He shared that the Finance Committee reviewed the audit with Marie and voted to recommend that the Board approve. He then thanked Marie for her team's work, and asked her to provide an overview for those who had not been in the Finance Committee meeting. She noted while the audit shows a surplus, there were major capital expenditures and Foundation debt pay-down that were not reflected, and this is explained in the Management Discussion and Analysis. She noted that following the vote, the School will submit both the FY24 Audit and Charter School End of Year Financial Report (CSEOYFR). Pratt thanked Marie again, and asked if there were any further questions or concerns. Hearing none, Gildea called for a motion to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee.

#### **C. Vote to Approve the FY23 Financial Audit**

Melisa Lemire made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee to approve the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Financial Audit.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

##### **Roll Call**

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

### **IV. Board Committee Updates**

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

Next, Gildea shared that the Committee received an update on probation updates, with no current concerns, and also discussed the need to continue growing the Board.

**B. Academic Excellence Committee Update**

All updates had previously been covered during the meeting.

**C. Finance Committee Update**

All updates had previously been covered during the meeting.

**V. 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 6:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ted Gildea

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**Documents used during the meeting**

- CoaH Academic Data 2023-2024\_23.10.23.pdf
- Budget vs Actuals\_23.09.30.pdf
- Statement of Financial Position\_23.09.30.pdf
- SNP September.pdf
- Statement of Cash Flows (1).pdf
- YTD September.pdf
- COH Draft Audit.pdf
- Organizational Goals Dashboard\_Oct2023.pdf