

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### February 2024 Board Meeting

---

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

Tuesday February 13, 2024 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. The meeting was held via Zoom at <https://cityonahill-org.zoom.us/j/81315100800>.

---

##### **Trustees Present**

Alekz Hirschmann (remote), Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Edelyn Contreras (remote), Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote), Ted Gildea (remote)

##### **Trustees Absent**

Danielle Canty, 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), Diana Landry (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 Feb 13, 2024 at 5:04 PM.

### C. Approve December 2023 Meeting Minutes

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the minutes from December 2023. December 2023 Board Meeting on 12-12-23.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Melisa Lemire	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Danielle Canty	Absent
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye

### D. Approve January 2024 Meeting #1 Minutes

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the minutes from January 2024 #1. January 2024 Board Meeting #1 on 01-12-24.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye

**Roll Call**

Danielle Canty	Absent
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye

**E. Approve January 2024 Meeting #2 Minutes**

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve the minutes from January 2024 #2. January 2024 Board Meeting #2 on 01-24-24.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Danielle Canty	Absent
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Ted Gildea	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye

**II. City on a Hill Charter Discussion**

**A. City on a Hill Charter Discussion**

Melisa Lemire, Chair, opened the floor for discussion following the Boards recent decision to not renew the charter and surrender it to the Commonwealth effective June 30th, 2025. Lemire addressed action items amongst the Board including votes that would take place as well as the appointment of trustees responsible for ensuring the completion of the Department of Education Closing Procedures.

Ted Gildea made a motion to affirm that the Board of Trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School (the “Board”) not renew the City on a Hill Charter and that the City on a Hill Charter be surrendered to the Commonwealth effective June 30, 2025.

Edelyn Contreras seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Danielle Canty	Absent
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye

#### Roll Call

Ted Gildea	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent

Alekz Hirschmann made a motion to designate Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, and Jordan Pina, Chief Operating Officer, as the contact persons to send and receive communications to and from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (“DESE”) regarding closure of City on a Hill Charter Public School.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Ted Gildea	Aye
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Danielle Canty	Absent
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent

Alekz Hirschmann made a motion to designate Melisa Lemire, Board Chair, and Ted Gildea, Board Vice Chair, as the Trustees who will be responsible for ensuring that DESE closing procedures are completed, and to authorize Melisa Lemire and Ted Gildea to act on the Board’s behalf for purposes of entering into agreements or engaging the services of a closing auditor in the event the full Board is unable to meet.

Andres Tejeda Soto seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Ted Gildea	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye
Danielle Canty	Absent
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Brooke Fincke	Aye

### III. Organizational Updates

#### A.

### General School Updates

Lemire directed the attention of the Board to the General School Updates. Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, provided recent School Updates following the decision of the Board to not renew the charter and surrender it to the Commonwealth effective June 30th, 2025. Pratt noted all staff were notified in person as well as via email. Pratt also noted families were provided communication via email, mail and phone call. She shared families and staff have responded well and the School held a Community Meeting for any further questions from the Community.

Pratt then gave an overview of recent and upcoming School Events, including Black History Trivia Night and Saturday MCAS Practice Testing.

### B. General Finance Updates

Next, the Board turned their attention to the General Finance Updates. Ted Gildea, Vice Chair and Treasurer, noted that the School remains in a financially strong position. He shared that the School continues to meet its goal for this year and the School Year 2023-2024 budget remains on track. He also shared that although changes are planned for School Year 2024-2025, the School will remain financially strong and in-depth discussions have begun amongst the Finance Committee.

## IV. Meal Modification Policy

### A. Meal Modification Policy Discussion

Jordan Pina, Chief Operating Officer, shared an overview of the Nutrition Department. Pina stated following a Nutrition Review the School would implement the Meal Modification Policy and ensure proper documentation for student dietary needs. Pina noted the Board must vote on a Meal Modification Policy to ensure that all meal reimbursements are properly documented and submitted for approval and reimbursement.

### B. Vote to Approve City on a Hill's Meal Modification Policy

Ted Gildea made a motion to approve City on a Hill's Meal Modification Policy.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Melisa Lemire	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Danielle Canty	Absent
Michelle Allwood	Absent
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye

#### Roll Call

Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye

### V. Committee Updates

#### A. Governance Committee Updates

Melisa Lemire, Board Chair, shared the Governance Committee discussed Compliance and Board Growth in their recent meeting. Lemire emphasized the importance of Board Members staying engaged, particularly as the School approaches it's 30th School Year. Lemire shared despite efforts to reengage Board Member, Michelle Allwood, she has not been responsive or attended meetings. She prompted a motion to the Board to remove Michelle Allwood as a trustee.

#### B. Vote to Remove Board Member

Ted Gildea made a motion to remove Michelle Allwood as a Trustee of City on a Hill Charter Public School.

Alekz Hirschmann seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Michelle Allwood	Absent
Jacqueline Bennett	Aye
Danielle Canty	Absent
Brooke Fincke	Aye
Melisa Lemire	Aye
Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora	Aye
Ted Gildea	Aye
Kimberley Thai Small	Absent
Andres Tejeda Soto	Aye
Edelyn Contreras	Aye
Alekz Hirschmann	Aye

#### C. Finance Committee Updates

Ted Gildea, Committee Chair, shared that all financial updates were shared during the General School Updates section.

#### D. Academic Excellence Committee Update

Alekz Hirschmann shared that the Academic Excellence Committee met with Laura Edouard, Principal, earlier in the week and discussed the most recent set of Academic Data. Hirschmann shared the School's passing rates increased by 8 percent, noted from

Progress Reports in the second quarter. Hirschmann also shared that despite a slight dip attributed to midterms, there was significant growth in the 10th-grade class and in MAP testing. He noted the Schools efforts to align classes with the MCAS format yielded positive outcomes, especially in Math and English. He shared the School provided incentives for growth and students remained engaged and motivated, demonstrating a commitment to improvement. Hirschmann noted overall there is strong focus on student success and continued efforts for improvement into the next academic year.

#### **E. Executive Director Support Committee**

Jacqueline Bennett, Committee Chair, shared that the Committee did not meet in February 2024, but that the previous meeting focused on recruitment for a successor Executive Director, which is no longer needed. She noted that moving forward the Committee will work through an extension contract for Pratt.

### **VI. Organizational Goals Dashboard**

#### **A. Organizational Goals Dashboard**

Finally, the Board turned its attention to the Organizational Goals Dashboard. Pratt began sharing updates focusing on educational outcomes such as passing rates and graduation projections for different classes. She shared there has been a dip in passing rates compared to the previous quarter, which is typical for midterms. However, it's noted that the performance in Science, especially Biology, had significant discrepancies between different sections. Laura Edouard, Principal, is investigating the factors contributing to these discrepancies and plans to address the issue effectively.

Pratt stated The Class of 2024 is projected to have a graduation rate of 91%, indicating strong performance throughout the year. Additionally, she noted a significant portion of the class (65%) has been accepted into two or four-year post-secondary institutions. Overall, Pratt noted the data reflects positive trends in Organizational Performance.

### **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 6:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Melisa Lemire

---

### **Documents used during the meeting**

- COAH\_BudgetvsActual\_1.31.24.pdf

- COAH StatementofCashFlows\_1.31.24.pdf
- COAH StatementofFinancialPosition\_1.31.24.pdf
- Meal Modification Policy [DRAFT].pdf
- Organizational Goals Dashboard\_Feb24.pdf