

APPROVED



## City on a Hill Charter Public School

### Minutes

#### September 2024 COAH Board of Trustees Meeting

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

Tuesday September 24, 2024 at 5:00 PM

##### **Location**

<https://cityonahill-org.zoom.us/j/81315100800>

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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.

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##### **Trustees Present**

Andres Tejeda Soto (remote), Brooke Fincke (remote), Danielle Canty (remote), Edelyn Contreras (remote), Gabriela (Gaby) DeLeon-Evora (remote), Jacqueline Bennett (remote), Melisa Lemire (remote)

##### **Trustees Absent**

Alekz Hirschmann, Kimberley Thai Small, Ted Gildea

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

Sonya Pratt (remote)

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

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Sonya Pratt (remote)

**Guests Present**

Asha Ibrahim (remote), Diana Landry (remote), Jordan Lopez (remote), Nikia Davis (remote)

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**I. Opening Items**

**A. Record Attendance**

**B. Call the Meeting to Order**

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to Call meeting to order.  
Brooke Fincke seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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

Melisa Lemire called a meeting of the board of trustees of City on a Hill Charter Public School to order on Tuesday Sep 24, 2024 at 5:05 PM.

**C. Approve August 2024 Board Minutes**

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to Approve August Board Minutes.  
Brooke Fincke seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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

## **II. School Updates**

### **A. General School Updates**

Melisa Lemire, Board Chair, expressed gratitude to the Board for their attendance and directed their attention to Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, for General School Updates. Pratt shared that the school has successfully kicked off the year, noting that it is slightly over-enrolled with approximately 78 students, with about 90% currently dual enrolled at Roxbury Community College (RCC) or Wentworth Institute of Technology. She highlighted that attendance has reached an all-time high of 90%.

Pratt also noted that she met with the School's Union Representative, who mentioned that staff morale is high, with satisfaction stemming from observing students actively engaging in both on-campus and off-campus courses. She indicated that the school is in the process of hiring a Spanish teacher, and students have been participating in an online Edgenuity course with a live instructor, with feedback suggesting they are thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Andres Tejeda, Board Member, inquired about the school's process for tracking attendance in remote and dual enrollment courses. In response, Pratt noted that all students are required to check in at City on a Hill each morning before attending their college courses, during which attendance is recorded. She explained that College and Career Counselors regularly visit the college campuses to verify that students are attending their classes. Pratt also mentioned that the school has consulted with institutions employing similar models, such as New Heights Charter School, which has provided valuable support in implementing an effective approach for City on a Hill.

### **B. Finance Updates**

Next, the Board turned their attention to the General Finance Updates. Jordan Lopez, Chief Operating Officer, displayed the School's Budget vs Actuals as of September 30, 2024, indicating that expenditures were consistent with seasonal expectations and should not raise concern. Lopez provided a detailed overview of recent spending, highlighting the need to utilize ESSER funds before the September 30 deadline. Lopez discussed a strategic spending approach, focusing on investments in field trips, staff appreciation, and bulk purchases of essential supplies. She noted the school currently accommodates 78 students, slightly above the projected 75 enrollment. Lopez reassured the committee of the school's strong financial position, supported by conservative budgeting practices.

## **III. Board Committee Updates**

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

Melissa Lemire, Board Chair, directed the attention of the Board to Committee Updates.

Lemire provided updates on the Governance Committee's meeting held on September 24, 2024. She noted that the committee addressed compliance updates and noted positive ongoing meetings with the Department of Education. Additionally, Lemire informed the Board that the School Foundation is currently in the process of selling the building.

**B. Academic Excellence Committee Update**

The Academic Excellence Committee did not convene for a meeting this month. The Committee will provide an update following the meeting.

**C. Executive Director Support Committee**

The Executive Director Support Committee did not convene for a meeting this month. The Committee will provide an update following the meeting.

**D. Finance Committee Update**

Andres Tejeda, Committee Member, confirmed that the Finance Committee convened earlier this month to discuss the School's current financial position. He noted that much of the discussion had been covered by Lopez earlier in the meeting.

**IV. Organizational Goals Dashboard**

**A. Organizational Goals Dashboard**

Sonya Pratt, Executive Director, provided an encouraging overview of the school's enrollment statistics, noting a significant increase in daily average attendance and a decline in chronic absenteeism. She highlighted that 73% of students are enrolled in at least one dual enrollment class, with those who missed the summer enrollment deadline set to have another opportunity to register for college courses next semester. During Back to School Night, the school successfully hosted its first Special Education Advisory Council meeting, allowing parents, staff, and community members to engage in crucial discussions about special education services and resources.

Pratt then shared updates on the school's facilities, revealing that the basement is being converted into a storage area while operations are currently focused on the upper levels of the building. She emphasized the school's commitment to fostering stronger connections within its smaller community. Additionally, Sonya highlighted the school's regular meetings with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to ensure proactive planning and a smooth transition moving forward.

**V. Closing Items**

**A. Adjourn Meeting**

Andres Tejeda Soto made a motion to Adjourn Meeting.

Edelyn Contreras seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Melisa Lemire

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**Documents used during the meeting**

- COAH\_BSvsPY\_8.31.24.pdf
- COAH\_P\_L\_08.31.24.pdf
- CoaH Organizational Goals Dashboard - Sept 24 (1).pptx