APPROVED

New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees

Minutes

March Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday March 26, 2024 at 5:00 PM

Location
1105 W Chestnut St
Brockton, MA 02301

OR

Zoom

New Heights Board of Trustees
Starting Time: 5:00pm
Location: 1105 W Chestnut Street
Brockton, MA 02301
Join Zoom Meeting

ZOOM Meeting:
Description:
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8981912806?pwd=WHJ2dE1sTHNYVlVmNUsvTkxEaW1JZz09

Trustees Present
G. Bengen (remote), G. Phillips (remote), G. Swaby (remote), J. Charnel (remote), J. Radzevich (remote), M. Sullivan (remote), N. Christ (remote), S. Bernard (remote), S. Jackson (remote), V. Marturano (remote), W. Lyttle (remote)

Trustees Absent
None

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened

J. Charnel

Ex Officio Members Present
O. Walker (remote)

Guests Present
B. Hancock (remote), J. Vega (remote), K. Kendrick (remote), M. Fernandes (remote), M. Jean (remote), R. Lewis (remote), S. Graham (remote), T. Chin (remote), W. Libby (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Sullivan called a meeting of the board of trustees of New Heights Charter School Board of Trustees to order on Tuesday Mar 26, 2024 at 5:04 PM.

B. Approved Board Members List

C. Roll Call

D. Reading and Approval of Minutes

M. Sullivan made a motion to approve the minutes from February Board Meeting on 02-27-24.
W. Lyttle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Executive Director's Report

A. Enrollment/Lottery Report

- LP provided updates on lottery/enrollment, current enrollments, and projected enrollment by grades.
- Have received 100 applications since the March 1 lottery
- In the last three years 300 applications haven't been admitted, can anticipate another 500 applicants in addition to those on the waitlist currently
- Are applications not correctly filled out included in the numbers presented?
    - Out of the 100 applications, some submitted prior to March 1. Some issues are incorrect grade applications or students not currently enrolled in school at all. Do reach out to these families to try and resolve these discrepancies.

J. Charnel arrived at 5:12 PM.

B. Spotlights

- The following presentation was given spotlighting students, staff, teachers, and a department: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1LW9oX24l6dsfgZXsvmfOuhC0Y9Q9tbAlbRIzgyUl9JQ/edit?usp=sharing

C. Civics Project

- Dr. Vidmar presented the attached NHCSB Civics Showcase presentation
  - 3 8th grade teams will be presenting this year.
  - What can the Board do?
    - We will send out a form asking for participation as Community Advisors assessing each project over the course of an afternoon. Would appreciate participation in this way if at all possible.

D. Heights vs. Heroes

- 2nd Heights vs. Heroes Basketball game with the Mayor's office will be on April 26 from 6-8pm. Would love for the Board to participate in support of the students, a reminder will be sent out shortly.

E. Athletics

- Steve Dalton provided an update on the Basketball season. New Heights finished ranked 44th overall in the State at the end of the MIAA season. Boys won the MCSAO championship for the second year in a row.
  - Are there any boosters that help support Athletics? If not, should look into trying to do some.
    - Do have banners hung up in the gym for advertisers. Are looking into the booster route but needing guidance in how to set that up and would love to have help in setting up the boosters.
      - Jeff Charnel is willing to support getting the right people in place to set that up.
  - Will there be an overlap of the 7 sports in 2025 or will they be phased in over a couple of years?
    - Looking to have Football this Fall, Baseball and Softball in Spring during the 24-25 school year.

V. Marturano made a motion to accept the Executive Director's reports as presented.
G. Bengen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. New Business

A. Building Site

- Omari explained the need to form a building committee to ease the space constraints as outlined in the Building Site email attached.
- Steve Bernard made a motion to create a new building committee to meet the building challenges. Seconded by Vincent Marturano.
    - Is this a short-term issue while renovations occur at MCC or is this a permanent on-going matter for us?
        - This would be the work of the building committee. MCC is still trying to identify the amount of time the buildings will be under construction. They reassured us that they are still hoping to have space for us in the future. Believe the committee should look at this as a 2 year challenge unless advised by MCC otherwise.
            - Gail Gibson Sheffield states that MCC is working on providing space on the Canton campus for New Heights students. This should be about a year due to a maintenance issue in the T Building which should be resolved after this year.
                - Is MCC still committed to the partnership?
                    - MCC is deeply committed to the partnership. The building plan is strengthening allied health which was already planned, the maintenance issue in the T Building caused the lack of space for this year.
    - What's the vision of the make up of the building committee?
        - Think Gail Gibson Sheffield would be helpful, Steve Bernard would be helpful, representative from Finance would be helpful. There is space for any Board member interested in the work.
    - Steve Bernard, Nicholas Christ, Jeff Charnel, and Gail Gibson Sheffield agreed to be on the committee. Other interested members can reach out to Omari about joining.

IV. Academic Excellence Committee

A. Black History Month and Student Activities Review

- Dr. Vidmar presented the Student Activities presentation attached

B. Update on AA Degrees

- Maria Fernandes presented the AA Degree Update attached

C. Student Conduct Update

- Kaitlin Kendrick presented the Student Conduct presentation attached.
- Nicolas Jackson presented the update fight data for February
    - There were 7 incidents in February - 0 Major Physical Incidents, 0 Fights, 7 Minor Physical Altercations

        - Dr. Jones presented her philosophy around changing the terminology of Assault and Battery to describe physical incidents.
    - Middle School consisted of the majority of incidents.

D. Revised Electronics Policy

- Bryan Hancock presented a proposed updated Electronic Device Procedure to more thoroughly outline the steps regarding electronic policy violations.
    - Updated policy includes all wifi compatible electronic devices
    - Is there an explanation as to why it's important for students to put electronic devices away?
        - This would be an addendum to the handbook where that is discussed.
    - Is there any mention of shutting off devices at the beginning of class besides putting it away?
        - In the handbook where this will go it discusses students having devices off and away.
    - Is it the intention to share this procedure with parents so they know there will be instances where teachers ask students to turn over their device?
        - Yes, having family support is why this is being brought to the board in order to share that out with the community.

V. Marturano made a motion to approve the procedure as outlined by Bryan Hancock concerning the Electronic Device Policy.
G. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
N. Christ made a motion to accept the Academic Excellence Committee Report as presented to the Board.
G. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Finance Committee

A. YTD Finances

- Nicholas Christ presented the FY24 budget as attached
    - No material changes to report. There is a plan for the surplus as presented in the following discussions.

B. Investing Funds into Money-Market and/or CD

- Shelly Jackson presented the following information on Money Market and CD's:
    - **North Easton Savings Bank**
      MM 3.44% Rate. APY 3.50%
      CD 9 months 4.89% Rate. APY 5.00%

    - **Hingham Institution for Savings**
      CD 9months 4.69% Rate APY 4.80%
      MM .01%
    - **Dedham**
      CD 9months 5.25%
      MM 3% APY
    - **BayCoast Bank**
      MM 4.50% and CD 8 Mos 5.00%
    - Nicholas Christ recused himself from the discussion regarding the decision
    - Bill Lyttle, Shelly Jackson, and Jason Radzevich recommend that $500,000 be put into a Money Market at BayCoast Bank and $500,000 be put into a CD at BayCoast Bank
- Steve Bernard suggested that anyone connected with a bank recuse themselves from the discussion and vote regarding where to put the funds.
    - Nicholas Christ has chosen to recuse himself from the discussion due to his connection with BayCoast Bank. There is nothing that prevents doing business with a board member's business as long as they recuse themselves from the discussion and decision.
- What was the process that was done to find these numbers and come to the decision?
    - Each member was assigned a different bank to look into and it was ensured that no one found rates on a bank they were connected with in any way. One bank offered a .03% higher APY on a Money Market if a new operating account was opened and it didn't seem worth the effort for that amount.
- Won't we not know our budget needs until June? Should we wait until then to make a decision?
    - The Money Market is 100% liquid and can be removed at any point in time, there may be a limit on the amount of withdrawals in a year but this information will be shared first thing in the morning.
    - There will still be $2.1 million in the bank if needed
- Should we be thinking about more than $1 million? Was this discussed?
    - Keeping enough money in the operating account was an important consideration at this point.

G. Phillips made a motion to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee.
J. Charnel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

V. Marturano	Aye
S. Jackson	Aye
J. Charnel	Aye
G. Swaby	Aye
J. Radzevich	Aye
N. Christ	Abstain

Roll Call

M. Sullivan	Aye
W. Lyttle	Aye
S. Bernard	Aye
G. Bengen	Aye
G. Phillips	Aye

C. Athletics - Funding Requests

- Steve Dalton presented a plan to bring the Athletics Department into compliance through the upgrade of the gym, and purchase of equipment and uniforms. This is outlined in the attached Athletics Funding Rationale.
    - Operation upgrade (gym floor, hoops, scoreboard) - $65,000
    - Program upgrades (uniforms and sports equipment) - $97,500
    - Miscellaneous (training equipment) - $17,500

D. Transportation - 2 vans

- Tim Chin presented the options to purchase used vans (2022 vs 2019) to transport athletic teams to games and practices, as well as smaller field trips:
    - A 2022 van would cost $201,991.83 over 5 years, $141,338 in the first year
    - A 2019 van would cost $152,197.50 over 5 years, $99,190.50 in the first year
- If these vans are purchased this year there will be cost savings for next fiscal year.
- Are you able to use a 15 passenger van to transport kids? In the past this wasn't allowed.
    - Tim did research on this and it's a bit of a gray area. Spoke to someone who coordinates school transportation for all of MA who said they were allowed to transport for other student activities. We aren't able to have them on a fixed route transportation schedule which would require bus plates. They would be registered as a regular vehicle and only used for transportation to games and field trips.
    - These vans used to be a safety concern. Are they still?
        - They have made changes to ensure better safety. Would also like to have any coaches involved in DOT trainings already scheduled.
- Vote will be pushed to next month when the information on new vans are available and board requests an ROI analysis as well.

E. Washington, DC Trip

- Looking for about $15,000 to support students attending the Washington DC Trip who might not be able to afford it.

F. DR Service Learning Trip

- Hoping to receive an additional $10,000 for the DR trip to support it occurring in this fiscal year.

S. Bernard made a motion to approve the use of the anticipated budget surplus for uniforms and athletic equipment, Washington DC trip, and the DR trip to not exceed $150,000 total.
G. Phillips seconded the motion.

- Recommendation from the Finance Committee is to approve the additional funds to be used for the Washington DC, DR trip, and Athletics not beyond the anticipated surplus of $145,000 anticipated in the current budget.
- Steve Bernard recommended increasing the amount available to $150,000 for incidentals.

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

VI. Governance Committee

A. Updates

- Committee met yesterday to discuss the upcoming Executive Director annual review.
- Discussed having a retreat this summer but decided to postpone it for another year. In lieu of the retreat would like to schedule one or two dates to hold the orientation created by Maria Fernandes for the full board.

B. Expansion

- The committee discussed if now is the time to consider expansion given everything that is happening in Brockton at this time. This would be in the works for 2 years from now and require research to make a decision. The committee recommends forming a working group to explore the issue more thoroughly and working group should make a recommendation on if expansion should be sought in June.
    - Does this have to be approved?
        - This would require a full application to go before State Board for a vote in January/February next year.

V. Marturano made a motion to form a committee for the purpose of providing counsel to the board as to whether or not to seek expansion of the school.
J. Charnel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

- Vincent Marturano will chair the committee.

- An email will go out to board members requesting them to express interest in the committee within a set time frame.

S. Bernard made a motion to accept the Governance Committee report as presented.
J. Charnel seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

V. Marturano made a motion to adjourn.
G. Phillips seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
M. Sullivan

Documents used during the meeting

- NHCSB Civics Showcase.pdf
- Building Site Email.pdf
- Student Activities.pdf
- AA Degree Update.pdf
- Student Conduct.pdf
- Electronic_Device_Procedure_updated_3_11_2024.pdf
- FY24 Board Financial Statement Febraury (1).pdf
- Athletics Funding Rationale.pdf
- 10th Grade DC Trip.pdf