

**Holyoke Community Charter School
2200 Northampton Street
Holyoke, MA 01040
Board of Trustees**

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – April 27, 2022

In Attendance: Jay Breines, Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Janine Kent (entered at 5:12 pm after approval of minutes and membership), Li-Jun Ma (exited at 7:00 pm), Lina Rivera (exited at 5:30 pm after membership), Jean Swinney (exited at 6:58 pm)

Guests: Mahdi Kansou, Ryan Meek, Dan Pallotta, Tom Paquin, Vanessa Pileggi, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Robert Todisco

Not Present: Rafael Rodriguez

I. Meeting called to order at 5:07 p.m. by Leona Florek.
Public comments/none.

II. **Approval of Minutes**
Jay Breines moved to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2022 regular meeting. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Ma - Abstain. The motion passed.

III. **Board Reports**

Board Mail

None

Membership

Cynthia Dennis moved to renew Lina Rivera’s term for an additional three years. Seconded by Jay Breines. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Ma – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Facilities

Dan Pellotta and Robert Todisco, from P3 reported on the gymnasium/classroom construction project progress. They reported that the approved project to install safety film on the windows in the garden room to be funded by 8.5mil. Rob then presented the project budget and reviewed five projected contingencies:

- 3R2: mezzanine beam enclosures to meet code: \$15,269
- 4R1: additional work requested by Holyoke Gas & Electric (work related to Gillette building): \$10,563
- 6: power to light display cases and hand dryers: \$5,739
- 7R1: Verizon service conduit relocation (work related to Gillette building): \$38,322
- 10: additional foundation work along building line A (tie the two buildings together, reinforce existing foundation: \$11,911

The five contingencies total \$81,803 out of an available \$287,987 contingency line.

The board and guests discussed the possible need to upgrade from the copper conduit to a fiber conduit to increase/upgrade internet connectivity, but was determined not necessary due to the fact that the school already has a fiber line and adding an additional one would bring no additional benefit.

Tom Paquin reported that there was a collapse of the asphalt in the back driveway. Dan and Rob presented the site plans and stated that the back driveway was not included in the original plan. They reported that some areas in the back have sinkage happening, but it needs further inspection to the substrate to determine the cause; there will be an additional expense in the future to fix this, but an estimate is not yet available.

Dan and Rob presented the board with a draft of the 4'x8' sign that will be installed on Route 5 to advertise the construction. This will happen in the next two months, as it requires a special permit from the Holyoke planning board; Dan will report back on the permitting process. A second sign will be installed at the school level to advertise to current parents and students; no permit is necessary for that, as it is not on the public street. Dan stated he would have the sign up by May 23. Janine Kent asked for more diversity on the sign to represent HCCS parents/students better.

Ryan Meek inquired if the current budget includes repaving the entrance from the street down the hill and replacing the guard rail. Dan reported that it was not. Ryan asked if the board could possibly add that as a change order and if the board would consider adding a new school sign on the street up top. Dan stated there was a possibility of adding a shim layer to the pavement on the drive and adding something better than a guard rail; he could price that out if that was requested by the board. Cynthia Dennis stated that the back of the school pavement/drive is more important. Janine stated that an estimate for the signage would be good; if there is a quote, the project could be delayed for next year or beyond (grand opening) if too expensive. Dan reported he would get an estimate. Tom reported that Gillette has to pay a percentage of any improvements to the entrance way.

Rob and Dan exited the meeting.

Finances

The board reviewed the financial reports for March and found no issues. **Cynthia Dennis motioned to approve the financial report for March. Seconded by Li-Jun Ma. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Ma – Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

Ryan Meek presented the budget for FY 2023 and the End-of-Year Forecast for FY 22 to the board. He discussed state-wide budget increases to tuition revenue; reviewed staff costs, the ESSER grant (new art teacher and outreach coordinator are part of ESSER grant). He stated that projected last year as part of the operation budget was HVAC Rooftop units and bathroom stall doors; but this project was not completed because the school was unable to obtain any bids due to short staff. The board discussed the project and want to include the cost in the FY2023 budget.

The board asked Dr. Sonia Correa Pope if there were any additional needs not included in the presented budget. Sonia stated there was a need for an attendance clerk due to new DESE

requirements on attendance policies (identifying trends for individual students and patterns for student groups, monthly attendance meetings, addressing impediments for individual student attendance) and the addition of chronic absenteeism to the school's accountability system. Sonia, the board, and guests discussed the needs for this new position and reviewing current administrative assistant/clerk duties and assessing workload.

In reviewing the budget the board discussed the following items:

- Low enrollment and the impact on the school budget: Sonia discussed county-wide trends of low enrollment and discussed events that the school has held to recruit new students, including the upcoming Hoop It Up event.
- Teacher retention and salary comparisons:
 - Mahdi Kansou reported on retention stipend from ESSER grant over two years; the difference of salary increases at HCCS (based on performance) vs. traditional public schools (based on steps/years); teacher union dues; reiterated the salary analysis completed by SABIS
 - Possibility of a salary adjustments
 - Teacher work levels, structure, stipends, and remaining competitive with the entire benefit package.

Janine Kent discussed adding the attendance clerk position as there is a surplus in the budget and it will support the school director. She asked Mahdi Kansou to expedite the recommendation for the position. He stated that the position could be added to the budget and not be filled if that was the recommendation after the review of current staffing.

Dr. Jean Swinney discussed conflating issues of staff retention/recruitment and budgetary needs. She recommended that the board articulate the type of data and feedback it wants from teachers/staff instead of speculating on what their opinions and feelings might be. Sonia offered adding questions to solicit the desired feedback to the bi-monthly staff survey that will be administered next year.

Janine Kent motioned to approve the FY 2023 budget and the End-of-Year Forecast for FY 22 with an addition of the attendance clerk position. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Ma – Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

V. **Old Business**

- **Student Enrollment:**
Dr. Sonia Correa Pope stated that enrollment was brought up in the previous discussion about the budget and would be further discussed in the Director's Report.

V. **New Business**

- **Review of Education Service Provider (ESP) Evaluation:**
Leona Florek presented the draft evaluation to the board members and asked that feedback and comments be made by May 11. The final draft of the evaluation will be presented at the May meeting and the board will vote to approve.
- **Approval of the 2022-2023 Academic Calendar:**

Leona Florek presented the 2022-2023 Academic Year calendar to the board.

Cynthia Dennis motioned to approve the 2022-2023 Academic Year calendar. Jay Breines seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Ma – Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. **Administrative Reports/School Director**

Director's Report - Dr. Sonia Pope reported:

- Review of enrollment; reviewed recruitment efforts (Hoop It Up event; Mass Mutual Hockey Family event)
- COVID 19 report: data on positive cases; Pandemic-EBT resources
- Academic Update: ELA MCAS completed; Parent/Teacher Conferences; Math tutoring session over the April break; progress reports mailed
- Professional Development: World Language curriculum with DESE
- Student Life Organization (SLO): K-2 dance; staff appreciation luncheon on May 5; "Lock-In" event for grades 3-5; sports awards ceremony; academic awards ceremony
- Recent/upcoming events reviewed

Janine Kent motioned to adjourn the meeting. Cynthia Dennis seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye, Swinney - Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Swinney

Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

March 23, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Monthly Financial Report

FY23 Budget

FY22 End-Of-Year Forecast

Draft ESP Evaluation

2022-2023 Academic Calendar

School Director's Education Providers Report