

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – July 23, 2025

In Attendance: Rafael Rodriguez, Elizabeth Pawlowski, Jean Swinney, Leona Florek

Guests: Sonia Correa Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Michelle Botta, Kyle Callender, Vanessa Pileggi

Absent: Joshua Famiglietti, Lina Rivera

I. Meeting called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Leona Florek

Jean Swinney motioned to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2025, finance committee meeting. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Leona Florek motioned to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2025, regular board meeting. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Florek – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

II. **Board Reports**
Board Mail/ Folder
None

Public comments/none

III. **Finance Report**

The finance committee did not meet tonight due to the absence of a quorum. Leona asked the board if there were any questions or updates?

Maria shared a few details of June's financial reports. She mentioned that the month of June is when the school receives the final tuition payment which takes enrollment and transportation into account. Maria shared that the school received less than the years before due to the changes in the way the school now has to report transportation. The school will get reimbursed for the payment; it is just going to be on a different schedule.

Leona had a question in regard to grant expense and staff cost, she noticed that it was higher than budgeted for. Maria let her know that at the end of the fiscal year she looks at how much money is left and that if she can make changes to spend the grant in full she will. Those changes cannot be made until the amendment is approved.

Elizabeth Pawlowski motioned to approve this month's financial reports. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Swinney – Aye, Florek – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Maria gave the board an update regarding DESE and funding. She shared that she received a notification letting the school know that federal grants are being reviewed to ensure that they align with the priorities of the current administration. She joined a webinar for title one which seems that DESE has a contract with, and that the school will receive at a minimum the title one funds. If the school were to receive others, it would be at a later date.

Kyle Callender entered at 5:50 p.m.

Maria shared that the school has received several requests from the community to use the gym. She shared that they reached out to legal counsel who then reviewed the school's loan documents. The loan the school received are backed by a tax-exempt bond which have regulations that need to be accounted for when letting others use the gym. She wanted to let the board know that they are doing this to ensure that the school is responding to the requests properly.

Jean mentioned the possibility of asking counsel if it would be possible to rent the gym out for a fee in the future to maintain cost of the maintenance of the facilities. Maria shared the potential of a utilization agreement where those who want to use the building have to agree to the terms along with a fee.

Multi- Use Turf Field

Maria shared that the stone water permit was approved this past Monday, the school received all of the documents that were requested. The planning board meeting took place on Tuesday where this was also approved with no questions.

She also mentioned that there was a conversation regarding timelines with Gale and Associates along with herself, as well as Kyle Callender and Sonia. Due to the length of the stone water permit approval, if the school were to start the project now (September), the school would not have access to the field, and the project would have to come to a stop during the winter months. The question was that does the school send out bids now and begin construction in the spring, that way the school doesn't lose access to the field all year. The school thinks that it would be best to do this option and start construction in the spring.

Elizabeth had a question in regards of the rest of the timeline. Maria shared that if construction began in the spring that the field would be ready for September 2026 start of the 2026-2027 school year.

IV. Board Member Renewal

Leona Florek motioned to renew Jean Swinney's term for an additional three years. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Florek – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The board of trustees did not open the Executive Session

V. **Old Business**

20 Year Anniversary

Sonia shared that a video is in the works for the opening of the ceremony and that finer details are going to come within the next few weeks.

Introduction of the new Deputy Director of Academics

Sonia introduced Mrs. Michelle Botta as the school's new Deputy Director of Academics.

VI. **New Business**

2024-2025 Annual Report

Sonia and Leona asked the board if they had time to review the AY2425 Annual Report and had any questions. They shared that the Executive Committee reviewed the document and motioned it to be approved during the full board meeting. There were no questions or concerns.

Elizabeth Pawlowski motioned to approve the 2024-2025 Annual Report. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. Rodriguez – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Florek – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

2025-2026 Board of Trustees Calendar

Jean Swinney motioned to approve the 2025-2026 Board of Trustees Calendar. Seconded by Elizabeth Pawlowski. Each member voted by roll call. Swinney – Aye, Florek – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye.

Sex Ed Opt- Out Letter

Sonia shared that the school is moving forward with a new school wide health curriculum and that they are currently looking for a health teacher. She shared that a few staff members will be attending a workshop in Boston where the approved curriculum will be presented. This letter will be given to families if they would like their student to be exempt from any portion of the curriculum.

She shared that as a part of this, families have the right to review the curriculum and make a decision based on what they would like their student to do. This curriculum will be implemented this school year.

Haley shared the letter with the board for their review.

Elizabeth had a question from a parent standpoint in regard to what would be provided if a parent wanted an overview of the curriculum. Sonia responded that this is going to be a topic that will be presented during the Boston training.

Elizabeth Pawlowski received and approved the Sex Ed Opt- Out Letter. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Rodriguez – Aye, Florek – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Swinney – Aye.

The board of trustees did not open the Executive Session

Elizabeth Pawlowski motioned to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Rafael Rodriguez. Each member voted by roll call. Swinney – Aye, Pawlowski – Aye, Florek – Aye, Rodriguez – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:43 p.m.

As prepared by Haley Saltares

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Swinney
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

Meeting Attachments

June 25, 2025, Meeting Minutes

June 25, 2025, Finance Meeting Minutes