

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – August 26, 2020

**In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25 and Governor Baker’s Emergency Order in response to COVID-19 allowing remote meetings of public bodies. (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/order-suspending-certain-provision-of-open-meeting-law/download>), this meeting was held via Zoom video conference.*

In Attendance: Jay Breines, Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Jenna Gable, Janine Kent, Lina Rivera, Jean Swinney

Guests: Lara De Almeida, Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Christi Seiple-Cole, Amy Wesley

Not Present: N/A

I. Meeting called to order at 5:06 p.m. by Jenna Gable.

Roll call of all attendees; each attendee spoke his/her name.

Public comments/none.

II. Approval of Minutes

Leona Florek moved to approve the minutes of the July 22 regular meeting, the August 7 special meeting and the August 13 special meeting. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Board Reports

Board Mail

None

Finance

Cynthia Dennis reviewed the financial reports and found no issues/concerns.

Janine Kent moved to approve the financials. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Gymnasium/Construction Project Planning Discussion

The board discussed delaying moving forward with the gymnasium construction during the COVID-19 pandemic. The board discussed the following:

- the optics and financial unpredictability around embarking on a non-essential project at this time

- DESE willingness to approve a loan during COVID-19
- Cost of stopping the project once in progress
- Possibility of needing more classroom space due to COVID-19
- Eventual return to in-person learning and the need for a gymnasium

Tom Paquin reported on the ancillary projects that were added into the construction project, but that could be completed by P3 and Dan Pellotta while the board reassess the gymnasium construction. Ryan Meek reviewed the cost of each ancillary project. Tom reported that the skylights are leaking already and the winter would have even more impact, so that project should be priority. The board discussed going out to bid for the ancillary projects and the possibility of financing them through the capital budget.

Cynthia Dennis and Jay Breines proposed waiting for three months to reassess the project. Janine Kent and Leona Florek agreed with Cynthia and Jay. Jenna Gable asked the board if they were all in agreement to hold off on moving forward with the gym for three months to reassess, but still move forward now with the ancillary projects financed through the school's budget.

Cynthia Dennis motioned to separate the funds and move forward with using the school budget to have P3 complete the ancillary projects : skylights, brick pointing, Garden Room windows, and office space build-out. Lina Rivera seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Kent – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Facilities

Tom Paquin reported on the air filters installed in the HVAC units. He stated that the current units pull in a lot of outside air; heavier filters would reduce the amount of outside air coming in and use more energy to pull the same amount of air into the building. B&G Mechanical reviewed the system fully and the school's HVAC system meets the standards/guidelines as set by DESE.

Tom reported that all classrooms have been set-up using 6' distance between desks. Sonia Pope told the board that the school would be allowing parents to borrow a desk and chair from the school to set-up a home learning space. The board inquired as to the liability for lost/damaged items. Sonia responded that all families borrowing furniture, along with Chromebooks and textbooks, are signing a form that states they are responsible for any replacement cost.

Tom reported that the school applied for a permit for a second storage unit for five years to store the extra furniture. The City Council committee is set to vote in October.

Tom reported that he suspended the cleaning company until mid-October; maintenance staff are handling daily cleaning.

Grants Update

Maria Rodriguez presented the board with a break-down of grants that the school receives, including all COVID funds.

Membership

None

IV. Old Business

None

V. New Business

The board reviewed and discussed the SABIS ESP Evaluation **Jean Swinney moved to approve the ESP Evaluation. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

Sonia Pope presented the board with the new 2020-2025 Accountability Plan with DESE provisional approval. **Jean Swinney motioned to approve the 2020-2025 Accountability Plan and submit to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

Sonia Pope presented the board with the 2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook and reviewed changes. **Cynthia Dennis motioned to approve the 2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook. Seconded by Lina Rivera. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.**

VI. Administrative Reports/School Director

Dr. Sonia Pope reported:

- Enrollment – 709 students enrolled in order to ensure 702 enrollment by October 1; in-person kindergarten screenings are taking place with COVID-19 procedures in place
- Academics – Pillar’s team worked August 17-21 to prepare for teacher training, parent orientation and school opening; Admin/Clerical/Security/Cafeteria Staff training was August 24-28; Teacher/Paraprofessional training is August 31 – September 11 (pacing, curriculum, remote learning procedures, attendance, and discipline); SABIS training on September 1 & 2
- Parent Orientation is September 1 (Grades K-4), September 3 (Grades 5-8), and September 4 (Spanish) from 5 pm – 7pm via MS Teams
- Commissioner’s Update: not mandatory, but highly suggested/recommended for teachers to return to building even for remote models; teachers will return to the school, except for underlying conditions, in Phase 2; Commissioner stressed the importance of daily attendance for students and DESE reporting; flu shot requirement for all students, with religious and medical exemptions possible – until December 31st –

HCCS is looking into bringing a flu shot clinic to the building for parents to take advantage of from CVS; still recommended to not take temperatures

- Distributing backpacks and coats to parents
- Discipline remotely: live-streaming teaching, teacher can mute and shut off video immediately, 12 staff on student discipline team to monitor those things and make calls to parents/families/students; videos not being recorded; SABIS provided a lawyer drafted letter to parents for remote learning part of parent orientation
- Employees with children – daycare is difficult to find; employees would qualify under Emergency Family Leave for 12 weeks (paid for 2/3 of their pay rate); employees with underlying conditions need an accommodation to teach from home during phase 2.

Jenna Gable thanked Dr. Pope, her staff, and SABIS for all of the work they have put in to getting this work done.

Jean Swinney moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Leona Florek. Each member voted by roll call. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Gable – Aye, Rivera – Aye, Swinney – Aye. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski

Respectfully submitted,
Janine Kent
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

July 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes
August 7, 2020 Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes
Financial Report
ESP Evaluation
2020-2025 Accountability Plan
2020-2021 Student/Parent Handbook