

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – June 23, 2021

**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, Janine Kent

Guests: Lara DeAlmeida, Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Christi Seiple-Cole, Amy Wesley, Vanessa Pileggi

Not Present: Jean Swinney

I. Meeting called to order at 5:05 p.m. by Leona Florek.

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

Public comments/none.

Board Mail

None

II. Approval of Minutes

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the minutes of the May 26, 2021 regular meeting. Seconded by Janine Kent. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed.

III. Facilities

Tom Paquin reported that City of Holyoke planning board was presented with the architectural plans for the gym addition. A site visit is scheduled for July 13, 2021. A planning board meeting will be held later that same evening. Maintenance, security, and facilities are running smoothly. An inspector from TD Bank has initiated an appraisal on the building. This is being used as a alternative, in the event bond financing isn’t approved beyond the five-year charter.

Finances

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

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the financials. Seconded by Jay Breines. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Cynthia Dennis requested a ratification to hire Locke Lord as bond council. Cost will approximate \$55,000.

Cynthia Dennis requested a ratification. Seconded by Janine Kent. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Ryan Meek requested approval from the board to payoff the existing TD bank mortgage in order to restructure debt. The payoff amount is approximately \$1.6M.

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the mortgage payoff. Seconded by Jay Breines. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Mass Development requested a board vote to reimburse or recoup expenses that have already been spent-to-date on the gymnasium project. Examples include architect and project management fees. Resolution states part of the \$8.3M tax-exempt bond reimburse temporarily, expenses advanced from internal funds, prior to the date of this vote.

Cynthia Dennis moved to recoup expenses. Seconded by Janine Kent. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

Mass Development is meeting July 8 to approve the HCCS bonding project. HCCS is requesting DESE add to their next meeting agenda review and/or approval for HCCS financing beyond the five-year charter.

IV. **Membership**

Jay Breines will present a candidate at next board meeting.

V. **Board retreat**

The board is scheduling a board retreat for the Saturday September 25, 2021.

VI. **Old Business**

None.

VII. **New Business**

The board reviewed the draft annual report and suggested amendments. The board voted to approve the meeting dates of the upcoming year's board meeting dates.

Cynthia Dennis made a motion to approve the upcoming school year's board meeting calendar. Seconded by Jay Breines. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. **Administrative Reports/School Director**

Director's Report - Dr. Sonia Pope reported:

- Enrollment – 701, recruitment ongoing. Enrollment policy amendment, adding Chicopee region, was approved by commissioner.
- End of year exams were administered to students in multiple formats.
- Summer school is scheduled for M-Th, July 6 – July 29, 2021.
- Academics - HCCS celebrated 8th grade graduation on June 17, 2021 with an in-person, socially-distanced event; Next school year's (BOY) orientation & preparation for reopening was discussed.
- SABIS Update presented by Amy Wesley (COVID challenges this past year, smooth transitions, supporting Academic, IT, Finances, and HR)

- Professional Development – ongoing, Dr. Pope is now a member of D.E.S.E.’s ‘Leaders of Color’. Focus is on behavior interventions; School will resume in the fall, in-person, excluding all previous COVID restrictions; Annual report is due July 30, 2021.
- DESE Updates: Enrollment policy amendment that added Chicopee region, was approved by commissioner.
- Student Life: ongoing. End of year comments about parent connection included “wonderful representation” and much more positive feedback from parents about honoring our family event.
- Student Management: none to report.
- Facilities: Tom Paquin reported earlier in the meeting
- Upcoming events: Summer school

Jay Breines motioned to accept the Director’s Report. Cynthia Dennis seconded. Each member voted by roll call. Breines – Aye, Dennis – Aye, Florek – Aye, Kent – Aye. The motion passed unanimously.

The board discussed this past year and all the challenges and the overall positive time we are in currently, post-COVID). Further, there was discussion about cross-training staff.

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.

As prepared by Janine Kent
Respectfully submitted,
Jean Swinney
Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS
May 26, 2021 Meeting Minutes
Monthly Financial Report