

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

Minutes of HCCS Board of Trustees Meeting – March 24, 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: Amy Landau (Community Preservation Act Committee), Ryan Meek, Tom Paquin, Sonia Pope, Maria Rodriguez, Amy Wesley

Not Present: N/A

I. **Meeting called to order** at 5:09 p.m. by Jenna Gable.

Public comments/none.

Guest, Amy Landau, introduced herself as from the Community Preservation Act Committee, and stated she was joining the meeting to see how public bodies were using video conferencing to hold meetings.

II. **Approval of Minutes**

Cynthia Dennis moved to approve the minutes of the February 26 regular meeting and March 18 special meeting. Seconded by Jean Swinney. Each member voted by roll call. The motion passed unanimously.

III. **Board Reports**

Board Mail

None

Finance

Cynthia Dennis reviewed the financial reports. She asked Maria Rodriguez about paying bus drivers. Maria reported that she has reached out to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and they will be coming out with guidance soon. Sonia

Pope stated she had reached out to the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA) for guidance on this as well and will report back to the board. Cynthia asked Maria if the school was still be reimbursed for the meals served. Maria reported that the number of meals is varying greatly and that Tom Paquin obtained a site license from DESE to reimburse the school for all meals served.

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

Facilities

Tom Paquin reported that there are four people working in the building to serve meals daily. He reported that the cleaning company is cleaning the floors and the building was completely sanitized and continues to be sanitized on a schedule.

Tom Paquin also reported there was a roof leak last week and that roofers were called in and fixed the leak.

Tom reported that he emailed the Large Scale Project Memo to Ryan Meek, Sonia Pope, and Cynthia Dennis.

Jay Breines asked Tom if the sanitation machine purchased last year was capable of handling COVID-19. Tom reported that it has been a huge success, sanitizing the entire building in under an hour. He reported that the school has a large reserve supply of the sanitizing liquid to get through the end of the year. The liquid is a Clorox product that list Corona Virus on the label.

Leona Florek asked Tom if the potholes in the parking lot had been filled. Tom reported that they have not been filled yet and that the plowing company came today and plowed and sanded due to the meal program.

Membership

None

IV. Old Business

Charter School Renewal Outcomes

Sonia Pope reported that she has not yet received guidance from DESE on the edit of the bylaws. She will report to board once DESE has replied.

Sonia reported that she had a meeting scheduled to discuss enrollment with DESE, but it was cancelled due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Amy Wesley stated that DESE has put a finding in our charter renewal around enrollment percentages and the school has a

conditional charter renewal. Sonia presented historic enrollment numbers to the board, which showed a steady decline in Holyoke residence percentages. She explained trends of Holyoke enrollment decrease due to families moving to neighboring cities but continuing to transport students to HCCS, transience, and homelessness. Jay Breines stated that the socio-economic problems of Holyoke are materializing in the school's enrollment numbers and discussed the possibility of receiving a waiver. The board discussed enrollment by city and grade-level and the concerns and opportunities of a possible regional expansion along with commitment to Holyoke and the students at HCCS. The board also discussed the financial perspectives of a possible seat and/or grade-level expansion. Sonia reported that the school needs to respond to DESE by August 1 on this condition of renewal.

Cynthia Dennis moved to apply for a regional amendment to include Chicopee. Lina Rivera seconded. Each member voted by roll call. The motion passed with Cynthia Dennis, Leona Florek, Jenna Gable, Janine Kent, Lina Rivera, Jean Swinney voting in favor, and Jay Breines voting against.

Gymnasium Next Steps

Sonia Pope reported that she had reached out to DESE person responsible for building and facilities. The board discussed the options of financing the new construction. Ryan Meek stated that going with TD Bank will preserve the relationship.

Cynthia Dennis moved to apply for TD Bank for the \$12 million financing. Jean Swinney seconded. Each member voted by roll call. The motion passed unanimously.

COVID-19 Update

Sonia Pope reported on the school's actions in response to the COVID-19 outbreak and school closure:

- Call with DESE Commissioner:
 - Schools closed until April 7; but plan for the worst – closing until the end of the academic year
 - Tuition is based on enrollment, so tuition payments will still be made
 - MTELS and teacher qualifications – schools will not be penalized on this accountability measure
 - Continue to pay hourly employees until any further guidance comes out
 - BM & HR conducted a successful payroll
 - SPED – recommendation to use HIPPA compliant technology to conduct SPED meetings; further guidance will be forthcoming from Russell Johnson
 - Continue paying vendors
 - MCAS 3 options
 - Reduce the amount of testing
 - Push testing window back

- Cancel test this year (if we don't go back soon)
 - Commissioner will continue to have updates every Friday – Sonia will send updates to Chair
- Virtual Learning
 - Sonia reported great success – 94% of parents are connected through digital platform
 - Remaining 6% who don't have access to internet – providing printed packages at meal drive through
 - 140 families came through the drive-thru last Friday to pick up packets & meals
 - Dedicated phone line in the school that parents can call and have their messages listened to and responded to
 - DESE is looking to create a statewide broadcast television network
 - Reinforcing skills, not covering new material – mastering concepts, trying to prevent regression
 - At the board's request, Sonia will have a report after next week on how many students are actually submitting work and engaging with Class Dojo
- Lunches are being served –the DESE meal application so that we can be reimbursed for the meals was accepted and approved.
- Student Opportunity Act – need to plan for the next academic year the deadline for this is extended for now
- Not required to go past the 185 days we originally scheduled in calendar
- Attendance after March 2 will not be counted in terms of Chronic Absenteeism
- All site visits are suspended for now
- Ensuring that no more than 10 people are in the building at any time
- Pillars –
 - AQCS conducting grade-level meetings virtually with teachers via Microsoft Teams
 - Academic team meetings
 - Student Life is creating a video of the teachers that will be posted on Facebook and Dojo
- Paraprofessionals are being assigned to specific students who need support (SPED)

The Board expressed gratitude to all teachers and staff of the school for their dedication and asked Sonia to pass along their thanks to her team.

V. **New Business**

None

VI. **Administrative Reports/School Director**

School Director reported updates under Old Business

Jay Breines moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Cynthia Dennis. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

As prepared by Elizabeth Pawlowski

Respectfully submitted,

Janine Kent

Holyoke Community Charter School Board of Trustees

MEETING ATTACHMENTS

February 26, 2020 meeting notes

March 18, 2020 meeting notes

Financial Report