



OnTECH Charter High School  
Minutes for February 22, 2017

The meeting was held at: 312 Sedgwick Drive, Syracuse, NY 13202  
Time: 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Ellen Eagen, Founder and President  
Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/ Treasurer  
Robert Gardino, Trustee  
Victoria Giarratano, Trustee  
William Sanford, Trustee  
Edward McLaughlin, Foundation Representative/ via teleconference  
Francis Coudriet, Administration

Excused: John Stegeman, Vice President

**1. WELCOME**

The meeting was chaired by Ms. Eagen who welcomed everyone to the meeting. She acknowledged that foundation representative, Ed McLaughlin, was on the telephone line to join into the meeting. She proposed that the first order of business was to entertain a teleconference with Ahmad Duwaik, an individual who had been helpful to OnTECH in the application process and someone who could be retained for an initial period prior to opening of the school for the purpose of getting the necessary programming/curriculum in place during the pre-opening period. Ms. Eagen and Mr. Stegeman had the opportunity to work with Mr. Duwaik during the OnTECH RFP period and found him to be helpful and informed.

The Board discussed the relationship that Mr. Duwaik might have. Ms. Eagen replied that he would fill the role of a founding leader in setting the stage, creating curriculum and building a structure during the pre-opening period. Mr. Sanford suggested that whatever was decided a “scope of work” should be agreed upon. He also asked whether this person could be a grant writer. The Chair said that he has done those kind of tasks and it could be one of his charges. The Board agreed to the conference call.

**2. APPROVAL OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes had been previously distributed. The Chair asked for any additions, changes or modifications. There being none, the minutes were accepted as presented. It was explained that the next meeting would probably be held at a different community location.

**3. TELECONFERENCE WITH AHMAD DUWAIK**

A telephone connection was then made with Ahmad Duwaik. The Chair asked him to give the Board some of his pertinent background. Each of the Board members had been provided with a



copy of Mr. Duwaik's resume. Mr. Duwaik proceeded to present his background and experience. He started as a classroom teacher with a specialty in math and later became Department Chair. His work at the Bronx Skills Schools is in some ways similar to the OnTECH environment. He has prepared grants, provide PD and developed lessons with teachers. He felt he could play a contributing role in launching OnTECH at the start. He would be instrumental in building curriculum for the school and installing a formative structure. Mr. Gardino asked why he was interested in OnTECH. Mr. Duwaik stated that it enabled him to use all his skills, including that as a lawyer and in relation to finance. In addition to his degree from California State University, Long Beach, he also has several additional degrees. He would call upon all this experience in support of OnTECH. The call lasted approximately 40 minutes.

#### 4. GOVERNANCE / BOARD DEVELOPMENT

The Chair brought up two documents that had been previously disseminated, OnTECH By-laws and the Code of Ethics Policy. She said that the Board needed to approve both documents and asked the trustees for a response. The trustees indicated they would like more time to review the documents. It was agreed that a motion to adopt both documents would be postponed to the next Board meeting.

The Chair stated that it would be beneficial for the Board to meet at different community locations. Since these were public meetings, it also might encourage members of the public to attend if the meetings were conveniently located. The facilities of NEHDA were mentioned as a possibility. Mr. Sanford suggested that an excellent place would be the conference room at the boat house at Onondaga Lake. It is very picturesque and an attractive environment, particularly with Spring coming.

#### 5. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Chair then asked the Secretary/ Treasurer to report on the financial progress, specifically the grant CSP monies. The Secretary/ Treasurer advised the Board that application had been made for an EIN number, a D&B number and a NYS Vendor number. The next step was to obtain certification to enable receipt of the grant monies. The Chair explained that the monies from the federal government would flow through the State Ed Department and in order to properly receive those monies an organization needed to be qualified. CSBM, the organization that had worked up the OnTECH budget for the RFP proposal, is going to assist with the CSP grant.

Mr. Sanford asked how much money was available through this process and when would OnTECH be able to receive the money. The Chair explained that the ordinary grant was \$500,000, but because of the OnTECH focus on EL and SPED students, OnTECH was eligible for an additional \$300,000. The problem is that there are requirements attached to the money and often the timing of the usage does not always coincide with the availability of the money. The best approach is to proceed with our paperwork as expeditiously as possible to become qualified and receive monies. Ms. Eagen and Mr. Kimatian are taking the lead on this and working with CSBM.

#### 6. FACILITIES



The next order of business was facilities and the development of the site. The Chair expressed that a lot of planning was being undertaken by the architects and the site developer. The Secretary/Treasurer pointed out that many hours of meetings took place to gain the input needed by the architects and there were obviously costs associated with the work. The Chair explained that to the extent the costs could not be paid at the outset, they would be rolled into the ultimate lease payments for the building. However, based on discussions with the CRP representative, a substantial amount of the development cost could be covered by the CSP grant.

One aspect of the facility being developed is that it would not have a complete gym and one consideration was to develop a relationship with other local institutions that would be beneficial. Both Dunbar and the SWCC facility were mentioned, though they would require bussing. St. Lucy's might also be a consideration. The Boys & Girls Club building was virtually adjacent to the OnTECH site and there was a possibility to develop an alliance with them. Ed McLaughlin, a member of the facilities committee, will investigate this possibility.

## 7. MISCELLANEOUS

Fran Coudriet, handling IT and Administration, said that he prepared business cards based on the input he received and passed around a mock-up of the graphics and format. The trustees approved the appearance of the card.

The Chair also pointed out that trustee bios should be on the website and that to the extent that anyone needed make changes, they should do so that all trustees are represented accurately.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.