



MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 20, 2017 MEETING

Present:

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President
Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/Treasurer
John Stegemen, Trustee
Victoria Giarratano, Trustee (excused)
Robert Gardino, Trustee
Bill Sanford, Trustee
Fran Coudriet, Administration

1. WELCOME

Trustee, John Stegeman, was Chairperson of the meeting. The meeting was called to order at 5:35 PM. The Chairperson welcomed all the Trustees and those in attendance to the meeting. He said the Board would conduct the business portion of the meeting first and then attend to questions that any of the community members might have.

2. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE PRIOR MEETING

The Chairperson stated that the minutes of the August 16, 2017 meeting had been previously distributed to the Trustees and he ask for any comments or modifications. It was noted that Fran Coudriet, Administration, had been excused from the prior meeting and the minutes should be adjusted to reflect that. With that change, a motion was made by Trustee Sanford and seconded by Trustee Gardino to accept the minutes with that change. There being no further discussion, the Board unanimously adopted the minutes as amended.

3. FINANCIAL REPORT

President Eagen was called upon to present the Financial report. She said that the submission for the CSP monies was completed except for only the M/WBE required forms. She explained that the monies under the CSP would probably take a couple of months after the final documents were submitted to be disbursed. As she stated at the prior Board meeting, given that OnTECH would nevertheless have need for monies to compensate the consultant retained for curriculum work during this interim period, she would be willing to provide a loan to OnTECH for these ongoing purposes until the CSP monies were received. A Promissory Note was drafted for approval by the Board stating that an amount up to \$20,000 would be loaned by the President to be paid back no later than June 30, 2018. No interest was intended to be charged for the loan and there would explicitly be no personal liability of any of the Trustees, which would specifically be incorporated into the Promissory Note.

The Chairperson called for a motion to approve the loan as presented. A motion was made by Trustee Sanford and seconded by Trustee Stegeman to approve the loan as presented with the understanding that the non-liability of Trustees would be incorporated as a term of the Note.



There being no further discussion, the motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

The President also explained that a condition of the CSP monies was that 30% of the monies would be used with M/WBE vendors. She said that Sam Rowser of On Point for College had referred one certified vendor for furniture. There are also city and state directories of certified vendors. With that the President completed the Financial Report.

4. FACILITIES REPORT

The Chairperson called upon Trustee Kimatian to deliver the Facilities report. Trustee Kimatian reported there were ongoing discussions concerning the Onondaga Commons site. At the same time, there was also a Plan B should that site not be favorable for OnTECH. Brine Wells, the developer, had secured the bids for the construction from a second company at much more favorable terms. In addition, he said the President was speaking with the financial consultants, CSBM, to gain their input.

He further reported that Brine Wells was making submission for CFA and URI monies, not only for OnTECH, but for the Health Clinic and OCC participation on the site. A presentation was made to Centerstate to give them the impact of the project. They were quite enthused by what the project did for the community. Whichever is the ultimate decision, OnTECH was fortunate to have several options. Trustee Sanford suggested that there should be a date for determining what option should be selected. A motion was made by Trustee Sanford and seconded by Trustee Stegeman that the end of October would be the time when such a decision would need to be made. Thereafter the Board members discussed the feasibility of other options that might be available, including starting at one location with the smaller student population and then moving to a larger site. Trustee Eagen said that was not a favorable circumstance and would only be done if there were no other options. The realtor for OnTECH was also at the meeting and gave her input.

4. CURRICULUM

The president reported on the progress with curriculum. She said on Mondays and Fridays, she has a scheduled conference with Ahmad Duwaik, the consultant retained by OnTECH to develop curriculum. Ahmad is first tackling math and science, which will be completed by December and he will then move on to English in January. With respect to instruction, three teachers had already expressed interest; Mr. Duwaik was determining certification status. Trustee Gardino asked about the staffing. The President explained that the full scope is in the materials presented to the State and that there was interest from several individuals who wanted to teach in a school like OnTECH. Part of the teaching approach she also explained was internships and industry relationships. This would be coupled with mentor relationships in the first and second year of high school.



Trustee Sanford asked whether he understood correctly that the students had to pass their Regents examinations. The President responded “yes” they do have to pass Regents examinations. She further explained that there is a new CDOS (Career Development Occupational Studies) approach authorized by the Regents, which allows a student to fulfill one of the Regent’s requirements through a combination of study and internship hours. In some curriculum plans it has replaced the Global History Regents, in which case the CDOS fulfillment of the graduation requirements would be indicated on the diploma.

Trustee Stegeman added that colleges want to see the students take the most challenging and rigorous courses that give them real world experience.

Trustee Gardino asked about remediation. The President said that remediation is built into the curriculum to the extent that a student requires it. This also connects with the Mastery approach where students work to achieve certain levels of mastery which are components of the curriculum, after which they move on to the next level of the subject. In that way, students can work at their own pace. Generally, the president stated, the instructional approach is a scaffolding of curriculum.

Trustee Sanford said it would be a good idea to have an elevator pitch for the school, to which all agreed.

The President reported that she had visited a NYC school where the students were clustered into a study group where the teacher acted as the facilitator rather than the direct teacher. This is one facet of project based learning. Should we consider that approach, different rubrics would have to be developed and teachers trained in that model of teaching. Trustee Stegeman asked how that approach mapped onto the State tests. Can you take Regents at different times, he asked? The president responded by saying that Regents could be taken multiple times at set times of the year.

The president also reported that the head of school job needed to be posted. She said that Trustee Stegeman, given his background in administration, is going to review the criteria. She also looked to the other Trustees to comment and also invited the community members in attendance to comment on what they thought should be characteristics of staff hired. Cards were available for participants to note such characteristics.

5. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The President reported that she had met with Susan Coots, the Director of the Clinic at Onondaga Commons and said that she was pleased at the possibility of having OnTECH there because these were the very demographic that she wanted to reach. There is also the possibility that the nursing needs of the school could be met through the Clinic but would need to be discussed/addressed/approved at a future time.



President Eagen further reported that she had been contacted by a person who wanted to start a soccer team under the school name. The purpose would be to interact with the other schools and bring visibility for the school and an opportunity for the students to participate. Fran Coudriet, Administrator, said the school needed to consider how close an affiliation was desirable and in what way since the team would be representing the school. He suggested for promotional and liability purposes, there needed to be a clear understanding of the relationship. President Eagen suggested that Trustee Stegeman would meet with soccer coach and discuss ideas.

6. BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Proposed Board member, Eskedar Getahun, is in Ethiopia visiting her family at this time. The president said she met with Eskedar within the last month and had a good visit with her. Eskedar is very enthused about becoming a member of the Board. She has completed the required steps, including the fingerprinting process, and has filed all the required documents. A resolution approving her membership will be presented to the Board at the next meeting she can attend. Trustee Sanford said he feels it important to continue to develop the Board and suggested that Board members consider names they want to propose.

5. NEW BUSINESS

Administrator, Fran Coudriet, advised that he could change the website address of OnTECH to a .org address, replacing the .com. The president suggested that was a valid consideration and upon discussion it was agreed by the Board members that taking that step would be a good idea and would be more indicative of the non-profit status of OnTECH, as opposed to being a commercial entity, as could be assumed with the .com.

There being no further business, on motion duly made, seconded and passed, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.