**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**Minutes of April 25, 2018 Meeting**

**Location:** White Branch Library, 731 Butternut Street, Syracuse, NY 13204

**Present:**

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President

Eskedar Getahun, Trustee

Vicotria Giarratano, Trustee

Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/ Treasurer

William Sanford, Trustee

John Stegemen, Trustee

Fran Coudriet, Administration

**1.** **WELCOME**

Chairperson, Trustee John Stegeman, called the meeting to order at 5:35 PM. He welcomed the members of the community in the audience and asked the Board to introduce themselves. He opened the meeting by saying that any members attending from the community who might have questions would have an opportunity after the business portion of the meeting to ask them. Trustee Eagen stated that the OnTECH Board welcomed comments from the community saying it was an excellent way for OnTECH to continue to iterate itself in a manner consistent with the community needs.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman Stegeman stated that minutes from the March 21, 2018 meeting had been previously forwarded to all Trustees and he called for a motion to approve them. Trustee Sanford moved, seconded by Trustee Getahun for approval. There being no objection or modifications proposed, the motion was unanimously carried.

**3. FINANCIAL REPORT**

Trustee Stephen Kimatian was called upon by the Chairperson to give the Treasurer’s report. Trustee Kimatian said there were four items on the agenda. Based on the approval of the CSBM agreement at the last meeting, he reported that CSBM was given all the information necessary to create the ledgers that would report the fiscal transactions for the June 30, 2018 report. He also added that the CSP expenditures were in place and that the necessary MWBE calculations would be made to insure compliance with those regulations. He presented the Trustees with the expenses and revenue through April 12, 2018. Trustee Eagen then brought up the need to have an auditor in place for the fiscal year July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019. Though the work of the auditor would not take place before the end of the fiscal year, she said it was still important to have the auditor in place who would accomplish this report. She said that she has been dealing with an auditor who has done an excellent job at her other schools and would recommend using this firm. Though their normal cost for an audit was approximately $23,000, she felt that it could be negotiated to $15,000, given this was OnTECH’s first year and they would potentially be gaining a new client. She asked the Board whether she should sound out the firm to see whether this was a possibility. The Board discussed the proposal and informally agreed that the deal sounded good and that it should be pursued to be brought back to the Board for consideration and a vote. Trustee Eagen also informed the Board that there was a charter requirement to have a Financial Handbook. She reported that CSBM was working on preparing that for review and adoption by the OnTECH Board.

Trustee Kimatian then referred the Board to the loans that had been made by Trustee Eagen evidenced by the executed promissory notes, stating there was now money in the treasury to repay those loans. The ledger accounts showed an amount of $36,000 in payments by Trustee Eagen to OnTECH for operations. Of that amount, $6,000 was paid as a contribution from the Sustainable Sciences and Technology Foundation, with the balance coming directly from Trustee Eagen. Trustee Eagen said it was her intention to have the $6,000 as a contribution to OnTECH and she accordingly had made that through the Foundation. The balance of $30,000 would be repayment on the loans. Trustee Sanford made a motion to repay the $30,000, which was seconded by Trustee Getahun. There being no further discussion, the motion was called and carried unanimously. There being nothing further for financial reports, Trustee Kimatian stated that the report was complete.

**4. FACILITIES**

The Chairperson asked Trustee Kimatian to report on the facilities. Trustee Kimatian reported that Building Hope was proceeding with all deliberate speed to complete the due diligence of the properties. Architects had submitted plans to conform to the State Education requirements and that the engineering needs were being assessed. An important requirement was met by the Zoning Board of Appeals of the City of Syracuse approving the parking variance required in order for OnTECH to use the facility as a high school. Trustee Stegeman asked whether a lease would be signed prior to the closing on the building. Trustee Eagen stated that we had the lease from Building Hope and needed to review it and would also engage outside counsel for this purpose. It is expected that Building Hope would like to know that the lease was acceptable to OnTECH prior to their closing on the properties. That concluded the facilities report.

**5. OPERATIONS**

Trustee Eagen reported on operations saying that a necessary policy of the school was to have a complaint process in place whereby should a complaint be received by the school or the Charter School Office, there was a procedure in place to deal with the facts and resolve the complaint and report the information to the Charter School Office. In such as instance the Charter School Office would expect that the facts of such complaint would be dealt with and would be reported to them.

Trustee Eagen then reported on student recruitment. She explained that though any student could apply to OnTECH, the target population was basically in three areas, the southside of the city, which is mostly African-American, the Latino population on the west and the generational poor, and the New American community on the northside. Accordingly, she reported on the following steps taken: Meeting with the Congolese community on International Women’s Day, meeting with Karen Community members, with Jay Subedi of the Bhutanese community, the Director of the Northside Learning Center and Kayla Kechechian. On the evening of the Lottery for OnTECH, Trustee Eagen related an exercise with the attendees present where each was asked what they wanted to see most when they walked into OnTECH. Surprisingly, most individuals wanted to see and experience the same things: Clean, bright classrooms, laughter, no yelling or screaming, music, kids not running down the halls. Trustee Eagen said she also reached out to leaders of the Latino community.

She explained that a telling statistic is that over 2,000 students start in the Syracuse City District 9th grade but that only less than 1000 graduate in the 12th grade. OnTECH, she said, is interested in finding the students who among those missing from the 12th grade. She spoke about another issue in the community, that of older students who had not attended school while in refugee camps and had lost continuity of education. In several instances she recounted how many newly arrived immigrants did not have a birth certificate and were often assigned a birth date of January 1, and an arbitrary year of birth. Trustee Eagen said there may be a remedy for some of these individuals to plead their case and be able to attend school. Trustee Stegeman commented that the discussions of Trustee Eagen in the community are building up relationships. Trustee Giarratano commented that often kids are the best recruiters.

**6. PERSONNEL / STAFFING**

Trustee Stegeman reported that the head of school finalist was Donna Lucy. All Trustees had a chance to meet with her at this point and evaluations were submitted. Though there were some areas in which she did not have experience, the overall feeling was that she was the best candidate. Morgan, Kaylie, and Glen were also able to interview her from the teacher perspective. It was concluded that due diligence would be done on her references.

**7. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING**

Trustee Eagen reported on curriculum development. She shared some of the good points made by one of the head of school candidates on models for effective curriculum. She then spoke about her visit to the D-School on the Oracle Campus in Silicon Valley and the Design School at Stanford University.

Morgan Boerman then reported on the upcoming annual FFA Convention being held in Rochester. She said there were over 500 agricultural programs, competitions on several levels and subjects, and many competitions with respect to leadership development. OnTECH will be attending in recognition of the $8,000 grant that was awarded to OnTECH for agricultural teaching. She mentioned there was a still need for judges.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairman asked whether there was any new business. There being none, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Trustee Sanford and seconded by Trustee Giarratano and there being no further discussion the meeting was adjourned.

