Minutes for August 29, 2018 Board Meeting

**Place:** Administrative Offices of OnTECH Charter High School, 810 Willis Avenue, Syracuse, NY 13204

**Present:**

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President

Victoria Giarratano, Trustee

Bill Sanford, Trustee – excused

Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/Treasurer

John Stegeman, Trustee/ Chairperson

Eskedar Getahun, Trustee – excused

Francis Coudriet, Administrator

**1. WELCOME**

Chairperson of the meeting, John Stegeman, called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. He welcomed the community representatives who were in attendance and invited them to ask questions at the end of the business meeting. He then asked the Trustees to introduce themselves.

**2. FACULTY/ STAFFING - INTRODUCTIONS**

After that the Chairperson gave the floor to the Founder & President Ellen Eagen. Trustee Eagen welcomed everyone and said this was a momentous occasion to be in the school and getting ready for the first class. She thanked everyone for their support and expressed her great satisfaction in bringing the mission of OnTECH to the Syracuse community. She then spoke about the faculty present and how they had marshalled their resources over the last months to create a unique curriculum for the students. She then invited each of the faculty members to introduce themselves and speak about their personal perspective on how they viewed the launch of OnTECH.

**3. FACILITIES/ OPERATIONS**

The Chairperson then asked Trustee Kimatian to speak about the status of the renovations. Trustee Kimatian reported that the renovations required to open the school were close to completion. The school only planned to use the first floor and the basement while renovations were completed on the second floor. Top priority was meeting the building code requirements of the city and state and fire alarm security required by the city of Syracuse Fire Department. So far, he said, the school has passed all its inspections. The community members in attendance and the board were invited to tour the facility.

**4. ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING**

Trustee Eagen then asked the Head of Academics, Mr. Josh Schneider, to speak about the curriculum and academic programming. He presented the work the faculty had done over summer at numerous meetings in discussing the best programming approach, as well as their invitation to community members and potential students to give input on the curriculum. He said the faculty was looking forward to opening day with great enthusiasm.

**5. OPERATIONS**

The Chairperson then called upon Trustee Eagen to report on operations. She explained that the the District had been very helpful in providing transportation, even though it needed to be ingested into the system after much of the routing had been already done for the city students. She said that the city would use yellow buses to transport the students instead of Centro, since it was easier to do at this point. The routes for students were being worked out as the enrollment increased. She cautioned that the first couple of weeks are generally rocky as the bus drivers and the students get acclimated to the new pattern of the routes.

Trustee Eagen then spoke to the organizational structure.

She then handed out an org chart that showed the three heads of the key operational departments - Facilities Operations, Academic Instruction and Culture & Students. The Support services department including HR, Finance, Development and Accountability/Data Services would provide expertise to each of these departments. As such, the three main departments would operate as a triumvirate of responsibility, each having a domain and each accountable for the department charged. This was the same structure as represented in the initial school design. In some detail she then explained how she would interact with these heads and oversee the head of school function until a search was completed to fill that position. Trustee Eagen referred to other high performing charter schools having a similar structure that apparently functioned excellently. She then asked for approval of the Board of the structure presented. A motion was made by Trustee Stegeman and seconded by Trustee Kimatian to approve the structure as presented. Further discussion ensued with the questions by the Trustees on the specific functions of the Head of School Culture and in what ways that individual would interact with the students. Trustee Stegeman wanted to know what would happen if a Head of Culture was not found. Trustee Eagen said there were several candidates for the position and she felt confident that even if a candidate did not perform as anticipated there were several other candidates who were ostensibly qualified. After further discussion of support services concerning HR, the motion was called. Upon vote a resolution approving the org chart proposed was unanimously approved.

**6. FINANCES**

The Chairperson then called upon Trustee Kimatian to give the financial report. Trustee Kimatian said the expenses were in line with the budget, but that given that we were a new school, we would adjust a working budget to the actual student body count as it settled after the first three weeks. He said that the school has received the balance of CSP monies of approximately $20,000 and that there was the anticipated payment from the city school district expected within two weeks.

**7. APPROVAL OF AUGUST MINUTES**

The Chairperson then ask for a vote approving the August 29, 2018 meeting minutes. On motion by Trustee Kimatian, seconded by Trustee Eagen, a motion to approve the minutes was carried unanimously.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no new business or other matters to discuss, the Chairperson asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. After the question was called, on motion by Trustee Giarratano, seconded by Trustee Kimatian, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting.