Minutes for December 21, 2018 Board Meeting

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

**Present:**

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President

Victoria Giarratano, Excused

Bill Sanford, Trustee

Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/Treasurer

John Stegeman, Trustee/ Chairperson

Eskedar Getahun, via telepresence

Francis Coudriet, Administrator

Joshua Schneider, Head of Academics

Keil White, Director of Operations/ Facilities

**1. WELCOME**

John Stegeman, Chairperson for the meeting, called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM. He welcomed everyone and said the school would be on its first Holiday break before a New Year. He said it was an exciting time to be in the school’s new home and celebrating the holidays.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The Chairperson then ask for a vote approving the November 21, 2018 meeting minutes. Trustee Sanford moved, seconded by Trustee Stegeman to approve the minutes from November 21, 2018. There being no further additions, modifications, or corrections, the motion was carried unanimously.

**3. FACILITIES / OPERATIONS**

The Chairperson called upon Kiel White, Director of Operations, to give the facilities report. Mr. White stated that several options had been considered with respect to the heating plant of the school. The boiler was now 22 years old and was not performing reliably. An analysis of the BTU output showed that at temperatures below 10 degrees the boiler would may not be able to generate enough heat to keep the school at the necessary comfortable temperatures. The school’s choice was to replace the whole boiler for a cost of $50,000 or repair the section causing a problem, which was a cost of $16,000. Trustee Kimatian said that three quotes had been obtained. Of them, $16,000 was the least costly and two companies had similar quotes. The difference was that the company selected had been the company that had worked on the boiler for the last ten years and was most familiar with it. The repair should last for several years. After discussion, the Board voted. On motion by Trustee Sanford, seconded by Trustee Eagen, the Trustees unanimously approved to repair the boiler. Mr. White said that the plans were to accomplish the repair over the vacation holiday so as not to interrupt teaching days for students.

Mr. White further reported that the fire alarm system in the church was in the process of being completed. Trustee Sanford asked whether the costs were sustainable to which Treasurer Kimatian replied that they were.

**4. ACADEMICS REPORT**

The Chairperson called upon Joshua Schneider to present the Academics report. Mr. Schneider said he was pleased to report that laptops for students were all in and the students were getting used to using them. Benchmark testing had been done using the STAR software program which has given good information on the various levels of competence. He said the availability of using laptops for instruction enabled access to online teaching tools such as Khan Academy.

Mr. Schneider then informed the Trustees that report cards would be going out. In areas where there were incompletes, he said the students would be able to make good on that during the semester. Then ensued a discussion among the Trustees and Mr. Schneider on how that would be accomplished.

Trustee Sanford asked what the correlation was between following the dress code and performance grade level. Though a study had not been done, a case could be made that those following the dress code had higher grade performance.

Mr. Schneider then handed out an Academic Report listing the month’s accomplishments.

Trustee Eagen reported on a trip to the Schein Student Center at Syracuse University by sixteen students who had earned the trip. The students saw an art show of painting of well known individuals and some not so well know, but all of whom had made significant contributions to society. For many students it was the first time on a university campus.

**5. FINANCIAL REPORT**

The Chairperson then called upon the Treasurer for the financial report. Treasurer Kimatian reported that the first 20% of CSP monies had been received and that the school had submitted its December 1 enrollment invoice to the Syracuse City School District. He said that the bills were up to date, that the capital expenditure for the boiler repair had been allocated and that there was over a month of operating cash flow going forward. He said that the best use of the CSP monies was being considered.

**6. PERSONNEL & STAFFING**

The Chairperson asked Trustee Eagen to report on personnel and staffing. Trustee Eagen stated that we needed to think about next year and the recruiting of students. She said that we continue to receive students on a weekly basis during the school year. She said that often a parent and a potential student might want to visit the school and tour the facility and see OnTECH in action. That‘s why it is important, she said, that we consistently show those interested in the school a caring, respectful and learning environment. She said that a strategy was being developed for a recruitment campaign. It also meant, she said, we would need to recruit additional teachers for the new added enrollment.

**7. GOVERNANCE**

The Chairperson recognized Trustee Eagen for the Governance report. Trustee Eagen referenced the need previously discussed to hire more teachers and staff for the impending student enrollment increase, but also added that consideration would also be given to a head of school search. In addition, she and other Trustees were identifying individuals who could become Trustees, who would be complementary to the current Board and provide additional guidance and expertise. With that she yielded the floor to Trustee Sanford.

Trustee Sanford said that over the next months he would be leaving the Board because he would be spending more time away from Syracuse. He said, even at that time, that he would still be available to be helpful where he could. Trustee and Founder, Ellen Eagen, said she was sorry to hear that but thanked Bill for the excellent work he had contributed to OnTECH to date, which had been integral to the launch of the school, and for the continuing work he would do.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, a motion was made by Trustee Sanford, seconded by Trustee Stegeman to adjourn the meeting and was approved by unanimous consent.