**BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING**

**Minutes of February 24, 2020 Meeting**

**Location:** OnTECH Charter High School 810 Willis Avenue Syracuse 13204

Time: 5:45 PM

**Present:**

Ellen Eagen, Founder & President

Stephen Kimatian, Secretary/Treasurer

Pastor Willie K Mitchell, Trustee

Victoria Giarratano, Trustee, Excused

Karen McMahon, Trustee

Beth Gavenda, CFO/Human Resources

Fran Coudriet, Administrator

Jana Rogers, Head of Academics

Keil White, Director of Facilities

Ta’Quell Morris, Head of Community and Culture

Theo Jones, Dean

Dominique Elizabeth, Community Member

**1.** **WELCOME**

OnTECH Trustee, Steve Kimatian, serving as chairperson, opened the meeting and welcomed the community and staff. He stated that a quorum was present in that all trustees were in attendance.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The chairperson asked for approval of the prior month’s meeting minutes of January 22, 2020. He asked whether there were any additions, corrections or modifications. There being none, the minutes were accepted as presented.

**3. REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITY & CULTURE**

The chairperson called on Ta’Quell Morris, Head of Community & Culture to report. Mr. Morris said that a focused effort was being made by the Deans in reaching out to students who were absent on any continuing basis. In each case, calls were made to homes and if necessary parents and guardians were communicated with by text or email and in some cases visits to the home. He said, the goal was to strive to be better on an incremental basis.

He then reported on the Community Circle event that was held this morning. It was the first time the school had done that. Mr. Morris had visited Vertus Charter School in Rochester that had a morning routine of bringing the students together to start the day. He said it came off well and the Community Circle was a variation of that. He then reported on several student events that had taken place. One was a Valentine’s Day party which was well received. Among the others were the club events, the barbers club, the chess club and the Future Farmers of America chapter meeting. The Founder then reported on the continuing partnership with the Onondaga Zoo. For a zoo event, 18 students participated by volunteering. They impressed the zoo management by showing up on time, presenting themselves well dressed, responsive and courteous in discussion. In addition, seven students applied for Onondaga County zoo guide jobs and to the credit of OnTECH students five were accepted. Another student got a job at Price Chopper.

At this time, the chairperson recognized Mr. Morris to introduce Ms. Shannon Cavidine, a nurse practitioner from Upstate Hospital. Ms. Cavedine, he said, was going to be present for a day a week to see students who could benefit from her counseling. Those present all welcomed Ms. Cavedine and the chairperson said those present would welcome her comments. Ms. Cavedine said she was very much looking forward to working with the students at OnTECH. She had visited the school on several occasions and had discussions with the Founder on how she could be of assistance to the students. She said that she would work with groups of students, small groups, not 8-10 but rather 3-4 students at a time. The Founder stated to the Board that Ms. Cavedine’s role would be that of an independent contractor and the students would be designated in a referral process. She said that she needed a motion from the Board to approve this relationship. Accordingly, Trustee McMahon made a motion to approve the hiring of Ms. Cavedine as a consultant nurse practitioner, which was seconded by Trustee Mitchell and then unanimously approved by a Board vote.

Next, the chairperson recognized Dean Theodore Jones, to give a report on athletics. Mr. Jones said the OnTECH program was growing with a lot of enthusiasm from the students. Although the basketball team lost its last two games, they lost by less, and more importantly, they played as a team and showed good sportsmanship to the competition. He said the players were developing their self confidence. He then reported that for the Spring teams, OnTECH would field a JV Baseball team, a Softball team and a Track & Field team. The Founder then said that the cost of uniforms and team equipment was something that needed to be calculated. She said that the Landlord, Building Hope was willing to make a contribution to that. The Founder asked Mr. White to work with Mr. Gavenda to put together a draft budget relating to spring sports.

The Founder explained that OnTECH had a supporting 501(c)3, the Sustainable Sciences and Technology Fund, Inc. (SST), for this purpose and she anticipated that contributions to the SST could support athletics if necessary. Further she reported that the SST could be a vehicle to pay students who performed jobs for the school. Toward this end, she requested that the Board consider and then move to approve an approach that would enable the school to receive funds from the SST for these purposes. Accordingly, Trustee Mitchell moved to approved receiving monies from the SST for the designated purposes. The motion was seconded by Trustee McMahon and then unanimously approved by the Board.

**4. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Don Miller, Executive Director, reported on the improvement of the students in the time it took to change classes between periods. Students were in their next class in 4 minutes; previously it took 13 minutes. There were 57 on-time starts of classes and the ontime end times increased from 16 to 59 over comparable periods. He said this resulted in greater on task activity. He then brought up the consideration of using advisory times more effectively. The Founder underscored that the charter refers to using this advisory time for emotional-social growth and that the teachers and staff needed to thoughtfully consider this in the planning. Clubs should be an integral part of this. He then said that plans needed to be made for the incoming new class and that an 11th grade curriculum needed to be adopted. As he saw it, there could be a need for 7.5 FT teachers and there were 14 -18 classrooms that would be needed; an assessment would need to be made for use. Recruiting teachers would become a priority and the focus on that would come in April and May. Trustee Kimatian noted that he recognized the importance and asked Trustee McMahon if she would assist on any promotional materials needed. Trustee McMahon indicated she would.

**5. HEAD OF ACADEMICS REPORT**

The chairperson called upon Jana Rogers, the Head of Academics, to report. Ms. Rogers walked through the ESSA requirements and how the data is used for better understanding of the student progression in the education process. She said that there was a reporting deadline for input of data on March 20 and 27. The Founder reiterated that she wanted to be sure the school did not miss a deadline and advised that the staff needed to do what was necessary to meet the deadlines. The Founder further stated that she wanted to be sure that in scheduling classes the pathways for a diploma were taken into account. CFO, Beth Gavenda, mentioned, in case it was of value, that there were PSAT’s designed for 8th and 9th grades that could be taken.

**6. REPORT OF CFO/HR**

The CFO, Beth Gavenda, was called upon to give the financial report. She said the school was in good financial shape. With respect to revenue, submission to the SCSD for the next payment had been made and the school anticipated the payment over the next two weeks. Payment for SPED students was being prepared and would be submitted over the next two weeks. The county school districts were pretty much up to date with payments. For the month of January 2020 revenue was 94% under budget, primarily due to less students than budgeted and expenses were 76% under budget. This combined to give a result of net cash flow that was projected to be $167,000 compared with a budgeted $81,000. She stated at the moment there were no outstanding personnel issues.

**7. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FACILITIES**

The chairperson then recognized the head of facilities, Keil White, for his report. Mr. White said that we had 24 applications for next year. He said an open house was being planned for March. The Lottery was tentatively scheduled for April 7. A discussed ensued about ways to teach the community about OnTECH, including field trips from 8th grades. Mr. White then further reported that the school now had a washer and dryer that was installed for use. He said that it was important to do an assessment of space for the total population that is expected at the school for the next year. That ended the facilities report.

**8. OUTREACH**

The chairperson recognized the Founder for a report for further matters in connection with the community. The Founder stated that she met with the head of transportation for the SCSD. Apparently, yellow buses could be the mode of transportation if OnTECH adjourned school in the afternoon at 4:00 PM. That timing, however, was problematic. Following was a discussion on whether uses public or yellow buses. She said she also spoke to the head of food services at the SCSD to get a better handle on how OnTECH could get better fresh food services. She reported that SCSD would consider offering to OnTECH another food plan which included fresh food and produce. She said that SCSD said they would start providing that kind of food service to OnTECH as soon as possible. The Head of Food Services would consider developing a menu for the following academic year that would provide a variety of fresh foods to the smaller schools in their system and OnTECH would be included.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no new business, the chairperson asked for a motion for adjournment. On motion made a seconded, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 PM