

HARAMBEE INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY  
CHARTER SCHOOL  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

---

**January 22, 2020**  
**John Skief Hall**  
**6:00-8:00 P.M.**

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday January 22<sup>nd</sup> 2020 in the conference room at 638 N. 66<sup>th</sup> Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19151.

**Open Session, Board Room, 6:00 P.M.**

**Meeting Called to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:11 p.m.

**Libation**

Renee Whitby

**Introduction of Visitors and Others Present**

**Visitor** stated his name- Joseph P. Watkins

Public comment- visitor stated that he has taken a tour of Harambee Institute and gave his impressions.

Topic- Overview of Mr. Watkins background and experience

Dr. Baynard introduced the visitor and prospective board member Joseph P. Watkins to board members and Harambee staff. Mr. Watkins stated that he had taken a tour of the school and witnessed some of the students' activities. He was very impressed with the students and especially the African greeting. He gave an overview of his background and experience.

**Roll Call**

The chairman of the board conducted role call

**Board Members Present:**

Maurice Baynard

Larry Bell

Charis Jackson

Renee Whitby

C. Wade Mosely

**Board Members Absent:**

Marirose Roach

Joseph Foster

Donna Holmes-Lockett

Lakiesha Creighton

**Others Present:**

Gregory Shannon            CEO

Michelle Thornton	CFO- conference call
Ericka Washington	Assistant Principal of School Operations
Sara Ferguson	Assistant Principal of Instruction
Angela Dennis	Assistant VP of Specialized Services

### **December Minutes Review/Approval**

**Motion:** To approve December Meeting Minutes

The motion was seconded, all agreed, minutes approved

Approval AYE: 6      Nays: 0      Abstentions: 0      Absent: 3

### **Facilities Development Plan-Michelle Thornton, CFO**

Michelle Thornton, CFO was conferenced in by telephone and requested to present her report first. She reported that part of the strategic plan would continue to explore opportunities for organizational expansion. The senior management team will be looking to address the deficiencies of growth, classroom size, resource space and storage in the future.

### **CEO Report-Gregory Shannon, CEO**

- **Development and Fundraising**

Gregory Shannon reported updates on the signature fundraising initiative for spring 2020. He presented members with a cost comparison of three venues and reported that they have identified both the date and venue for Harambee's Signature Spring Gala. They have secured the date of Thursday May 28, 2020 at the historical Belmont Mansion. He and senior staff members Michele Thornton and Erica Washington took a tour of the Mansion and shared how beautiful the venue is. Gregory noted that the Grand ballroom would be an excellent choice for the event, along with securing an additional room for a silent auction. The venue will accommodate 150-170 individuals. In addition, he mentioned that Harambee has secured the venues museum and will provide two separate tours of the museum on that evening. Harambee is currently vetting individuals to serve as the MC for the evening along with keynote speakers and caterers. A final determination will be made soon. A number of awardees will also be recognized that evening and potential candidates have been selected and will be formalized later. Dr. Baynard asked if the event would be formal or semi- formal. Gregory replied that it would most likely be semi-formal.

- **Midyear Leadership Convocation**

Mr. Shannon reported that the Midyear Leadership Convocation will be held at The Chubb Conference Center, Saturday January 25<sup>th</sup> 8:30 am- 3:30 pm. Roz McPherson will be presenting on Board development and would like members and staff to complete a survey so that she can use data from the survey as part of her presentation. He noted that on Saturday, the Board will begin with a closed session and board development in the morning. In the afternoon following lunch, The Leadership team will make a presentation on "Leading in a Culture of Change. Gregory also reported that during the leadership convocation, they will have an exciting data presentation from Sara Ferguson and the academic team,

around the instructional data and what everyone can do to contribute to academic success. Dr. Baynard noted that Board member Joseph is currently away, but has indicated that he will be in attendance on Saturday. He also noted that he understands that it is challenging to give up an entire Saturday, so the morning session will be used for the Board to discuss in detail, some of the items that have not been previously discussed in the Board meetings. The morning session is specifically designed for members to work on Board growth and development. He acknowledged that some Board members may not be able to give up an entire Saturday to participate in all of the afternoon sessions, so he urged members to try to make it in the morning and stay for lunch.

### **Operations, Ericka Washington, Assistant Principal of School Operations**

- Charter School Renewal

Gregory Shannon reported that they have begun a series of meetings to assess the status of the 2016 Charter Renewal conditions. He indicated that his Sr. Management team has conducted three meetings to review Charter Renewal conditions and their next meeting is scheduled for Thursday January 23, 2020. The purpose of the meeting is to take a look at all of the conditions and to ensure that all are satisfied. Gregory stated that many, if not most of the conditions have already been satisfied. Board member Wade, asked how have certain schools whose charter was expiring this year, already received their approval for charter renewal? Ericka responded by explaining that the charter school office has started a new process by selecting certain schools that have a 5 year track record to fast track them instead of going through the regular process.

- Enrollment

Gregory reported that they have held two open house events for the 2020-2021-lottery process and they were very excited about the participation they received. Harambee will hold their lottery tomorrow evening. In the past Harambee has been the last school in the process and this year they will be the first lottery in the city. They have taken measures to simplify the application process and have trained staff on the different options that parents can take in terms of applying.

- Lead in water

Gregory reported that all drinking fountains have been sampled and tested. All samples and fountains are in compliance. Ericka reported that they have decided to purchase and provide filtered stations instead of water fountains.

### **Specialized Services, Angela Dennis Assistant VP of Specialized Services**

- Immunizations

Gregory reported a 100% compliance with student immunizations. They were also able to engage the parents and convince many to share immunization records with Harambee.

- Harvard comes to Harambee

Gregory reported on Harvard comes to Harambee. This is a program where a current student from Harvard and a former Harambee student came to Harambee and spoke with the students about Harvard, the enrollment process and the college experience. Gregory explained that each month they would like to bring in a speaker from a different

University. Next week beginning on January 27<sup>th</sup> will be the kickoff of college to career week. Gregory also noted that each day in circle a different member of the Senior Management team will come in and speak about their college and how that experience led them to their career choices. The students will then dress up in the swag of the college of their choice or the career that they see themselves in. Trips will begin in the fall for students to attend the Harvard campus to continue the conversation around college to career.

### **Instructional Data Report, Sara Ferguson**

Sara presented a data presentation and gave an overview of the data from 2019. She explained The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), which is a standard based criterion that provides an understanding of student and school performance related to the attainment of proficiency of academic standards. Based upon the presentation, the data is used to view individual student scores; used for teachers in identifying students who may need additional educational opportunities, and for schools curriculum and instruction improvement discussions. Sara also noted that she will be providing a more detailed presentation on Saturday at the Midyear Leadership Convocation. During Sara's presentation of the proficiency scores, a discussion ensued about opportunities for Harambee students to become more proficient in math. Dr. Baynard commented that he would like to see everyone become more math proficient. He indicated that the standard must be raised.

### **Old Business**

Midyear Leadership Convocation

The Midyear Leadership Convocation will be held at The Chubb Conference Center, Saturday January 25<sup>th</sup> 8:30 am- 3:30 pm.

### **New Business**

None

### **Action Items:**

**Motion:** to give the leadership team the green light to continue with the building acquisition based on the data that was presented today.

Motion seconded, all approved unanimously

AYE: 6

Nays: 0

Abstentions: 0

Absent: 3

### **Public Concerns**

**Visitor:** stated her name- Joy Fobbs

Topic: Joy Fobbs stated that she began approximately three weeks ago. She stated that she is currently teaching a 5<sup>th</sup> grade class for a teacher that will be going on maternity leave shortly. She also stated that she has seen tremendous growth at Harambee since Baba Shannon stepped in. She stated that she loves math and that her expertise lies in math. She is looking forward to helping Harambee move further along and increase PSSA scores. She is not sure where she will be next year but hopes that she will be placed in math.

Larry Bell, board member asked if there were any long-term vacancies. Sara reported that a second grade teacher left and they currently have a certified long-term substitute teacher in that position.

**Motion:** To dismiss

Seconded by Larry Bell, all agreed

AYE: 6          Nays: 0          Abstentions: 0          Absent: 3

**Adjourn Board Meeting**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:22 P.M.

**The next Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 26<sup>th</sup> 2020**