

Harambee Institute of Science and Technology Charter School Board of Trustees Public Meeting Minutes

February 26th 2020

John Skief Hall

6:00-8:00 P.M.

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Wednesday February 26th 2020 in the conference room at 638 N. 66th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19151.

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

Meeting Called to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:06 p.m.

Libation

Renee Whitby

Introduction of Visitors and Others Present

Visitors stated their names

Mathew Laken- Cramers Uniforms

Joy Fobbs- 5th grade teacher at Harambee

Nakia Brown- 4th grade teacher at Harambee

Public comment-

Roll Call

The chairman of the board conducted role call

Board Members Present:

Maurice Baynard

Larry Bell

Charis Jackson

Lakiesha Creighton

Renee Whitby

C. Wade Mosely

Board Members Absent:

Marirose Roach

Joseph Foster

Donna Holmes-Lockett

Others Present:

Gregory Shannon CEO

Michelle Thornton CFO- conference call

Ericka Washington Assistant Principal of School Operations

Sara Ferguson Assistant Principal of Instruction

Vote on nomination of Joe Watkins

Dr. Baynard, Board Chairman entertained a motion to accept Joseph Watkins as a new Board member

Motion: to accept Joseph Watkins as a Board Member
The motion was seconded, so moved unanimously

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

January Minutes Review/Approval

Motion: To approve January Meeting Minutes with 2 corrections
The motion was seconded, all agreed, minutes approved

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

PRESENTATIONS:

CEO- Gregory Shannon presented new uniforms from Cramers Uniform Company to Board Members and introduced the seasonal uniforms that parents selected based on parents input. He introduced visitor Matt Laken from Cramers Uniforms and asked him to elaborate on some of the details of the uniforms along with time lines for manufacturing. Matt answered additional questions and left everyone with literature to review.

CEO Report-Gregory Shannon, CEO

- **Organizational Expansion**

A SWOT Analysis was completed to determine readiness for expansion. The analysis identifies Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Mama Erick lead the team in the first exercise will be following up on part two of the SWOT Analysis

- **Development and Fundraising**

CEO, Greg Shannon reported updates on the signature fundraising initiative for spring 2020. He noted that they have a fully executed contract for the event with the Belmont Mansion. The event will take place on Thursday May 28, 2020. Tickets will be printed within the next two weeks for distribution to everyone so that members can either raise \$1,500.00 or sell tickets. The venue will hold 180- 200 people and the headline entertainer has been identified. They are currently trying to secure Carol Riddick as the headline entertainer. The event will include a Jazz Quartet from the CLEF club, highlighted by a Harambee Institute student that will be performing with the jazz quartet. She is currently on scholarship with the Clef club.

- **Summer leadership retreat**

Greg indicated that they would like to select Baltimore Harbor in Baltimore Maryland as the location for retreat activities. He also noted that they would like to get the dates out for the retreat as early as possible so that everyone can plan around the dates selected. The dates are as follows:

Tuesday July 28th

Wednesday July 29th

Thursday July 30th

- **Second annual Men's summit**

Harambee is currently in the planning stages for the 2nd annual Men's summit, which will be held on Friday May 8th. Greg indicated that they have confirmed Rodney McCloud as the keynote speaker. The caterer for the event has been selected as well. They will use Eatable Delights, the same caterer that was used last year for the event. He asked everyone to be sure to plan their schedules accordingly.

Instruction

Greg mentioned that they are on a 40 day PSSA plan in conjunction with the HASA PROGRAM. They have been working with students that fell just short of proficient on last year's assessment. They want to provide help in the areas that those students scored low and provide intervention around those standards. They are also registered for the regional Scripps Spelling Bee that will be held in New York. Harambee Institute will have a 5th and 8th grader participating.

Operations

Greg noted that Mama Ericka and the operations team have been extremely busy. They have secured a vendor for exterior lighting and have ensured that all lamps are fully operational around the building. The rusted fixtures have all been changed as well. They have also identified a firm to help with the facilities master plan and are in the process of signing an agreement with that firm. The firm will be looking at all internal and external and systems and structures.

- **Student Enrollment**

Greg reported that the acceptance letters for the 2020-2021-school lottery have all gone out and they are maintaining their current waitlist. The expected enrollment for the next school year is 600. Greg also reported that current enrollment is now 566 but is expected to increase. They have drafted 2020-2021 school academic calendar. Greg also noted that the school calendar is highlighted by a start date for staff on August 10th and an instructional start date for all students on August 24th. There will be 181 instructional days for students and 199 days for teachers. The terminal date for the school year next year will be June 9th for students and June 10th for students.

Specialized Services

Greg reported that their gifted and talented program is currently underway and the first three students have been tested and found gifted. Mama Crystal has been identified as the Gifted and talented teacher this year. Gifted and talented services will begin shortly and should be up and running within the next two weeks. They have a total of four 4th grade students and one 5th grade student to start the program. Board member, Charis asked if they would be testing younger grades as well. Greg answered that there will be a universal primary screener for the program that will be given across the primary grades of K-1 and 2. Greg noted that the students would be evaluated based upon how they perform on the screener.

CFO Report, Michelle Thornton-by conference

Updates

- **BUILDING ACQUISITION UPDATE- LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Michelle shared updates on property acquisition and discussions around refinancing their current bonds to assess whether there are better interest rates. They have asked Rodney Jones, broker to come in next month to give a presentation.

- **Budget Process**

Michelle reported that the 2020-2021-budget process is underway. She reported that

she and the CEO have met with each executive leader to review their department budgets and next month they plan to make a presentation to the Finance Committee and in April they will present to the entire board with hopes to have a vote in May which should place them on target for an effective date of July 1.

- **FOH Gala 2020**

Dr. Baynard asked Greg, CEO to expand on the FOH Gala 2020. Greg reiterated that they have a fully executed contract for the event with the Belmont Mansion. The event will take place on Thursday May 28, 2020. Tickets will be printed within the next two weeks for distribution to everyone so that members can either raise \$1,500.00 or sell tickets. They are currently negotiating with Carol Riddick as the headline entertainer. The event is inclusive of a historical tour of the museum and exhibits. The event will include a Jazz Quartet from the CLEF club, highlighted by a Harambee Institute student that will be performing with the jazz quartet.

- **Incident**

Ericka reported that an incident took place a couple of weeks ago during the breakfast period at approximately 7:30 a.m. The sprinkler system went off and they immediately evacuated everyone and relocated them to W.P. ACES (West Philadelphia Achievement Charter Elementary School). There was no damage; the cleaning team removed the water and sanitized the kitchen. The fire chief came out and inspected everything and gave them clearance. The staff and students followed drill and relocation protocol from their monthly drill practice, which allowed for a smooth process. Dr. Baynard asked where they are with environmental assessments? Greg indicated that

- **2020-2021 School Calendar**

Greg asked Ericka to expound on the 2020-2020 school calendar. She pointed out the changes, which include 181 instructional days for students and 199 days for teachers. Another shift would allow for 16.5 professional development days; a 7-day winter break and a 5-day spring break. The school lottery will still be held in January. Board member, Renee noted that the Kwanza celebration does not appear on the calendar. Ericka responded that it appears on the calendar as the Sherehe/Kwanza celebration. A discussion ensued about the calendar in previous years. Board member Charis stated that previously there had been a Kwanza celebration that was its own separate event and a Sherehe celebration, which were two separate events. Ericka indicated that she would be willing to change the language for the December 23rd Sherehe event to a Kwanza celebration. Dr. Baynard, Board Chair stated that Kwanza is a big cultural deal and that they should think about Kwanza as a big celebration. He noted that there are lots of people that do not know a lot about it and suggested that Harambee Institute educate about the importance and invite the community. He suggested that they educate the community on the meanings of each day and why it is important. They should teach the community how to celebrate in their own homes.

Old Business

None

New Business

Wade inquired about Board insurance, bonds and indemnities. Greg noted that Michelle oversees and handles the Harambee and Board member insurances. Dr. Baynard requested a review and discussion in the next Board meeting.

Erica added that she would be convening a Wellness committee and opening it up to Board members and parents to join. Board member Charis indicated that she might know a few interested parents. Board member, Kiesha informed Ericka that she was the previous secretary for the committee and would pass along information from the last meeting. The next meeting will be held on March 10th.

Public Concerns

None

Action Items:

Dr. Baynard entertained a motion to pass the proposed draft 2020-2021 school calendar with the essentials needed to report to the school board. Board member, Larry Bell motioned, seconded by Board member Wade Mosely. All in favor, so moved

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

Dr. Baynard entertained a motion from Board member Larry Bell to give senior leadership the ability to decide on new uniforms for Harambee. Dr. Baynard accepted the motion with the caveat that a long sleeve option for the summer uniform would be considered and that leadership would make provisions for those concerns.

Motion: Larry Bell made the motion, seconded by Board member Charis Jackson, opposed by Board member Renee Whitby. She stated that her opposition is to the color (tweed) instead of black. Board member Charis gave an explanation of the reason that the parents decided on that color.

AYE: 5 Nays:1 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 3

Motion: Dr. Baynard entertained a motion to dismiss the Board meeting, the motion was seconded and all agreed, meeting dismissed

Adjourn Board Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

The next Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 25th 2020