

Harambee Institute of Science and Technology Charter School

Board of Trustees Public Meeting Minutes

Board Meeting Minutes Monday November 24th 2025

The meeting of the Board of Trustees Public Meeting was held on Monday November 24th 2025 at 6:33 P.M. The meeting was held via zoom.

Open Session

Board Members Present:

Maurice Baynard
Jan Gillespie- Walton
Renee Whitby
C. Wade Mosely
Charis Jackson

Board Members Absent:

Shawn Blue
Larry Bell
Donna Holmes Lockett

Others Present:

Gregory Shannon	CEO
Daniel Bryant	Compliance Officer
Nakia Brown	Chief Academic Officer
David Rosario	Chief of Operations and Administration
Deleah Archer	Chief of Student Support & Innovation
Michelle Thornton	CFO
Jenita Lunsford	Board Liaison

Meeting Called to Order

Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

Libation

Libation was led by Renee Whitby- Board member and cultural leader

Roll Call

Board Chairman Maurice Baynard asked members and the senior leadership team to give introductions. Board members and the senior leadership team introduced themselves, stated their names and titles.

Introduction of Visitors and Others Present

Dr. Valerie Howard- Richardson (Community Council Health Systems) observing as a potential Board member was introduced by Board member Jan who has recommended her to the Board. Dr. Richardson introduced herself and indicated that she is the Clinical Director for an IBHS (Intensive Behavioral Health Services Systems) program with Community Council Health Systems. She previously worked as a Special Education teacher for 17 years with the School District of Philadelphia.

Review and approval of the October 29th 2025 Board Meeting Minutes

Board Chairman Maurice Baynard asked if there were any corrections and/or additions to the Board Meeting Minutes from the October 29th meeting. He opened the floor to Board members for comments. There were no corrections and/or additions. Board member Wade made a motion seconded by Board member Jan to accept the minutes as presented. All were in favor; none were opposed and there was a unanimous motion to accept the minutes as presented.

Approval: 5 AYES: 0 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 4

Board Chairman Maurice Baynard turned the meeting over to Greg for the CEO report. Greg began with reciting the Mission, Vision and Core Values of the organization.

Harambee Institute exists to offer our community an education with a focus on the origins, current status, and future of the African world.

Our mission is to educate students to succeed as global citizens with a clear awareness of “who I am, where I am from, where I am going, and how I get there.”

Our vision is a collective and informed African American community utilizing science and technology as a means of promoting education for self-reliance, locally and globally.

Our core values are:

Greatness: Pursuit of excellence in all we do

Accountability: Owning what we do and who we are

Innovation: Open to new ideas with a growth mindset

Integrity: Honesty, transparency, and unity in all we do

CEO Report, Greg Shannon

Greg announced that a dozen Harambee students will participate in the 6ABC Thanksgiving parade as dancers. They were highlighted on Saturday and Sunday this weekend practicing for the parade along with Mama Goldie. He said that they continue to showcase the great talents of their wonderful children.

Charter Renewal Update

Greg reported that they are in the throes of their Charter Renewal and indicated that they completed their application and beyond the application being submitted he wanted to thank Board member Jan, Dr. Baynard and Dr. Blue for their engagement with the

Charter School Office. He gave thanks to the parents, teachers, community stakeholders and administrators. He said that The School District of Philadelphia's Charter School Office came in for their RSV visit to see if everything in their application was in fact true. He said that they had three mission elements that they submitted. First that they are an African centered school and second that they are a STEM school and that they are a forward-facing community school.

Greg said that in addition to the charter application, they submitted an amended application requesting an additional property. He stated that they have engaged members of their school community with respect to the additional property. They will be moving on with a parent meeting to engage Harambee parents about the purchase of a new property on December 10th. Greg reported that on December 19th they will officially engage their staff and in January and February they will engage with the community in the area informing them that they are attempting to purchase a new property. Greg said that he is really excited to report that they have engaged Dr. Baynard and Board member Jan around the new property as well. He said that they have engaged Board members Wade and Larry from a facilities & financial standpoint. He told members that they are now ready to make a formal presentation to the Board this evening around the entire process. Greg concluded his report and opened the floor to questions. He turned the floor over to Nakia for her report on Instruction.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Nakia Brown **Service Learning**

Nakia reported that her presentation would look a bit different because she would be speaking about an area of curriculum that has been at the fore-front of their instructional program which is their work with service learning. She said that she and Board member Jan talked the work that Jan and her sister friends are doing at Cheyney University with their community food pantry. After talking with Greg, they continued to move forward with their mission element of community. They organized a student youth group with the junior Black shirts and their upper elementary 5th grade students. She said that they worked diligently on a cross curricular project that resulted in Harambees community pantry.

Community Pantry

Nakia reported that their goal is to nourish the community. They want to wrap it around instruction so the students' read articles and analyzed some data and statistics about food insecurity in their own communities and how they could respond. The response was a canned and non-perishable food drive. Nakia informed members that she would attempt to share a video. She narrated the video and shared with members that the food drive began at the beginning of October and ran for a full month through the end of October. The video showed the number of items that were collected and distributed back into the community. This was their first Junior Black shirts Children's Project and the commercial that the students created and produced themselves. Over the course of 29 days the students collected 2,500 non perishable items. They had 12 families to reach out to them and they were able to provide them with food, bread and non-perishable items. Nakia said that they created a system just like a QR code and

placed it on the front door. They put it on Class Dojo and shared it via flyers to the parents. They made the baskets for parents and they were able to come to the school and pick them up. Nakia said that they received such great feedback that they will continue beyond the month of October with their process as it is something that has truly blessed their school community. She said that they engaged their community through the principles of the Nguzu Saba and the principles of Umoja.

Nakia also mentioned that they were able to partner with the Tyrese Maxey Foundation through one of their paraprofessionals and that organization donated 200 turkeys to Harambee. They worked with Greg and Michelle who insured that were picked up and on Saturday, they were able to distribute 200 turkeys to their school community in about an hour and seven minutes. Nakia said that she and Greg are always looking for their next opportunity to serve and that will be the MLK Day of Service at Temple University. She thanked everyone who has donated already and if you still would like to donate, they will continue to keep the project going as long as they are able to do so. Nakia concluded her report and opened the floor to questions.

Board member Renee commented that she is so proud to see the school doing things for the community at a time when it is really needed. She said that it warms her heart. Greg turned the meeting over to David for his report on Operations.

Operations, David Rosario

Building Expansion

David reported that he would share the proposed facility expansion and they are hopeful that the BOARD would share their support behind it. He reported that there are two issues to bring tonight. He said the main and larger issue is the facility expansion and secondarily, is their maintenance contract to go with the HVAC system. The warranty is expiring and they need to go into another phase of maintenance.

David shared his screen and narrated the building details, showing the specs of both properties. The first footprint he showed 3.44 acres for the larger building with almost 150,000 square feet. He said that they would have to convert it of course for school needs, but it has the space that they are looking for. He showed a picture of the second footprint which is a unit that has 14 units inside of its construction and almost 20,000 square feet with an atrium. David told members that they are looking for the Board to authorize them to begin a due diligence period and enter into a letter of intent with the sellers of the property at the proposed addresses.

David explained that the Island Avenue properties will serve as their dedicated area on campus for fifth to eighth grade students. He said that they are hoping to grow up to 400 students from the district and some of the county areas because it's close to the county line. He said that some of the things that they want to do academically for students are listed in the Board Resolution. He said that they are asking for the Board to authorize the CEO and the CFO permission to use \$100,000 for escrow purposes, for due diligence and project readiness. He said that these are normal and customary moves when engaging in any type of property venture. David stated that with the

Boards support behind it, the CEO would then have the responsibility to execute a letter of intent for both properties and it would also allow the CFO to continue her part in securing the bank engagement letter from PNC Bank.

David said that these are the parts of the package that they would have to give to the owners to show their seriousness of intent and it allows them to engage in a period of due diligence that they would agree upon. He said that part of the due diligence is facility readiness. He further stated that Board support behind it would get them an initial 90 days with the potential of an extension of another 90 days, in total six months which would coincide with the settling of the amendment application and the settling of the Charter Renewal process. These are the major points of what they are trying to do and he is submitting it to the Board for consideration and a vote.

David concluded his report and opened the floor to questions.

Dr. Baynard asked Board member Wade to give a 30 second overview from his position on what his recommendation would be since he represents infrastructure & facilities as well as finance as a member of those committees.

Board member Wade responded that it is a large undertaking and they have concerns with the debt service that would be involved. He said right now, their annual payment to the current bond is around \$500,000 and depending on the amount of capital that they draw from the bond, it could be three times that amount on the debt service.

He also said that they have concerns with the fit of the building and how appropriate it would be. In that regard they probably need to engage an architect or professional to get a physical needs assessment of the building and what the current condition is and what will be necessary in order for them to fit it for their intended need. He said as far as a recommendation, he would leave that to the Board as he does have some concerns about the stakeholder assessment with the parents and the location being about 6 miles from Harambee. He wondered if they would still maintain their interests with moving and splitting the school. He said that there are still a lot of questions and a lot of due diligence that needs to take place to get a firm level of comfort and he is not sure if 100,000 is enough. He also expressed concern about who might have the time necessary to manage the process forward. He suggested getting the process started and then determine how it all works out.

Board member Charis noted that she had some of the same concerns that Board member Wade shared. She asked if they have done a walkthrough of the site.

Greg responded yes, David, Michelle, Terrence, and I all had an opportunity to walk the facility, both internally as well as on the grounds. He said that there is nearly five or six acres of grounds that exist outside and the building has great bones. He said that they need to do the due diligence because the process is for any charter organization seeking additional property, this all has to run concurrently with the charter renewal and the amended application process. He said that this would allow them to provide their

children with the kind of STEM offerings that would continue to keep them on the cutting edge educationally as well as provide open space for the children to engage in physical activity and other STEM activities such as drone flying, makerspace, and their urban gardening program would expand.

Dr. Baynard expressed some concern about the \$100,000 allocated for due diligence, suggesting it might not be enough to address all necessary evaluations. He also highlighted the significant flooding risks in Eastwick, urging the need for detailed environmental assessments to avoid future disasters. He recommended strongly that that they lean in and go into this transaction knowing exactly what those predictions are.

Greg acknowledged those concerns and noted that they have considered them, noting that the floodplain, soil samples and projections are all part of their due diligence process.

Dr. Baynard asked David if he would mind him taking this issue that has been presented to the Board for consideration and a vote. To authorize the CEO and CFO to do their due diligence on this project with all of the caveats as they've been discussed this evening at \$100,000 provisionally, assuming that further analysis doesn't require additional dollars. David replied yes.

Motion: Board member Charis made a motion to accept the due diligence request to authorize the CEO and CFO to do their due diligence on this project at 100,000 dollars, seconded by Board member Wade. All were in favor; none were opposed and there was a unanimous motion to accept.

Approval: 5 AYES: 0 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0

Absent: 4

HVAC Maintenance Contract Approval

David reported that he and Terrance have gone through the proper process in conjunction with their facilities committee and have selected CM3 Building Solutions to be their provider for HVAC services. It will be a total of three years and they will be the primary contact and contract to support HVAC services for Harambee, which is located on the roof and throughout the building. The scope covers preventative maintenance and a response service team. David noted that the actual contract was provided to members with Board materials and hopes that they have had a chance to review it.

Dr. Baynard asked if there were any questions regarding the proposal, if not would anyone like to make a motion that they accept the proposal as laid out by David to approve the maintenance contract.

Motion: Board member Charis made a motion seconded by Board member Renee to approve the HVAC maintenance contract with CM3 Building Solutions. All were in favor; none were opposed and there was a unanimous motion to accept it as presented. Greg turned the meeting over to Dr. Archer for her report on Specialized Services.

Specialized Services, Dr. Archer

Preparing for McKinney Vento Audit (November 2025)

Dr. Archer reported that she submitted her Board report when they were preparing for the McKinney Vento Audit which happened today. She indicated that they passed with an A and she is so happy to report it. She stated that they continue to provide strong supports for their students that qualify under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Act.

Preparing for Child Find report (Dec 1st)

Dr. Archer reported this is their last report which identifies all the students that qualify for special education supports and services, that they have to report to the state by December 1st. She said that they are in the process of editing that report, so that it can be submitted before they leave for Thanksgiving break. Deleah concluded her report and opened the floor for questions.

Board member Wade asked if they have a report on the HBCU tour. Greg indicated that because there were so many presentations this evening relative to the acquisition of property as well as their food pantry, they decided to table the presentation for PSSA data as well as the HBCU tour until December. Greg indicated that he would be providing the Business and Finance report on behalf of Michelle this evening.

Business, Finance and HR, Michelle Thornton

Greg reported on behalf of Michelle who is unable to attend this evening. He indicated that they had a December 31st deadline for the submission of their annual audit, but because of the government shutdown, that there has been an extension on that timeline. He noted that they have a draft presentation for the Board in December according to Michelle, with a vote in January. He said to expect the PSSA, and HBCU report along with & the draft presentation of our annual audit for next month's meeting. Greg turned the floor back to Dr. Baynard for final comments.

Dr. Baynard commented that the last Wednesday of the month which would be our regular meeting day is on December 31st, New Year's Eve and in addition to that, the week before is Christmas Eve, which leaves us the third week in December. The third Wednesday in December is the 17th and barring those of you who are celebrating Hanukkah, it seems that Wednesday, December 17th is the day that we will be having our next Board meeting.

Board member Wade asked Greg if he knows how far out the extension will be and what would be the new date. Greg responded that they have not been given a new date at this time, but they anticipate the extension to be at least being 30 days.

Dr. Baynard thanked Dr. Valerie Howard Richardson for joining us and asked her to join us on the 17th, where we will have a formal vote to include her as our newest Board member. In the meantime, he will do his due diligence to follow up and share with her some materials to catch up and read. He told her if there are any questions, please feel free to either reach out to him or Gregory.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Public Concerns

None

Motion to Adjourn: Board member Wade made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Board member Jan. All were in favor; none were opposed and it was passed unanimously.

Approval: 5 AYES: 0 Nays: 0 Abstentions: 0 Absent: 4

Next Meeting: Wednesday December 17th 2025