

# Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Education

## Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, May 14th, 2024

In Accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act: Public Notice of this Meeting pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act has been given by the Board Secretary in the Asbury Park Press – Paper of Record. Ocean Academy Charter School, 1650 Massachusetts Avenue, Lakewood, NJ. Attendance by virtual or in person.

Anita Raynes Lepelstat – President  
Jim Muzikowski – Vice President  
Marshall White  
Aase Marie Hare  
Sharon Hollander  
Roxanne Martin  
Wendy Osorio - Absent  
David Corso

Valarie Smith (Board Secretary), Lorna Hassel (Head of School), Dawn Cobb-Fossnes (Middle School Principal), David Block (School Business Administrator), Thomas McMahon (Facilities Consultant), Stephen Nichol (High School Principal) and Board Attorney, Dave Hespe.

Meeting Called to Order by Anita Lepelstat at 6:20 PM

Salute to the Flag by Board President Anita Lepelstat

### **Action Agenda**

#### **Public Session:**

### **Old Business**

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2024**

Motion to approve the minutes of April 16, 2024 made by David Corso

Seconded by Roxanne Martin

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

#### **Update on Middle School Activities** – Presented by Dawn Cobb-Fossnes

Ocean Academy’s First Graduating Class Graduation will take place at the School on June 19<sup>th</sup> – 5:00 pm.

There is also an “Awards” Banquet at the 3 B’s Bistro at 314 Route 70, Lakehurst on June 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Students are looking forward to their class trip to Washinton, DC

Eighth Grade Dinner Dance at School will be held on Friday, May 31<sup>st</sup>.

[Principal's Report](#) Presented by Lorna Hassel

**Month of April 2024**

Staff

full days off 92

half days 29

Student Enrollment - 485

Student incidents of absence – 282

[Parent Survey Results](#) Presented by Lorna Hassel

Surveys of parents were taken during the spring parent/teacher conferences. All of the survey responses were favorable to the school. 150 out of the 198 that returned their survey to us, said that they would be interested in taking evening English classes for adults here at the school.

**New Business**

[Lakewood Public Schools – Complaint to NJ DOE's Controversies & Disputes](#) – Presented by Dave Hesper, Esq & Valarie Smith

Discussion – Questions & Answers

Motion to approve / authorize the school to proceed with the filing of litigation in complaint to the NJ DOE against Lakewood Public Schools in regard to discriminatory practices in reregistration of resident students of the charter school made by Roxanne Martin

Second by Jim Muzikowski

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

[Contract with Tom McMahon for the 2024-25 School Year](#) – Presented by Valarie Smith

Motion to Approve 2024-25 Contract with Thomas McMahon made by Aase Hare

Second by Jim Muzikowski

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

[Update on Trailer](#) by Valarie Smith

We have experienced “inspection” problems with our trailer that necessitated a call to the Mayor’s Office. We have been working with the inspection unit since last September. We are now on schedule with just a few things to be reconfigured: sprinkler system needs to be reconfigured & the ground needs to be “stabilized” with grass for the final inspection.

**Update on New High School Building, Construction, etc** – Presented by Tom McMahon

We should be seeing sitework shortly for the new high school. The building is smaller than the elementary building but will be three stories. All architectural plans were finalized.

Estimate of building schedule to be 12 – 18 months.

**High School Update** – Presented by Stephen Nichols

We will be moving to Christ United (our temporary space for our high school) on June 1, 2024. There is quite a bit of remedial work (cleaning, painting, etc) that needs to be addressed before school starts in September.

Much academic planning is taking place: we are going on a modified block schedule, and we need to implement algebra every day. Pressing forward with furnishings and other basic needs.

**New High School Positions Created** by Stephen Nichols & Valarie Smith

**The following positions need to be filled for the High School:**

*ELA Teacher & Director of Curriculum, Guidance Counselor, Math Teacher, History Teacher, Science / PE Teacher, ESL (possible), Reading Interventionists (possible), Paraprofessionals*

Motion to Accept the Above Listed Positions for High School Anita Lepelstat

Second by David Corso

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

**New Hires for High School** Presented by Stephen Nicols

ELA Teacher & Director of Curriculum	Amy LaBarca
Guidance Counselor	Oscar Orellana
Science / SPED Teacher	Vincent Buccigrossi (Transfer from K-8)
Main Office Secretary (Bilingual)	Millie Tuches (Transfer from K-8)
Café and general House Keeping	Marisol Noguera (Transfer from K-8)

Motion to Approve New High School Hires made by Sharon Hollander

Second by Marshall White

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

## Salaries & Raises for Administration, Administrative Staff, & Paraprofessionals

Present by Valarie Smith

Overall raise percentage for Administrative (Senior Staff) Staff at 3.5%

General Administrative Staffers at 5%

Exceptions for Administrative Staffers Above due to change of Responsibilities - custom adjustment in line with additional responsibilities.

Paraprofessionals – Across the Board Increase at \$6,000

Discussion – Questions & Answers

Motion for Administrative Raise (Senior Staff) of 3.5% made by David Corso

Second Sharon Hollander

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Motion for Administrative Staffers at 5% made by Anita Lepelstat

Second by David Corso

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Exceptions due to Change in Responsibilities made by David Corso

Second by Anita Lepelstat

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

Increase for Paraprofessionals @ flat \$6,000 & starting Salary Increased to \$34,000 made by Sharon Hollander

Second by Roxanne Martin

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

**Financials** – Presented by David Block

Motion to Approve Financials as presented by SBA David Block: March 24 Bills List, April 2024 Bills List, 2/29/24 Secretary's Financial Report, and our Primary Budget.

Discussion Questions & Answers

Motion by Jim Muzikowski

Seconded by Marshall White

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board

### **Board Comments:**

Anita Lepelstat asked about advertising open positions at the school. In summary: we advertise for open or new positions. We do promote from within and most recently two newly created positions were filled by promotion.

**Announcements:** Dawn Cobb-Fossnes reported on the school's experience with the tutoring grant we were awarded from the State. Overall, we had a very successful program. We had a bifurcated program: one in-house, in-person program and the other was done virtually.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Made by Anita Lepelstat

Seconded by Jim Muzikowski

Vote: Unanimously Approved by the Board 7:55 PM

Adjourned

These minutes were unanimously approved by the Board of Trustees at the June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 meeting.