**Academy of Hope Adult Public Charter School**

**Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

**November 16, 2024**

**2315 18th Place, NE Washington, DC 20018**

**9:00 AM - 12:00 PM**

**Present**

\*\*Board Members:\*\*

Dr. Patrina Clark (Chair), Eric Jones, Larry Condelli (Secretary), LuAnn Sinclair, Nora Abramson, Jason Ufland, Brett Allen, Susan Leigh, Laura Hendricks, Steven Hamlett

**\*\*Staff:\*\***

Lecester Johnson (CEO), Michael Durant, Joy Bentley Phillips, Ruweda Hussein, Dr. Alicia Waldon, Dr. Larry Canady, Julius Martin, Lisa Leach

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM by Board Chair Dr. Patrina Clark.

**Approval of Minutes**

\*\*Motion to Approve May 14, 2024 Minutes: \*\*

Motion made by Larry Condelli

Seconded by Nora Abramson

Action: Approved unanimously

**CEO Report**

CEO Lecester Johnson reported strong enrollment growth and strategic expansion initiatives. The school currently serves 1,006 learners, slightly exceeding our ceiling of 1,000. This growth reflects the increasing demand for adult education services in our community. The school leadership will petition the Public Charter School Board for an enrollment ceiling increase to accommodate this growth.

The school leadership team is developing a new performance framework in alignment with the Public Charter School Board (PCSB) Aspire requirements. Under this framework, the school will identify two specific goals to be featured on the scorecard as measures of individual school performance. These goals will be presented to the board for review and approval.

A significant opportunity for regional expansion has emerged through a potential partnership with St. Francis Community Center in Baltimore. The Maryland Department of Education recently released an RFP for adult schools in their jurisdiction. While timing prevented immediate application, discussions with St. Francis Community Center - a 40-year-old nonprofit with established children's and after-school programs - have revealed strong community demand for adult education services. Initial meetings with Maryland's adult high school director have been positive, and further discussions with St. Francis's board are scheduled. The expansion would require approximately $150,000-$250,000 in startup funding, which will be discussed with the Foundation board.

The school has issued an RFP for a Strategic Planning Consultant to develop a comprehensive plan for both the school and foundation. This initiative aims to align our growth with our mission while ensuring sustainable expansion of our services. The strategic planning process will include stakeholder engagement, market analysis, and the development of clear metrics for success.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Finance Committee**

LuAnn Sinclair and Ruweda Hussein presented the Finance Committee report, highlighting significant financial growth and strategic investments. The revised FY25 budget reflects a 36% increase to $19.4 million, with a projected net income of $2.4 million. This growth supports our expanding learner population, which now exceeds 975 students.

The committee outlined several key investments, including enhanced staffing to support the growing student body, increased facilities maintenance and security to address higher occupancy needs, and strategic technology investments in Salesforce integrations to improve operational efficiency.

Facilities expansion plans are progressing, with negotiations underway for a 5–7-year midterm lease for a third site. The committee is evaluating two potential locations with a focus on turnkey setup to minimize construction costs. Financial analysis confirms the Academy's capacity to finance these future facilities while maintaining strong financial health.

The following contracts were presented for approval:

1. Building Maintenance Services - Clean Sweep, Inc.: $175,000 annually

2. Security Services - Guardian Protection Services: $156,000 annually

3. Project Management Consulting - Wilson & Associates: $85,000

4. Technology Integration Services - Salesforce Implementation: $65,000

5. Professional Development Services - Educational Excellence Corp: $45,000

Motion to Approve FY25 Budget and Contract Renewals:

*"Move to approve the FY25 revised budget of $19.4 million and the renewal of contracts as presented, with authorization for the CEO to execute all necessary documents to implement these approvals."*

Motion made by Susan Leigh

Seconded by Brett Allen

Action: Approved unanimously

A full audit presentation is scheduled for the next meeting.

**Development Committee**

- Announced upcoming Charter renewal celebration on November 21st

- Launched Good Jobs Campaign with $60,000 fundraising goal

- Reported on strategic planning initiatives and donor engagement efforts

- Outlined upcoming events including Giving Tuesday and annual holiday party

**Enrollment Management Update**

- Successful increase in summer enrollment to 352 students

- Achieved 98% accuracy rate in residency verification

- Current enrollment management strategies aligned with academic performance metrics

**Board Business**

The board addressed several governance matters during the meeting. Larry Condelli was appointed as the Foundation Board Representative, strengthening the connection between the school and foundation boards.

The annual CEO evaluation process was initiated. CEO Lecester Johnson will complete a self-assessment, and board members will receive a comprehensive survey to provide feedback. The evaluation will be discussed during a closed executive session at the January 30th meeting.

The board evaluation process will proceed in two phases. The mid-year evaluations, concluding December 31, 2024, will include both individual self-assessments and a collective board assessment. While individual self-assessments will remain confidential, the collective assessment results will be discussed during the January 30th executive session to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement.

The board has identified the need for two additional members to enhance its capacity and expertise. Board Chair Dr. Patrina Clark, along with Eric Jones and Deborah, will conduct initial interviews with potential candidates before presenting recommendations to the full board. Board members are encouraged to submit potential candidate information to CEO Lecester Johnson.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:27 AM.

\*Minutes respectfully submitted by Larry Condelli, Board Secretary\*