

**Amandla Charter School**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**September 8, 2015**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:26 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Tanya Burnell, Dan Palchak, Mark Palchak, Sean Stalling and Jennifer Kirmes.  
A quorum was physically present at the meeting.

Present via telephone: Mary Bryant, Adam Tarnoff,

Absent: Katie O'Connell

Guests: Alyssa Nickow, Judith Feldman, Sarah Brennan via telephone

I. Opening Matters:

- a. Jennifer Kirmes shared student anecdotes from the first day of school and previewed the soon-to-be-launched new website.
- b. Sean moved and Mark seconded that minutes from the August 4 Board Retreat be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

II. Board Goals: The board reviewed and voted on goals for the Board for FY16. Mary moved and Sean seconded that the Board goals be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Development Committee: Judith summarized the August 27<sup>th</sup> Development Committee meeting and reported on the recommendations made by the Development Committee to achieve this year's fundraising goals. The group then discussed the Poker Night concept that has been under consideration. Judith was asked to email the board by Friday, September 11 with a description of 2-3 event scenarios to which each board member would respond by Friday, September 18 with the number of tickets s/he expects to sell at 2-3 price points and the specific names of people likely to serve as host committee members.

IV. Education Committee: Jen presented the Education Committee's recommended goals. Dan moved and Tanya seconded that the goals be approved. The motion carried unanimously. Jen also presented the education committee's interim definition of "Academic Excellence." It was explained there is a correlation between the goals document and the working "Academic Excellence" document. Dan moved and Sean seconded that the definition be approved. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Ad-Hoc Data Science Committee: Adam presented the Ad-Hoc Data Science Committee Charter. The group clarified that the Committee's work would be completed by the end of FY16. Dan moved and Tanya seconded that the Committee Charter be approved to complete its work by end of FY16. The motion carried unanimously.

VI. Finance Committee: Jen reported on the Finance Committee's progress on the development of an Investment Policy. The board agreed best next steps are: (1) Mary to have the draft reviewed by appropriate legal counsel, followed by (2) Adam to have draft reviewed by appropriate expert in the arena of non-profit organization investment management. Board members are directed to submit questions to Adam to be answered by investment counsel. Mary and Adam agreed to elicit expert feedback before the October 9 Finance Committee meeting. The goal is to adopt the policy before the November board meeting.

Jen then shared the just-released draft FY15 Audit. Additional work is required with the auditor to address questions and propel the audit through revisions and finalization.

The group agreed that a quorum meeting would need to be scheduled in October to vote on the Investment Policy and FY15 Audit. Dan and Jen will follow up.

VII. Enrollment: Jen reported on enrollment numbers to date. At the November board meeting, she will report on updated enrollment numbers and revised budget/operational scenarios as needed.

VIII. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 8:09 pm.

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Judith Feldman  
Acting Secretary

**Amandla Charter School**  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Monday, October 26, 2015  
Minutes

Emergency Audit and Investment Policy Approval Meeting

Members Present: Dan Palchak, Mark Palchak, Mary Bryant, Katie O'Connell, Sean Stalling, Jen Kirmes (Sarah Brennan – non member)

- The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm by Dan Palchak
- The CEO provided a description of the audit findings and why there had been a discrepancy between the auditor's financial report and Shawn's end of year financials.
- Discussion of audit
- A motion was made to approve the audit (Sean) and then seconded (Mark).
  - The motion carried unanimously.
- The CEO provided a description of the Investment Policy.
- Discussion of investment policy.
- A motion was made to approve the investment policy (Katie) and then seconded (Sean).
  - The motion carried unanimously.
  - Mary arrived after the policy had been approved. She motioned to revoke the vote because she had concerns after receiving feedback on the policy from Mary Kay Klemish. There was a discussion and the CEO and other present BoD members assured Mary that the policy as it stands would allow us to receive stock transfers from donors and we would revisit the policy very soon.
- The CEO presented information about the CPS recommendation for Amandla's closure.
- Discussion of next steps.
- The meeting adjourned at 6:50pm.

**Amandla Charter School**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**November 10, 2015**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:22 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Dan Palchak, Mark Palchak, Mary Bryant, and Jennifer Kirmes. A quorum was not physically present at the meeting.

Present via telephone: Adam Tarnoff, Tanya Burrell

Absent: Sean Stalling, Katie O'Connell

Guests: Sarah Brennan, Toya Bell

1. Affirmation: Jen led the affirmation, focusing on the tremendous support we have received since CPS gave notice of its intention to revoke our charter. In particular, she read the online petition post of Selena Hampton, a parent, regarding how Amandla has affected her daughter's life.
2. Finance Committee Report: We are under budget for the first four months of the fiscal year.
3. Proposed revocation of charter: Jen brought us up to date on actions taken in response to CPS' proposed revocation of our charter. We are working to mobilize support among our students and their families, in the community, and with educational and other relevant organizations. We have reached out to the members of the Board of Education with the goal of meeting with them individually. We have planned a rally and a march and have established a Twitter hashtag, #SaveAmandla. Our students have written letters to the Mayor, CEO Claypool, and Board of Education members.

Jen and Sarah will meet on Friday with Liz Kirby, a CPS representative, to seek to better understand the District's rationale for its recommendation. We have retained Citizen Consulting to help us with organizing efforts. We have already spoken to WBEZ and the Chicago Tribune and will keep in touch with them.

The Board agreed to prepare a detailed letter to Board of Education members, to be ready by Friday. Dan will prepare a letter to staff reaffirming the Board's support of Amandla. We will also prepare a letter to the editor for use as appropriate.

4. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

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Mary C. Bryant  
Secretary

**Amandla Charter School**  
**Special Board of Directors Meeting**  
**December 3, 2015**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Dan Palchak, Katie O'Connell, Sean Stalling, Mary Bryant, Jen Kirmes. A quorum was physically present at the meeting.

Participating by telephone: Adam Tarnoff

Absent: Mark Palchak, Tanya Burrell

I. The purpose of the meeting was to consider whether to approve an appeal of CPS' decision to revoke Amandla's charter.

After discussion, Mary moved and Katie seconded that we appeal to the Illinois State Charter School Commission the revocation of Amandla's charter. The motion carried unanimously.

Mary moved and Dan seconded that we approve the retention of attorney J. Robert Hall to represent Amandla in the appeal, and that we further approve payment of legal fees and other expenses related to the appeal in the amount of \$30,000. The motion carried unanimously.

II. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm.

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Mary C. Bryant  
Secretary

**Amandla Charter School**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**January 12, 2016**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:02 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Dan Palchak, Mark Palchak, Mary Bryant, Tanya Burrell, Katie O'Connell, Christian Davis and Jennifer Kirmes. A quorum was physically present at the meeting.

Present via telephone: Adam Tarnoff

Absent: Sean Stalling

Guests: Sarah Brennan, Alyssa Nickow

1. Affirmation: Alyssa led the affirmation, celebrating the work of a team led by Ms. Byers to plan and teach Junior American History. She showed a video made by Ms. Byers that illustrated how the team operates.
2. Minutes: Mary moved and Dan seconded that we approve the minutes of the special meeting held on December 17, 2015. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Chair's Report:
  - a. Appeal to State Charter School Commission: Amandla's appeal from CPS' decision to revoke Amandla's charter was filed on time and acknowledged as complete. CPS filed its response. Aside from conference calls scheduled from time to time by the Commission, the schedule for the appeal is as follows:
    - i. Joint interview with CPS – Monday, February 1, 2016 (tentative Bilandic Building)
    - ii. Public hearing – Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 5:30-7:30 pm (location TBD)
    - iii. Site visit – Thursday, February 18, 2016
    - iv. Pre-Decision meeting – Wednesday, February 24, 2016, 3:30 pm (tentative Bilandic Building)
    - v. Commission Meeting to vote on appeal – Tuesday, March 1, 2016, 3 pm (tentative Sherman Park)
  - b. Settlement possibility: CPS has put out feelers regarding a possible settlement that would allow Amandla to remain chartered by the District, apparently because the CPS Law Department has concluded there is a potential that Amandla will prevail on appeal. Jen was authorized to

investigate settlement with CPS while keeping the Board informed and involved.

4. Finance Committee Report: The Finance Committee had noted an accounting error that resulted in the appearance that we were way over budget in certain line items. That error has been corrected, and the current financial report was presented.
5. CEO's Report: Jen walked the board through the dashboard report showing status on the goals set by the board, and addressed each item where we are significantly behind schedule. Progress in some areas may have been slowed by staff and student concerns about Amandla's future; Jen discussed changes put into place to overcome the effect of those concerns.
6. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

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Mary C. Bryant  
Secretary



**Amandla Charter School**  
**Emergency Board of Directors Meeting**  
**February 9, 2016**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:33 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Jen Kirmes. A quorum was not physically present at the meeting.

Participating by telephone: Dan Palchak, Mark Palchak, Mary Bryant, Adam Tarnoff, Tanya Burnell, Sean Stalling, Christian Davis.

Absent: Katie O' Connell

Guests: Sarah Brennan, Alyssa Nickow

I. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the board and key staff of an emergency personnel matter. No action was taken by the board.

The Board's officers will continue to keep everyone informed.

II. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

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Mary C. Bryant  
Secretary

**Amandla Charter School**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**March 8, 2016**

**Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6:08 pm by chair Dan Palchak.

Present: Mary Bryant, Tanya Burnell, and Jennifer Kirmes. A quorum was not physically present at the meeting.

Present via telephone: Adam Tarnoff, Dan Palchak

Absent: Sean Stalling, Christian Davis, Mark Palchak, Katie O'Connell

Guests: Sarah Brennan, Alyssa Nickow

1. Affirmation: Jen led the affirmation, a video of the Charter Commission roll call vote.
2. Chair's Report: Congratulations on successful appeal. In addition to regular reports, discuss next steps.
3. CEO's Report:
  - a. Referred us to motion approved at Commission meeting, especially conditions.
  - b. Dan received a request for a meeting with the Commission's Executive Director, which be held tomorrow morning.
  - c. Most difficult condition: making our budget work with the facility. We need to have a capital funding drive to avoid excessive debt service. None of the conditions are trivial.
4. Finance Committee Report: Revenue collected vs. expenses for seven months is approximately (\$38,000). Taking a new look at the budget to attempt to come out with a surplus without affecting academic or social-emotional programs.
5. Education Committee Report: We are in a familiar place for this time of year. Solid progress on some of our goals, off-track for others. Staff receptive to Committee's ideas for improvement.
6. Development Work Time:
  - a. Overview of scope of work to upgrade St. Benedict the African East.

- b. Capital Campaign/Securing Loan: Need someone to organize capital campaign
- c. Board of Directors Development; Increase Director engagement in committee work: Action item: bring two names of potential board members
- d. Engage a consultant
- e. Permanent CEO

7. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:39 pm.

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Mary C. Bryant  
Secretary