

**SMITH VOCATIONAL AND AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL
NORTHAMPTON, MA**

**MINUTES OF THE
REGULAR BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Tuesday January 18, 2022**

Virtual Meeting via Zoom - 5:00 PM

PRESENT: Michael T. Cahillane, Julie Spencer-Robinson, Richard Aquadro, Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Dr. John Provost, NPS Superintendent

ADMINISTRATION: Superintendent Dr. Andrew Linkenhoker, Principal Joseph Bianca, School Business Administrator Crystal Fairman, Facilities Director Tim Smith

STUDENT REP: Tyrese Cordova absent

Superintendent Linkenhoker called the meeting of the January 18, 2022 Board of Trustees to order and requested a motion for nomination for Chair.

Organization: Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Mayor Sciarra nominated Michael T. Cahillane for Chair. Richard Aquadro seconded the nomination.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - yes

Mayor Sciarra - yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 5-0

The Chair thanked his peers for their confidence in electing him chair. Welcomed the new members. At this time the Chairman called for nominations for Vice-Chair.

Dr Provost nominated Julie Spencer-Robinson for Vice-Chair. Mayor Sciarra seconded the nomination.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - yes

Mayor Sciarra - yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 5-0

Reading of Excerpts from the Oliver Smith Will of 1844

The Chair stated the first order of business after the election of officers at the regularly scheduled Trustee's meeting in the month of January following the Northampton General Elections is to read excerpts of the Will of Oliver Smith. The Chair read the excerpts of the Will.

Mission Statement: The Chair read the mission statement.

Participation by the Trustees: Julie Spencer-Robinson stated at an earlier meeting Ms Ouimette had asked that the Board of Trustees meet in person. Ms Spencer-Robinson asked if it was possible to meet in person in the cafeteria, and requests this be on next month's meeting agenda as an item to be discussed. Mr. Cahillane replied this can be placed on the agenda and briefly stated his concern around safety as well as the past Mayor following the meeting guidelines from the state.

Mr. Cahillane asked if there was additional participation by the trustees. Richard Aquadro echoed what Julie Spencer-Robinson stated and added he participates in a number of remote meetings but is fine with either. Dr. Provost stated he is fine with meeting in person.

Participation by the Public: Cyndie Ouimette welcomed the new trustee members, introduced herself to the Mayor as she hasn't met her yet adding she appreciates the transparency of the administration and that the school has a nice working relationship with the administration and trustees. Ms Ouimette is looking forward to working with the new group.

Approval of Minutes: December 21, 2021

A **MOTION** was made by Richard Aquadro and seconded by Mayor Sciarra to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2021 meeting.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - yes

Mayor Sciarra - yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 5-0

Information and Proposals:

Superintendents Report: At this time Dr. Linkenhoker gave a PowerPoint presentation on his report to the Board (attached).

Principal's Report - Mr. Bianca welcomed the new trustees, congratulated Chair Mr. Cahillane and Vice Chair Ms Spencer-Robinson and gave a brief report (attached).

Ms Spencer-Robinson asked Mr. Cahillane a process question: when can she ask questions about reports being given? Mr. Cahillane replied now is fine.

Ms Spencer-Robinson asked Mr. Bianca what he considers the reason for the increase of applications. Mr. Bianca replied he felt that families noticed that the school has been in session during the pandemic along with INCREASING college costs vs the local investment, and added the school's reputation.

Ms Spencer-Robinson complimented Dr. Linkenhoker on his informative report, and recognition of staff members. Nurse's are very happy.

Ms Spencer-Robinson commented in regard to the NEAS&C Accreditation that possibly is becoming obsolete and heartily endorses Dr. Linkenhoker's request to form a task group to look into this.

Ms Spencer-Robinson added the communication from the school around COVID has been informative and well received.

Ms Spencer-Robinson asked Dr. Linkenhoker a question about the change in oversight of the admissions, Dr Linkenhoker replied he believes issues around admissions no longer fall to the Department of Ed but rather the school committees. Ms Spencer-Robinson asked Dr. Linkenhoker his feelings on this, he replied he personally doesn't agree with DESE no longer having oversight. Added according to this new regulation anyone, anywhere, can lodge a complaint about admissions to local school committees.

Facilities Report – Mr. Smith reported follow ups to last month's meeting. The ATV/UTV has been ordered, could be 2 to 3 months before it is in. Mr. Smith also updated the Board on the electric hybrid, front sign ready to go out to bid, window project bid anticipated to be advertised next week, and we are in the early stages of a feasibility study for getting air conditioning to C building.

Business Report – Ms Fairman gave a brief review of the finance report. Thanked the City and the work of Glenda Stoddard to get the electronic paystubs program up and running. An outside audit is scheduled for Friday. The cafeteria received a grant from project bread, and also the USDA increased reimbursement rate – currently all students eat for free – USDA is looking in to FY23 potential. Tuition invoices will be sent soon, discussing with the superintendent to change the months bills are sent which will help with end of year processes.

New Business:

A **MOTION** was made by Julie Spencer-Robinson and seconded by Mayor Sciarra to approve payment for a PE/Health FY21 invoice \$74.64 to Gopher from tuition revolving.

Discussion: Mr. Aquadro asked why this was on as new business rather than in the weekly warrants. Ms Fairman replied it is because the invoice is from the last fiscal year and a vote of the Board is required in order to submit payment for it.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - yes

Mayor Sciarra – yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 5-0

A **MOTION** was made by Mayor Sciarra and seconded by Julie Spencer-Robinson to approve a two-night overnight field trip Sturbridge for the FFA State Convention March 16, 17 & 18, 2022

Discussion: Mr. Aquadro asked what is FFA – Mr. Bianca replied at the request of Mr. Cahillane that it is Future Farmers of America a membership that the agriculture programs belong to, Mr. Bianca added this is an annual event.

Dr. Provost added while this is a worthwhile event, his district isn't allowing field trips currently therefore will cast a no vote.

Ms Spencer-Robinson agrees with great enrichment opportunities for students and asked how many will participate? Mr. Bianca replied it is hard to say right now, but could be between 20 and 40. Which shops and which grades? Mr. Bianca explained the competitions that are included in this convention and that the Animal Science, Agriculture Mechanics and the Horticulture/Forestry programs participate.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro – a technical issue prevented him to vote

Mayor Sciarra – yes

John Provost - no

APPROVED 3-1

A **MOTION** was made by Mayor Sciarra and seconded by Julie Spencer-Robinson to approve increasing the daily sub pay rate to \$120

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - a technical issue prevented him to vote

Mayor Sciarra – yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 4-0

Future Business:

Tuesday February 15, 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting 5:00pm - Virtual

Tuesday March 15, 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting 5:00pm – Virtual

Upcoming Events:

March 16 – 18, 2022 FFA State Convention in Sturbridge MA

March 23, 2022 Spring Program Advisory Committees Dinner and Meetings

April 14, 2022 Outstanding Vocational Student Awards and Banquet – 5:30pm Mechanics Hall Worcester

Adjourn:

A **MOTION** was made by Dr. Provost and seconded by Mayor Sciarra to adjourn.

Michael T. Cahillane - yes

Julie Spencer-Robinson - yes

Richard Aquadro - a technical issue prevented him to vote

Mayor Sciarra – yes

John Provost - yes

APPROVED 4-0

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Carver, Board Secretary

Superintendent Report

January 18, 2022

Submitted by
Andrew H. Linkenhoker, Ed.D

Highlights & Updates

- 12/22/21: Commissioner Update Call
- 12/23/21-1/2/22: NO SCHOOL: Christmas Vacation
- 12/29/22: Commissioner Update Call
- Month of January: DH Budget Meetings
- 1/3/22: Faculty Meeting
- 1/5/22: DESE Admissions/ Discipline Webinar
- 1/5/22: Commissioner Update Call
- 1/5/22: Leadership Meeting
- 1/7/22: SNOW DAY #1

Highlights & Updates

- 1/10/22: DESE CTE Update Call
- 1/10/22: VEAC/ Mohawk Regional/ Franklin Tech Meeting
- 1/12/22: Leadership Meeting
- 1/13/22: Leadership Meeting
- 1/17/22: NO SCHOOL: MLK Jr. Day

COVID-19 Response Updates

- 12/28/21: DESE Distributed KN-95 masks: Picked up in Holyoke
- 1/1/22: DESE Distributed COVID-19 rapid tests: Picked up in Franklin
- 1/2/22: Distributed KN-95 masks & COVID-19 rapid tests to interested faculty & staff
- 1/10/22: DESE extends mask mandate to 2/28/22
- 1/11/22: Northampton bans cloth masks and gaiters from all city employees along with renewed focus on other mitigating measures to ensure city departments remain open. New mandates in place until 2/11/22
- 1/13/22: Ordered 540 COVID-19 tests to distribute to symptomatic students with parental permission
- 1/28/22: COVID-19 Vaccine/ Booster Clinic on campus (students & staff)

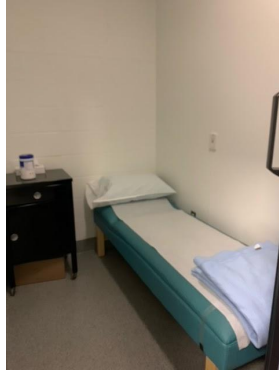
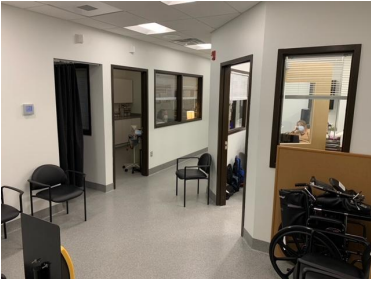
NEASC Updates

- 12/9/21: Received NEASC letter continuing school's "warning" membership status based on 10/25/21 meeting to review recent Special Report
- NEASC requiring another Special Report due 2/1/22
 - Focus on Governance Model & Facility Recommendations
- NEASC also requesting a Staff Directed Visit to review the school's progress
- NEASC provided the following recommendation:
 - Continue working on the 5-10 year vision plan to address enrollment, facilities, and instructional needs
- I request the Board to approve the creation of a task group to provide a recommendation to the Board regarding future membership status to NEASC

Substitute Teacher Pay Rates

- Board approved pay rate increase to \$90 about a year ago to maintain minimum wage equity
- COVID-19 has decimated available subs
- Nearby districts have increased their sub rates to attract subs
- Recommendation is to increase SVAHS sub rate to \$120/day to be competitive with nearby districts
- From one sub, "I prefer working at Smith, but [District A] is offering [X money]"

Renovated Nurse's Suite



Donations

- No donations this month

Looking Ahead

- 1/20/22: Leadership Meeting
- 1/24/22: DESE CTE Update Call
- 1/24/22: Department Meetings
- 1/26/22: MAVA Officers Presentation to Leadership I Cohort
- 1/26/22: MAVA Board of Directors Meeting
- 1/27/22: Leadership Meeting
- 2/1/22: Joint Meeting for FY23 Budget by Mayor Sciarra
- 2/2/22: General Advisory Meeting
- 2/3/22: Leadership Meeting
- 2/7/22: Faculty Meeting
- 2/10/22: Leadership Meeting
- 2/14/22: Department Head Meeting
- 2/15/22: Board of Trustees Meeting

February Focus

- Adult Education Report

Contact Information

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Super

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Mr. Joseph C. Bianca
Principal

www.smithtec.org



January 18, 2022

**Principal's Report
January 2022 Board Meeting**

Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Board of Trustees:

Enrollment:

545 students

Admissions:

We currently have 172 applications in our system, with 32 (18.6%) of them from Northampton.

January 2021 – 129 applications
January 2020 – 150 applications
January 2019 – 139 applications
January 2018 – 139 applications
January 2017 – 115 applications

Budget:

Building level budget proposals were due to me by Wednesday, December 22, 2021. We began our individual department meetings with department heads the week of January 10th. We will continue to review proposals and then combine into one proposal for Dr. Linkenhoker to incorporate into his budget request to the Board of Trustees.

Personnel:

Needs:
Health Teacher – due to resignation

Spirit Week:

Spirit Week, sponsored by Student Government ran from January 3-7th (snow day). Themes included, Pajama Day, Identity Swap, Anything But a Backpack, and Mathletes vs. Athletes. They also held a Shave it or Save fundraiser for the Northampton Survival Center. Mr. Subocz graciously volunteered to have the competition center around whether or not his bear would be saved or shaved. Shaved won. Student Government usually has a second Spirit Week in March.

Restaurant Update:

January 26, 2022 reopening.

Founded in 1844 by Oliver Smith

SVAHS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, disability, religion or sexual orientation.

Athletics:

Girls Basketball 4-3

Boys Basketball 3-4

Wrestling 3-5-3

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Bianca

Principal

Founded in 1844 by Oliver Smith

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sex, gender identity, disability, religion or sexual orientation.*