



# Sylvan Heights Science Charter School Special Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes October 10, 2023

## Board of Trustees Members in attendance

Attendees included Ed Jaroch, Margaret Burton Conners, Merita Marek, Chad Hotsko, Amechie Walker (remote), Debra Simpson-Buchanan, Erica Monroe, Nicole Marshall (remote)

## Board of Trustees Members not in attendance

## Staff/Public in attendance

**School Administration:** Susan Roth, Principal/CAO; Jessica Nordaj, Assistant Principal;  
**School Staff:** Lori Lauver, STEM/Federal Grant Coordinator; Melena Overdorf, teacher; Nicole Jordan, Cafeteria Coordinator; Michael Furry, teacher;  
**Interested Citizens:** Jim Ross, Advisor; Vern Mckissick (remote), Architect; Trina Gribble, Architect; Kada Louis, Parent

## Call to order

A meeting of Sylvan Heights Science Charter School was held at Sylvan Heights Science Charter School, 915 S. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104 on October 10th, 2023. The meeting was called to order at 6:07pm. This was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

## Roll Call

Following roll call, a quorum was present as noted above.

## Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Chad for approval of the agenda. This was seconded by Margaret. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously (8-0).

## Recognition of Guest & Scheduled Speakers

- *Trina Gribble, Project Architect McKissick Associates*
  - Hale Avenue square footage same size as Sylvan Heights Building
  - HVAC recently updated
  - 1.4 acres almost twice the size as we have at Sylvan Heights
  - Parking 30 spaces and another 10 space on the other side of Hale Avenue

- Hale Avenue is in a residential area with access to the property from three streets (current access is only one street).
- Hale Avenue property would allow for larger sized classrooms (increase of at least 100 square feet per classroom).
- Hale Ave. has 2 floors with a working elevator
- Expressed concerns:
  - changing to the same size school
  - reporting times may need to change
  - is it worth the money to initially invest in the due diligence process if we don't end up purchasing the property
  - are we rushing to get into a building to go to the same building that is the same size as Sylvan Heights
  - There is no room to expand at current location
  - Would some of the expansion take up some of the rear parking space
  - Could bus drop off be on Hale Avenue and parent drop off could be on Rudy Street and Swatara Street?
- Question by Amechie Walker was asked if there was a possibility for the Board to see Hale Avenue again. Some Board members were not able to see Hale Avenue the first time as there was a time crunch and members were given very little time to see the building.
  - Want to make sure everyone is on the same page,
  - Acknowledged teachers' concerns about arrival, dismissal and building size.
- Moving into an area where another school is already there; worries about how much traffic there will be. Worried about safety for our students.
- Concerns there is not enough room. Sylvan is a Math and science school with no space.
- *Jim Ross, Associate Broker, NAI CIR*
  - Working on moving for years
  - Current strategies for remaining or moving to Hale Ave need to be considered
  - If Sylvan purchases Hale Avenue, students can stay at the current location while renovations are going on.
  - Could expand the Hall Ave property in the future if all renovations are not practical at this time.

## Comment Period

### Public Comments

- None

### Staff Comments

- Melena Overdorf, Teacher
  - Concerns with growth
- Nicole Jordan, Cafeteria Coordinator
  - Concerns with having cafeteria and gym class in the same place in a smaller place
- Michael Furry, Teacher
  - Concerns with the space
  - Is this building the best space for our students
- Lori Lauver, STEM/Federal Grant Coordinator
  - Concerns with if the square feet of building is big enough for instructional programming

## Items for Board Action

A motion was made by Chad to table the decision until the next regularly scheduled board meeting. This was seconded by Mertia. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously (8-0).

## Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned was at 7:10pm by Mr. Jaroch
- The next Board of Trustees meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 17, 2023 at 6:00pm