

# Ocean Academy Charter School Board of Education

## Minutes – Board of Trustees Regular Meeting, May 16, 2023

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 - Absent  
Marshall White  
Thomas A. D'Ambola - Absent  
Aase Marie Hare  
Sharon Hollander  
Roxanne Martin  
Stephen Nichol

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

Meeting to be Called to Order by Anita Lepelstat at 6:12 PM  
Salute to the Flag by Board President Anita Lepelstat

### **Action Agenda**

#### **Old Business**

**Approval of Meeting Minutes of April 18, 2023** Presented by Valarie Smith

Motion to approve the April 18<sup>th</sup> minutes as presented made Stephen Nichol  
Second by Roxanne Martin  
Unanimously Approved by the Board

**Principal's Report** Presented by Lorna Hassel

#### **Attendance for the Month of April**

**Staff Absences/Days Out** – 47 full Days & 12 Half days

**Student Absence** - 174 Days

**HIB incidents** - 4

**Total Student Enrollment: 439**

[2023-24 Enrollment](#) – Presented by Valarie Smith

Ocean Academy is now accepting applications for Kindergarten and will be filling openings in grades first through 8<sup>th</sup> for the 2023-24 school year.

[New Business](#)

[Special Announcement](#) – Valarie Smith

We are proud to share the news! Ocean Academy Student, Hugo Gonzalez, won Honorable Mention for his submission to the Ocean County Poster Contest competition sponsored by the Ocean County Clerks Office. There were 10 submissions. There will be a ceremony to honor the top four winners on June 21<sup>st</sup>, at 4:00 pm at the County Offices.

[Special Presentation regarding School Emergency](#) Presented by Valarie Smith & Dawn Cobb Fossnes

Event on Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023 - Synopsis of the event

[Summary & Update on the New Health Curriculum](#) Presented by Valarie Smith & Dawn Cobb Fossnes

New Health Curriculum as mandated by the State Board of Education to go into effect this September for the 2023-24 school year. Summary of plans & timeline of parent outreach and participation options.

[Update on Lakewood Re-Registration](#) Presented by Valarie Smith

We have about six families that still need to re-register – we have put numerous hours into this effort.

[Update on Test Scores – ELA & Math – Other Districts](#) – Presented by Lorna Hassel

NJSLA scores (ELA & Math) state-wide have been released

[Public Session:](#)

Board President Anita Lepelstat acknowledged and welcomed parents to the meeting. About a dozen parents were in attendance.

The meeting was then opened for public comment.

Parent, Koesha Lee of Brick Township, asked about security event that had taken place on Thursday, May 11, 2023. Valarie Smith addressed the situation by stating that the students and staff were safe and that all safety precautions were taken are precautionary measures. School Resource Officer, Stephanie Mahone, from the Lakewood Police Department, was also in attendance at the meeting and thoroughly addressed all the parents' concerns and questions.

Ms. Lee also commented on Lorna Hassel’s presentation of NJSLA Results Comparing Ocean Academy to other similar (demographically) charter schools in the state. Ms. Lee stated that comparisons of Ocean Academy need to be made to other local schools and cited comparisons to Toms River, Brick, and Jackson.

Parent, Nery Reyes of Lakewood, asked about the new Health and Sex Education Standards and wanted to know what Ocean Academy was doing about it. Valarie Smith advised that administration, most notably Dr. Dawn Cobb-Fossness and Machree Paul, have been working on efforts of full disclosure of the Standards and Curriculum and that the school will be offering all parents the option of an “Opt Out” form. All information will be ready for parental review before the 2023-24 School Year begins.

**Financials** – Presented by David Block

**Business Item 1. APPROVAL OF MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORTS**

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE OCEAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF TRUSTEES, to approve the following –

Bill’s List for April and May FY23 & Bank Reconciliation as presented by the SBA

Motion to Approve: Anita Lepelstat  
Second: Sharon Hollander  
Unanimously approved by the Board

**Motion to go into Executive Session to Discuss Personnel (attorney/client privileged) Matters made by Anita Lepelstat**  
**Second by Aase Hare**  
**Unanimously approved by the Board at 6:46 pm**

**Personnel Issue** – Presented by Valarie Smith

A motion was made that the Board approves and confirms the dismissal of Employee # 123-1 was made by Aase Hare  
Second: Anita Lepelstat  
Unanimously approved by the Board

**New Hire & Reorganization of Front Office** – Presented by Valarie Smith

There will be a reorganization of the Front Office due to changes in staffing, a new computerized system (student data basing), and a reorganization of special education codes/compliance.

The plan calls for an additional employee to take on the duties of Human Resources and light bookkeeping. Ryan Shiffer has been recommended by the CSA to serve as Human Resources Director to commence on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

Motion to acknowledge and approve the reorganization of the Front Office and approval of Shiffer made by Stephen Nichol  
Second Anita Lepelstat  
Unanimously approved by the Board

**Motion to exit Executive Session made by Aase Hare**  
**Second by Anita Lepelstat**  
**Unanimously approved by the Board at 7:19 pm**

[Raises for Non-Teaching Staff](#) Presented by Valarie Smith

Raises for all classroom aids for the 2023-24 School Year  
Including Principal Middle School, two Administrative Assistants, cafeteria worker, head of maintenance, social media director. In addition, the SBA, Head of School, Day Custodian, Academic Supervisor, Head of Afterschool, Head of IT, In-house IT Director, School Nurse, and Student Data & Bookkeeper Consultant.

Motion to approve the 2023-24 raises for the above cited staff made by Roxanne Martin  
Second by Sharon Hollander  
Unanimously approved by the Board

[Board Comments:](#) No Board Comments

[Announcements:](#)

New Board Meeting is Tuesday, June 13<sup>th</sup> There will be no Meeting in July

[Motion to Adjourn:](#) made by Sharon Hollander  
Second: Anita Lepelstat  
Unanimously Approved by the Board

These Minutes Approved by the Board – June 13, 2023