



# Vertus HIGH SCHOOL

21 Humboldt Street  
Rochester, New York 14609

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## MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS VERTUS HIGH SCHOOL

February 23, 2021

### Time and Place of Meeting

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) via video conference on February 23, 2021 at  
4:00 p.m. EST

### Quorum and Attendees

The following directors were present:

Victoria Van Voorhis  
Bryan Hickman  
Evan Gallina  
Frederick Johnson  
David Carr  
Timothy Brown  
Calvin Gantt

The following directors were excused:

Mike Mandina

The following directors were absent:

None

The following staff members were present:

Julie Locey  
Michael James  
Tim Hill

The following advisors to the Board were present:

Amy Brisson – DeJoy, Knauf & Blood, LLP

The following members of the public were present:

Carol Garrett – pending board member  
Brittany Rumph  
Aqua Porter



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### **Call to Order**

Ms. Tory Van Voorhis called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and acted as Chairperson of the meeting. Mr. Gallina acted as Secretary of the meeting, assisted by Mr. Hickman. Ms. Van Voorhis then announced that the meeting was ready to proceed with its business. All directors could see, hear and be seen and heard by each other.

### **Governance and Resolutions**

**Resolution 1:** That the board approve the minutes of the January Vertus Board meeting.

The motion was moved by Mr. Brown and seconded by Rev. Johnson, and passed unanimously at 4:03 pm.

**Resolution 2:** The Board reviewed the addition of Dr. Carol Garrett to the Board of Trustees. Following discussion, and upon a motion made by Mr. Hickman, seconded by Mr. Gallina, the Board unanimously approved the following resolution:

The Vertus Charter School Board of Trustees, having conducted a thorough background check via a fingerprints scan as required and having discovered no state or federal criminal history, or having provided such history to SED if found, has voted to select Carol Garrett as a final candidate to its Board of Trustees, with a term expiring on January 31, 2024, pending approval by SED. The resolution is formally adopted upon SED's approval.

As New chair of the Board of Trustees, Ms. Van Voorhis reported that she has had individual discussions with each board member to ascertain their view on how the board can improve its functioning in the coming year and goals for the school. She briefly summarized what she had heard, but suggested that discussion take place at the next board meeting.

**Finance Committee Report:** Mr. Brown reported that the finance committee met with Ms. Brisson on February 11, 2021 and reviewed school finances in depth. The result is a more forward-looking financial summary to be submitted to the board each month, to avoid any surprises. The school is expected to operate on a cash positive basis for the final five months of the current school year, allowing plenty of time to prepare a budget for next year for sustainable operations.

### **School Reports**

***Principal Report:*** Ms. Locey gave an update on school activities. She noted that 58% of students still have chosen fully remote learning, while 48% of the in-person students are attending in person four days a week. It is expected that more students will be encouraged to attend in-person as the spring term proceeds. The Introduction to the Building Trades and the Barbering courses are now underway and doing well. The school has attracted a growing number of students from suburban districts in recent weeks, attracted by the school's large



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number of staff members of color. The Brothers Keepers Cupboard continues to be a great success, as it is currently full with food and allows Vertus to give food boxes to all students and families in need. The school would like to start a school band, as music is highly desired by students. The school also needs a van to make transportation of students to outside activities more convenient and less expensive, if the board can help secure funds.

Mr. Hill then presented on how he has picked up the duty of meeting all state reporting requirements. With the passing of former COO, Mr. Trzeciak, a number of items dropped through the cracks, and he has been working with NYSED to assure that the school has a full calendar of all reporting requirements plus documentation on how to meet each requirement and a plan and assignments in place to do so. All delinquent reporting has now been remedied.

**Fundraising Committee / Enrollment Promotion Report:** In Mr. Mandina's absence, Mr. James reported that the committee received a proposal from CauseWave suggesting a large number of initiatives to better promote the school to students and families. Due to the high cost and overlap with what the school is doing, only a couple of the CauseWave initiatives will be pursued. However, six new students have been added or are about to start this week and next, and the belief is that enrollment will continue to grow during this school year.

A grant writer has been contracted and has already submitted applications for two grants in support of the school. No results yet.

**Other Committees:** The Fundraising Committee and Community Engagement Committees will meet in March and report at the next board meeting.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Rumph explained that she is resubmitting an application for a K-4 charter school to NYSED this spring and attended our board meeting in order to better understand the workings of charter school boards.

### **Adjournment**

Questions were asked and answered throughout the meeting and general discussion ensued throughout the meeting. Upon a motion by Mr. Hickman, seconded by Mr. Gantt, and unanimously approved, the Board adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m. EST.

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Evan Gallina  
Secretary of the Board