

Board of Trustees Meeting October 25, 2023 (Virtual)  
 Marion P. Thomas Charter High School of Culinary and Performing Arts  
 125 Sussex Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103

October 25, 2023 | 5:00 PM ET

Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87205682710?pwd=dWh4bE5qWCtkWk9PcThPSWdLbVZZUT09>

1. CALL TO ORDER – Open Public Meetings Act - 5:07 PM

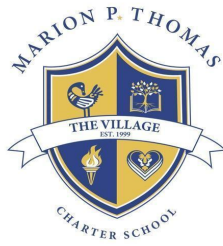
- The New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act (“Act”) was enacted to ensure the right of the public to have advance notice of, and to attend meetings of public bodies at which any business affecting their interests is discussed or acted upon. In accordance with the provisions of this Act, the Marion P Thomas Charter School Board of Trustees has caused notice of this meeting to be advertised by having the date, time, and place there of posted on the district’s website ([www.mptcs.org](http://www.mptcs.org)), in the office of the Clerk of the City of Newark, and was published in the Star-Ledger in August 2023.

2. ROLL CALL

Board Member	Present	Absent	Board Member	Present	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>			

- Ms. Gilchrist arrived before the H&I package event.

Non-Voting Board Members Present	
Elijah Griffiths (Board Secretary/Administrator)	Tina Jalloh (Board Attorney)
Angela Mincy, Chief School Administrator/Superintendent	Joshua Sollow (School Business Administrator)



### 3. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

- Chairman Rouse gave an update.

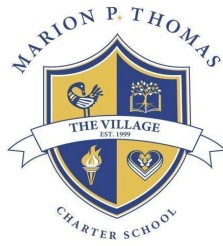
### 4. SUPERINTENDENT'S UPDATE

- Mincy gave a presentation update.
  - QUESTIONS
    - On Friday, we talked about attendance. Is there aftercare on Friday after the half day? (Rouse)
      - Yes, we do have aftercare even on a high school level although they don't participate in aftercare. I think the high schoolers just see Friday's as a half day. It seems like the students don't recognize it as a day of importance. One of the things we implemented was our team sending out a call to tell students it is a full day of instruction in a half day. That half day time is very important to us to make sure we are continuing educating our teachers.  
(Mincy)

### 5. COMMITTEE REPORTS

#### Personnel Committee

- The meeting was called to order at 5:03 PM on October 19th. The board members in attendance were myself, Briana Gilchrist, and Dr. Towe. We spoke about the vacancies. We currently have 15 classroom vacancies throughout the district. There are 6 at the high school meeting, meaning the high school is 89.3% staffed instructionally and 85% overall staff. At STEAM, there are 7 vacancies which means we're 80% instructional staffed and 80.7% overall staffed. At PAC, there are 2 vacancies leaving us at 94.5% instructionally staff and 94.2% overall staff. We went over the recruitment efforts. HR has been going into the Bamboo HR system and helping out the principals by sending them direct emails about the people who have applied who are certified and scheduling their interviews for them. There are panels on those interviews. On those panels, there is a student, a teacher, and an administrator from the building, usually a vice principal. HR is not present at all of those. They are usually present at the administrative interviews. There was a welcome back celebration last month with a glow-in-the-dark theme. It is my understanding that everyone had an amazing time. Ms Tia Holt came in with the opener Erica Nicole. There are some pictures that the district was able to show. They had a giveaway and Ms. Kyla Bird won. She is an aid from PAC. She won some Marion swag and a gift card. That was a 2 1/2 hour event that was on a half-day that staff enjoyed. On October 20th, there was a benefits fair and open enrollment fair. There have been some changes that happened. We have partnered with colonial health. Colonial life will be sponsoring our HR website called Navigator. They are bringing on AmeriFlex, they can offer Cobra for dental and vision, and we want to make sure that we're in compliance so that's why they're coming. Superior Vision will be renewed as well as CIGNA. Pet Benefits Solution will be offering more benefits for those individuals who have pets in the district. Some of those benefits include surgeries for their pets. There are some new websites that we're going to be posting our jobs on. We are also trying new avenues such as other things outside it just billboards, so there may be some mobile billboards, using downtown window space, and just trying to be creative with the avenues to promote. Other things are mobile digital, direct mail promotions, New Jersey transit, and outdoor windows. In terms of partnerships, we spoke about a partnership with Montclair State University. They have an educational program that they are trying to revamp because their program is dwindling. We know right now in education it is rough to



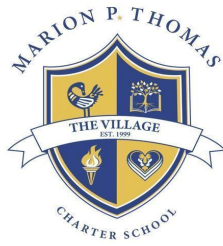
find our teachers everywhere; it is not something that we're just dealing with at the village. They're dealing with it throughout all the educational realms. They're going to do a program with the teacher aids and offer programs for them to get their BA and they'll be hosting those classes on site at the school where they work. We are going to jump onto that program so that we can try to get some of our teacher aid to be certified. We will be working with Essex County College as well to help with those in the pipeline to be certified. Additionally, we're doing a partnership with Council Woman Lamonica McIver of the central ward. We're going to start doing some community service events with her to make sure that we complete the community portion that we mentioned in our mission. On December 6th, some of our students will be participating in being a council person of the day at City Hall. We're excited to see how that goes and hear about those great things that they learn and see on that day. There is an app that will be using MoveSpring. When we have a healthy population, we know the cost of our benefits decrease and so is the mission of the village to get our village moving and getting them healthy and on this app, they can track what they do. I believe there will be some type of competitions going to come of using that app. I'm excited to hear about what comes from those efforts. There are some changes happening, we are moving from AFLAC. There will be a resolution today, one is to bring AmeriFlex and then the other one will be terminating AFLAC. and members of the village who let me say members of the village who want to stay with AFLAC. Members of the village can stay with AFLAC, they just have to pay AFLAC on their own. There will not be a direct deduction on your check. The reason that we are deciding to no longer use AFLAC and switch to AmeriFlex is because AFLAC cannot speak to the state system BenefitSolver. The system that AmeriFlex has does speak to BenefitSolver. It's very important to make sure the continuity of everything is there, so that you see those two resolutions. The meeting was adjourned at 5:34 PM.(Carter)

○ QUESTIONS

- Just to clarify you said AmeriFlex is replacing AFLAC, but on the resolutions D has AmeriFlex replacing Health Equity and resolution E has Colonial Life replacing AFLAC, so I want to make sure that what is written is the plan or if we need to correct the record? (Valdivieso)
  - No, Colonial Life is offering the disability insurance (Mincy)
    - So Colonial Life is going to replace AFLAC is correct on the resolution right, and then AmeriFlex replaces Health Equity as the FSA? (Valdivieso)
      - Yes, that is correct. (Mincy)

Operations & Finance Committee

- We started our discussion about enrollment. Enrollment has actually gotten better, which you know we had talked about the idea that you know we have budgeted for 1329 students and a month ago we were at 1274. Now we're at 1287 so that the numbers are getting better. Our goal for enrollment is 1329. We know that being under is an issue with regards to what the state expects us to achieve but being under by 5% or less is sort of the area where you start to get into trouble. We've closed that gap. I think the number is something like 3% or 4% that we're off budget, which is very acceptable. That is good progress. Next, we talked about the experience with Newark Common App. We as a committee felt like it's a good idea to continue using Newark Common App based on feedback that we've gotten from the administrators at the school. We talked about how it had a positive impact on enrollment, not just the enrollment numbers, but just the process of the visibility into the pipeline of enrollment. We talked about a couple things we're gonna be voting on today. One is a snow contract. We got an update for Mr. Arce about the quality of the snow removal



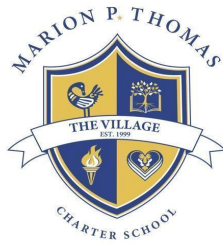
company that we're dealing with. He suggests and we agree about continuing that contract. We talked a little bit about the Hunterdon County co-op, just understanding how these co-ops work and how they help us to be more efficient in going after contracts without necessarily having to go through a full bidding process. Then the money stuff came up and we had a discussion about the need to replace a boiler in PAC. And it's expensive, thankfully we have the money in our fund balance to do it. A boiler is one of those things where it goes we have no hot water and no heat. It really is one of those things that you can't skip over. It's an important thing. We spent a lot of money on maintenance. A lot of our boilers are old and so now we're getting I think pretty good bids on getting them replaced. Next we have IT updates. We discussed the fact that our delayed egress project is completely in effect. That's a good thing we know we've been waiting on this for a while and thankfully that is done. We also talked about upgrading the camera quality in the high school and we had in our minutes from our meeting visuals about how grainy the pictures were with the old cameras and how vivid the pictures are with the new camera. That's another good thing. It's a good improvement to have more visibility through those cameras. Moving along. We then moved over to finance. We went over the financial report as well as the bills list. The thing I always focus on and our committee focuses a lot on is what's the status of our fund balance, is it growing or shrinking. Our fund balance and cash holdings if they are growing. And the size of budget and status of our budget and if we are looking to be at a surplus or deficit. We are looking to be at a surplus even with the sort of reduction in enrollment. We still are in a very strong position from a budget perspective. Then finally, we always take a look at the bills, and just go through every single line item of expense to ensure that that money is going where it's supposed to go. We feel really good about the four items that we're presenting for vote and in today's meeting. That will be all for our report. (Boomer)

○ QUESTIONS

- I am looking at the Newark Common App MOU resolution, it seems to still be in draft form. Has our attorney looked at it? Are we expecting updates to this? Is this something we should push back a month? (Valdivieso)
  - I've been looking at it. Those are the comments of who was looking at it before me, but they are all positive comments and really make the system better. I don't think we have time to delay, because we want to get started on this as soon as possible. We will be working behind the scenes to make sure it's a great contract. (Jalloh)
    - I suggest when voting, we should state subject to attorney review and that will cover that it's in draft form.. (Valdivieso)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee

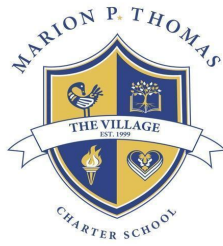
- The committee met on the 10th and the assistant superintendent Mr. Abbaleo, Ms. Ince, and myself for present. We discussed several areas. The assistant superintendent shared with us those students who had not in the spring past the NJGPA test and they had to be retested. We had 21 students in ELA and 64 students in math. Our current 11th graders will take the test in the spring of 2024. You already heard about the success of our math night, our parent night, so we won't go into that, but I understand that it went very well and we're looking forward to that being a continuing process within the village. Hats off to Ms. Ince as she is doing all she can to ensure that our parents get out to these sessions. We discussed the NJSLA results in great depth, and the assistant superintendent indicated that he would be presenting that information at a later time, but it appears that we're on target. We're using strategies to identify certain areas for those students who are not doing well and we're implementing certain strategies, monitoring, mentoring, and several different things to ensure that



we get the students to be successful. We're looking for the results of all of these efforts leading up to the spring exam. We have a couple of areas of resolution tonight, one being upcoming field trips, and the other being getting the signatures of the school leaders and the school treasurer on the TD Bank account. The three field trips we are looking to approve are the following. On November 30, the high school will be going to RISE New York, Dave & Buster's, and Dallas barbecue. Also on the 30th PAC will be going to NJPAC. And the third one, the high school on the 28th will be visiting the New Jersey state house. Those are the field trips on which we will vote tonight. As I said, the new principals in each of the schools on each campus, and the school treasurers, need to vote to have their signatures added to the bank account. That is the end of our report. (Towe)

#### Culture & Climate + Alumni Committee

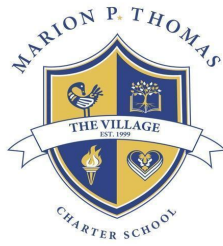
- We met on October 10th. The meeting started at 5 o'clock and ended at 6 o'clock. No resolutions to pass today coming from the committee. However we did cover a lot. There's gonna be 3 continuing reports, so far we're still in the process of identifying more reports that need to be flowing through the committee members. Preferably in advance of the meeting so when we show up, it's just raising significant issues from those and not dwelling too much because we have a lot to cover. Those three reports identified so far are the threat assessment teams report, just a continued report on developing the threat assessment teams that were standing up. As you may recall this is based on the statute we're supposed to stand them up in each school. The state guidance came out pretty late and therefore the state is very understanding that we are hurrying as reasonably as possible in trying to be in compliance but the implementation started a bit late due to the state releasing their guidance late. They are well informed. Attendance is not an actual report delivered, but all committee members are monitoring it. We have access to the dashboard from the standpoint of is there anything we can do from a culture and climate standpoint to address attendance. Also Mr. Williams is putting out a regular HIB report every month that we can comment on. So going back to the attendance, one of the issues that the committee had looked at was a pre-labor day attendance because of the number of days that were required to be in session versus Newark public schools. Sometimes there's a dip in attendance in the first few days of school pre-Labor Day, and two major factors were identified. One was Labor Day weekend travel that comes with people taking those vacations before school which makes it particularly difficult. We talked about whether it had been considered to adjust the school schedule, but figured that was not optimal for the school given the number of days we have to cover and how it would've hurt on the back end. We felt the school could better address and eliminate some families' confusion at the start of the school year due to the difference in our schedule versus the Newark public school schedule. We would try to combat this factor in the future through engaging in dynamic back to school event planning, which seems like we're already doing. So just keep doubling those efforts and trying to mitigate these two factors that cause some dip in attendance when the school year first starts. As far as threat assessment teams, we have all of our team established as we previously reported, and now the meetings everybody's trained up except for four people as of the 10th. Those people should all be trained on all threat assessment team policies, and all the required training should be done by the end of October. This is the estimation given. We have already started. Hopefully the first meeting for these teams was scheduled on the 12th and it would be one at each school every week so again by the end of the month all of these teams should've had their first meeting for the threat assessment team as we stand them up. We have previously identified some trends or patterns as far as HIB went that we could try to improve. We have made concerted efforts to onboard additional paraprofessional for



those students with special needs to have their proper support and resources, and identify students with those needs which contributed greatly to a positive claim and culture and accounting for those students. We quickly talked about how procedures were addressed during orientation as far as how students, especially for the younger students when parents drop them off, how to make sure those students get to the classroom safely. It was reported that those procedures were addressed during orientation. There were no concerns voiced from parents on that end, and the presence of the admin especially during those first couple weeks of school were really key in giving parents a reassuring feeling that the kids were getting to their classroom properly. That's pretty much all we addressed as we ran out of time. Again, this committee we are aggressively looking at a bunch of different issues, and trying to dissect as much as possible, make improvements, and then try to automate everything to report significant issues so that we could cover everything more effectively and efficiently. Also in case I did not mention it the current trustee members are myself, Ms. Gilchrist and Ms. Ince. That is all the end of my report. (Valdivieso)

Executive Committee

- No Report Given.



6. RESOLUTIONS

I. [2023-10-25-A: Approval of the October 25, 2023 MPTCS BOT Meeting Agenda](#)

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Discussion:

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II. [2023-10-25-B: Approval of Regular 9.27.23 BOT Meeting Minutes](#)

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

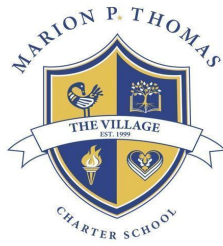
Discussion:

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III. *PACKAGE C - E Motion Carter - Towe\*\* | Approved*  
[2023-10-25-C: Approval of October 23' Personnel Report](#)  
[2023-10-25-D: Resolution to change Supplemental Insurance Plan Offering](#)  
[2023-10-25-E: Resolution to change Health FSA Plan Offering](#)

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

\*\* : Motion Seconded



Discussion:

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IV. *PACKAGE F - G2 with Note G2 is subject to Attorney approval of MOU.*

*Motion Boomer - Valdivieso\*\* | Approved*

[2023-10-25-F: Approval of October 2023 Finance Report](#)

[2023-10-25-G: Approval of Snow Contract Renewal](#)

[2023-10-25-G1: Approval of YMCA Rental Agreement 23-24](#)

[2023-10-25-G2: Approval of Newark Common App MOU](#)

Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Discussion:

- On the YMCA contract, are there any significant changes from last year that we should be aware of? (Valdivieso)
  - No. (Jalloh)
    - There is a clause in the YMCA, that both parties are removing any liability, so we should be hypervigilant for anything that appears unsafe while using that gym since liability unless gross negligence will fall on us, is that right Attorney Jalloh? (Valdivieso)
      - Yes, but that is also why we have insurance. (Jalloh)

V. *PACKAGE H - I Motion Towe - Valdivieso\*\* | Approved*

[2023-10-25-H: Approval of Field Trips](#)

[2023-10-25-I: Approval to Update Signatories on Student Activity Account\(s\)](#)

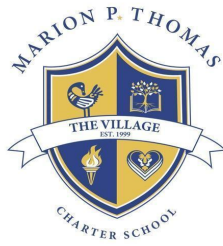
Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent	Voting Members	Motion	Yes	No	Abstain	Absent
Vincent Rouse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Julio Valdivieso**	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dashay Carter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Allan Boomer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Briana Gilchrist	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toni Ince	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dr. Princess Towe	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>						

Discussion:

- Ms. Gilchrist arrived before this vote.

\*\* : Motion Seconded





NOTE: We are pulling the executive committee resolution J for a later meeting.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT - It is now time for public participation. To engage in public comment, all speakers must register via the district's website no later than 5 calendar days prior to the advertised meeting by 5:00 PM ET. Please state your name and address for the record. All speakers will have 3-minutes to address the BOT.

- No registered speakers

8. CLOSED SESSION - 6:02 PM

9. CLOSING REMARKS FROM BOARD CHAIR:

*Thank you to all for your hard work and dedication to the village. Have a great evening! Committees thank you for meeting.*

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN: 6:02 PM ET Rouse - Ince\*\*

Respectfully submitted at: 10/25/2023  
Submitted by: Elijah D. Griffiths

\*\* : Motion Seconded