Common Ground Board of Directors Meeting Minutes: August 31, 2026

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Board of Directors Minutes

Microsoft Teams Link

Microsoft Teams Recording

Present: Karen Amaker, Ky Andersson, Lauren Caplan, Rebecca Colon, Liz Cox, Brian Kelahan, Alexis Smith, Sarah Field

Staff: Genevive Walker, Deb Greig, Ana Rosa, Beth Czar, Joel Tolman, Monique Frasier, Bri Jenkins, Donna Rehm McCabe, Rebecca Holcombe

Public: Margaret Randle, Almut Zieher

Absent: Jameson Davis, Stacy Spell

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 PM.

Public Comment:

N/A

Introduction of New Board Members:

- Rebecca Colon, a new board member, introduced herself
- Karen Amaker, a new board member, introduced herself
- Beth Czar, the new Board Liaison, was introduced

Introduction of New Board Chair:
Liz Cox was introduced as the new Board Chair. Liz asked for someone to read the mission statement. Sarah Field read the mission statement then the group took a minute for reflection. All board members noted what the mission means to them.

Business Requiring Approval

- June 29, 2026 Annual and Business Board Meeting Minutes
    - A vote was taken to approve the 6/29/26 annual meeting minutes and the business meeting minutes. Sarah Field made the motion and Karen Amaker seconded. Minutes were approved.
- TD Bank Signer Resolution

- Motion for certified resolution was approved. Liz Cox and Brian Kelahan were both added and will be replacing Alexis Smith and Jeff Carter**.** Brian Kelahan moved and Liz Cox seconded.

Invoices Needing Approval

- All invoices that had been budgeted were approved. Brian Kelahan moved and Alexis Smith seconded.
- Separate motion to pay monthly Hanover invoices was approved. Liz Cox moved and Brian Kelahan seconded.

Directors' Reports

- Genevive Walker, Ana Rosa, Monique Frasier, Joel Tolman, Deb Greig, and Rebecca Holcombe provided highlights from the reports.

Committee Reports

Minutes of all Committee Meetings will be posted on the Board of Directors Webpage by the end of each month.

Development & Finance Committee (Brian)

The finance committee met on August 20th.

The meeting agenda and minutes from the Finance Committee can be found HERE.

- Brian Kelehan reviewed. He discussed a board training opportunity that is taking place on 11/26/26.
- Bri Jenkins reviewed. A feast report was given along with the board pledge.
- Today is Margaret Randall's last meeting. She reviewed the Financial Report. In the last 2 years much effort and many strides have been made financially. The replacement for Margaret will be Morgan Worstell
- Ky Anderson had a question - when the cash flow goes below zero, how does that get dealt with. Genevive Walker answered that payroll would not be delayed but it is possible that other vendors may have a delay in payment. Credit is available as well if needed. A hope is that the ICHRA medical insurance plan will help with this area.

Governance Committee Report (Lauren)

The governance committee did not meet. But a brief oral report was provided.

- Lauren Caplan reviewed. An online orientation took place on 8/27/26 for board members. We are looking for new board members. Charter renewal is happening. Resources for charter board

governance training will be shared. That training must take place before 11/1/26. Meeting on 9/1/26 for the Executive Director's evaluation process.

School Committee Report (Liz)

The School Committee met on August 12th.

Minutes from the School Committee Meetings can be found HERE.

To be approved by the Board: DRAFT 2025-2026 Student Handbook

- **School Committee Report and Upcoming School Year Plans -** Liz and Monique provided updates on student enrollment, the student handbook, School Board policy manual revisions, and the School Improvement Plan - with a focus on absenteeism, credit earning, and school climate.
- **Enrollment and Handbook Updates -** Liz reported ongoing enrollment for 10th and 11th graders, and emphasized the need for board approval of the updated student handbook at the September meeting and the distribution of a new handbook link due to significant revisions.

New Business

N/A

Executive Session

- The board entered into executive session at 6:45
- Sarah Field left executive session at 6:52
- The board adjourned the executive session at 7:02. No votes were taken.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn the meeting was moved by Liz and seconded by Ky. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:05PM.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 29th in person at 358 Springside Avenue, New Haven, CT 06515.

Public Comment:

In order to comply with Connecticut Open Meeting laws, any member of the public wishing to participate in the meeting must sign up on the Public Participation Sign-up Document. Sign-ups for Public Participation will open at 5 pm on the last business day before the meeting (Friday, September 26th) and will close at 5:00 pm on the day of the meeting (Monday, September 29th) Public Participation is limited to 2 minutes per person up to 30 total minutes. Anyone wishing to make a statement to the board can also submit testimony in writing to Alexis.Smith@nhep.com by 5:00 pm on the day of the meeting. All submitted documents will be included in the publicly shared meeting minutes.