



## **BOARD MINUTES**

**Date:** January 23, 2019

**Location:** Hawbridge School

**Attending Board Members:** Todd Nicolet (Chair), Val Hanson (Vice Chair), Sue Eldon (Treasurer), Karamarie Fecho (Secretary), Natalya Barker, Lori Edmonds, Dianne Ford, Brian Setliff

**Absent Board Member:** Tim Toben

**Attending Executive Director and Faculty/Staff:** Mya Ciccotti (Interim Executive Director), Jennifer Shelton (Co-Assistant Director and Faculty Member), Jonathan Farmer (Faculty Representative to the Board), Emily Martin (Guidance Counselor)

- I. Call to Order
  - 6:05 pm.
- II. Roll Call
  - 6:06 pm.
- III. Approval of Agenda
  - Motion to approve agenda. Seconded. Unanimously supported. 6:07 pm.
- IV. Public Comment
  - No public comments (but see §VII.A below).
- V. Consent Items
  - A. Approval of previous minutes from December regular meeting and December special sessions.
    - Motion to approve previous minutes. Seconded. Seven Board members in support; one abstaining Board member (Fecho, who was not present at the December regular meeting and thus unable to vote).
  - B. Future Meetings/Events
    1. Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 27, 2019
      - Motion to approve February regular meeting date. Seconded. Unanimously supported. 6:08 pm.
- VI. Reports
  - A. Board

1. Fundraising Committee Update
  - Nothing to report.
2. Communications Committee Update
  - Committee Chair Edmonds provided an update. Committee is making an ongoing effort to engage the community and promote transparency. Committee prepared a document for Board comment and will share it with the Board via email.

#### B. Director

1. Timeline/planning for next school year
  - Administration provided a report and timeline with respect to planning for the 2019–2020 school year. Items under discussion include: faculty teaching assignments and master plan; lottery; student schedules; teaching certification; teacher recruitment; athletics planning; faculty requests for technology, etc.
2. Presentations from Sax Connex Interns
  - Ms. Osborne provided an overview of the internship program, including its history, and introduced five of seven current interns. Sax Connex Interns provided an overview of their individual experience: Anna - Frank Porter Graham Elementary School; Ethan – Cane Creek Farm; Bayla – The General Store; Emily – Alamance Regional Hospital; and Colby – Starberry Acres Horse Farm.
  - Board thanked Ms. Osborne and the student interns for their efforts and accomplishments.

#### C. Treasurer

- Board Treasurer Eldon did not have a report to share. Administration and Board Chair provided an update on her behalf. School budget is on track. No concerns.

#### D. Faculty Representative

- Faculty Representative Farmer provided a report. His report included questions and concerns from faculty that stemmed, in part, from the faculty survey that the Board recently distributed. He credited Ms. Ciccotti with creating a sense of stability and comfort with the faculty over the past year. The major concern among faculty is that Hawbridge has cycled through several Executive Directors over the past few years. Additional areas of concern include: plans for the budget surplus; level of Board support for the school expansion; and recent Board discussions during open sessions related to the school curriculum, relationship-building between faculty at BEJ and Hawbridge, and the use of professional development funds for presumed Board development. As a result, the faculty are sensing a lack of autonomy and Board intrusion on day-to-day operations of the school.

- Board acknowledged inadequate communication and misunderstanding between Board members and Hawbridge faculty. Board discussed options to improve communication and prevent misunderstanding between Board members and Hawbridge faculty. Board encouraged Mr. Farmer to feel comfortable reaching out to the Board at any time, whether during open session or at other times.

## VII. Unfinished Business

### A. Hawbridge Expansion Update from Little Diversified

- Jason, the Board's "Owner's Agent" and project liaison, introduced himself to Board members.
- Little also introduced themselves. Little then provided an historical overview of their involvement with the project, including the most recent comments and redesign suggestions provided by the Board. Little was somewhat surprised by the Board's comments/suggestions, but they appreciated them, as they stimulated for Little a better understanding of the mission and vision of the school and a renewed excitement for the project. Little then provided an overview of the redesign for the school expansion project.
- Board thanked Little for their attentiveness to the Board's concerns, as well as the mission and vision of the school.
- Claire Haslam, one of the land donors for the proposed Hawbridge school expansion, expressed concern regarding the redesign and the lack of community engagement in the redesign process. She noted that a sense of distrust has arisen among community members with respect to the Board's intentions for the school expansion. Ms. Haslam also noted that the community has concerns regarding the frequent changes in leadership of the school. She emphasized that community-building and trust were hard-earned by the prior Board and that relationships appear to have been weakened by the change in Board membership.
- Board thanked Ms. Haslam and acknowledged the need for better engagement between the Board and the local community. Board provided an overview of some of the reasons for the redesign of the school and noted that the current design is more aligned with the original intent of the school expansion, including the interests expressed by the community during early Board–Community "town hall" sessions.
- Board noted that the USDA loan to support the school expansion cannot be approved at this point in time due to the US Federal Government shutdown. As such, the new timeline for the school expansion is unknown.

## VIII. Closed Session

- ### A. To Consider Confidential Matters Pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11
1. Subsection (a) - (6)

- Motion to move to closed session. Seconded. Unanimously supported. 8:15 pm.
- Motion to move to open session and adjourn. Seconded. Unanimously supported. 9:20 pm.

*Minutes recorded and respectfully submitted by Karamarie Fecho, Board Member and Secretary.*