



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School
Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Wednesday, December 16, 2020

Location: Virtual meeting via Zoom

I. Call to Order – 6:03 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Attending Board Members: Todd Nicolet (Chair), Natalya Barker (Vice Chair), Dawnya Bohager (Treasurer), April Williams (Secretary), Kathryn Brown, Matt Buckmaster, Christina Fisher, Renee Lynch

Attending Executive Director and Faculty/Staff: Mya Ciccotti (Executive Director), Jonathan Farmer (Faculty Representative to the Board), Daryl Feldman (Assistant Director of Student Services), Jennifer Shelton (Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction), Sarah Cornette (Art Teacher)

Other Attendees: Jason Imhof and Ben Culp (Aspire Construction Management)

III. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

- Renee read a public statement from Emily Lyons, parent of students in 5th, 6th, and 7th grades, advocating for preserving snow days during virtual learning.
- Kathryn shared an update from Elizabeth McCue for the Saxapahaw Traffic Committee, reporting that the public meeting will not occur this month. The committee is continuing to contact Rep. Riddell and anticipates the community meeting will happen in January.

V. Consent Items

A. Approval of previous meetings' minutes

The minutes for board meetings on November 18, 2020, and December 9, 2020 (special session), were approved unanimously.

B. Future Meetings/Events:

The board unanimously approved our next meetings for January 13, 2021, and January 27, 2021, both at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

VI. Reports

A. Board

Fundraising Committee (K. Brown) – Met on Dec. 10

- Fundraising landing page – Began work on this and plan to get it in place before the groundbreaking ceremony.
- Grant writing – Dianne met with several teachers about grant writing, and together they are continuing to build their grant source list. They plan to meet again at the new site in Jan. or Feb., with appropriate COVID safety precautions.
- Groundbreaking – The new groundbreaking committee (Kathryn, Renee, Todd, Natalya, Dianne, Matt, and April) met virtually on Dec. 14.
 - Groundbreaking event date is set for Tuesday, Feb. 2, 2021, at 11:00 a.m., with a rain date set for Feb. 9, 2021.
 - Aiming for a brief ceremony of 30-45 minutes, trying to keep it quick because of winter weather.
 - Because of COVID and limited space, we will only be able to invite a limited number of guests to attend in person. We will offer a streaming option for those who would like to attend virtually.
 - Committee will meet again on January 4. Email Kathryn if you want to help with any of the preparations (it's a long to-do list).
 - Renee and Matt are working with Jonathan and Ms. Cornette, the school art teacher, on ways faculty and students can be involved with the ceremony. It's important to us that these groups are represented, though it didn't feel responsible to invite students to attend in person because of COVID. Ideas we have shared with the faculty include an essay contest, having students make a banner commemorating the event, inviting art and poetry submissions. Want to make sure this invitation is welcoming to faculty and students and not just adding more to their plates. Mya confirmed that there could be a budget for creating a banner.
- Next Fundraising Committee meeting is set for January 5, 2021.

Communications Committee (A. Williams)

- Board web page – Final edits to the Board web page have been made and Jennifer did a great job. It looks so much more robust and the information is easy to access.
- Community flyer – We put together a flyer announcing to the community the beginning of construction, which includes an aerial map and building rendering and encourages folks to go to the website for more information about the expansion and admissions. We're awaiting feedback from Mya on the design and messaging as well as when we should consider distributing

them. Jason offered that he and Ben can help with any communications regarding construction as well, including maps, diagrams, renderings, etc.

- Faculty appreciation notes – Thank you to everyone who took the time to handwrite notes for our faculty. Those notes went out December 4. Jonathan expressed his gratitude toward the note writers and said the notes were well received.

Renovations Committee (R. Lynch)

- Jason and his team are working on developing some numbers for us based on some plans they are putting together, aiming to have time to finalize these over the holidays when things slow down.
- It would be great if we could see those numbers before our Jan. 13 special closed session so that we can look them over before we have to act on them.

B. Director

- COVID state funding – Two weeks ago, the state realigned how we can allocate our COVID funding, making more money available to us. We were able to spend every penny, focusing primarily on increasing our PPE. Now every teacher will have their own plexiglass shield for their desk, every student will have their own portable plexiglass face covering, and each classroom will have a medical grade air purifier.
- COVID federal funding – The federal government has issued us \$13,874 in COVID relief funds, which we will put toward digital materials, particularly for our temporary space for the upper school in the fall (projectors and technology to support those new learning spaces).
- Hiring plan – Mya's hiring plan is available in the board's Google folder and includes information like positions, hiring team, and timeline. We're already gotten a lot of really great resumes. The biggest challenge will be hiring for the 13 classroom positions for the lower school (grades K-7). Daryl has connected us to an Elon virtual job fair, so we hope to get some significant interest there.

C. Treasurer

- We're 42% of the way through our current budget. We're receiving revenue that's keeping up with our budget at the state level, and county funding is picking up (last month we were at 19%, this month it's at 29%).
- Dawnya asked when the REAP (Rural Education Achievement Program) funding will come in, and Mya explained that once she submits for that funding, the school has only five business days to spend it all, which is a tight turnaround. They have a system in place for how to do that efficiently, and it will likely be in the spring because of a long backorder on Chromebooks.
- Dawnya reported that we continue to have slight lasting savings because of students and faculty not being in the building.

- Dawnya asked about an expansion line item of \$100,000; Mya explained that that it was for the closing fees on November 19.
- We're gaining some ground on our surplus.
- Dawnya is working on a budget for 2021-22 and will need to work closely with Mya; Mya suggested setting up a call with the accountant.

D. Faculty Representative

Nothing to report. Two more days until winter break!

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Hawbridge Expansion Update (Little Diversified and Aspire Construction)

- Ben reported that we received the notice to proceed from the USDA, which we were able to give to CT Wilson, so officially, as of today, the construction project is underway!
- There will not be a lot of site activity because of bad weather on this first day and because of the holidays coming up; will put up some temporary fencing, tree protection, etc.
- Tomorrow they will meet with DEQ on site to go over stormwater management.
- Official construction ending date is now Nov. 15, 2021, but that is highly subject to change.

B. Update on Plan B Survey for reopening

- 86% of families responded (great participation rate); 46 kids were outliers, meaning their families didn't respond.
- Most yeses for coming back on Jan. 20 were from 6th graders and the least were from 11th graders; high number of elementary (4th, 5th, and 6th graders) want to come back.
- Not making a definitive decision at this point. Mya is monitoring closely the COVID situation, seeing an influx of numbers because of Thanksgiving and holiday gatherings. Combined with cold and flu season, she wants to get through winter break and see what happens but still give families plenty of time to make plans.
- All families will have the option to stay on plan C, remote learning.
- If safe enough, we do want to give students an opportunity to come back in person at 50% capacity.
- More than half of 4th, 5th, and 6th graders said they would return. Less than half of 9th, 10th, and 11th said they would return.
- In lieu of a survey, the faculty met virtually to discuss reopening on Jan. 20. There was a lot of reservation about returning in person. In addition to concerns over COVID, faculty wonder how well they can serve students in a

hybrid situation, having to teach six feet apart (limits group work) and engage with both in-person students and folks at home on their computers.

- Todd expressed gratitude that the faculty are considering the reopening from the perspective of how to best serve the students' needs, and if a hybrid option would in fact be better or just different.
- Mya confirmed that state testing will still be happening, but that she has not emphasized testing among faculty and students, as they don't need that stress. Jonathan expressed appreciation that he has never had an administrator at the school make testing a focus of how to serve the students.
- The language of the most recent survey that went out to families was much clearer and left less room for ambiguity and skewing of data. Parents were grateful for the tighter language and the increased information.

C. Update on Fall Plans for Upper School

- After a visit to Bethlehem Presbyterian Church, ED and admins are optimistic about using it as a temporary site for the upper school in the fall. Mya is drafting a memorandum of understanding to reflect expectations and agreements between the BPC church board and the Hawbridge board (e.g., who's paying for what, when we'll be using the space, what an average day would look like, etc.).
- Mya anticipates needing two trailers for a total of four additional classrooms at the church site. Our current trailer rental company quoted \$70,000 total for two trailers of two classrooms each, no bathrooms (too complicated because church has septic tank not sewer line).
- Because bathrooms are limited, Mya sought quotes for restroom trailers. The quote for two 3-bathroom trailers (a trailer for boys, a trailer for girls—not customary for us to have unisex bathrooms) is \$55,000 (for the equivalent of 6 extra bathrooms). We can make one of the three restrooms in the church an all-gender inclusive option, leaving two restrooms for faculty.
- Total quote for classroom and bathroom trailers combined is \$125,000, less than our anticipated \$200,000.
- Anticipate putting 8th and 9th grades in church and fellowship hall, 10th & 11th in one trailer; most if not all seniors are only at school for four periods and then go on to ACC, so would likely keep them in our current trailer and not move it—all of this is preliminary
- No longer concern regarding Internet, as the church uses the same server we use at the school and we can fill in with hot spots if needed.
- Regarding insurance, we have an umbrella policy that covers students and faculty anywhere they are—did this intentionally because our students are so often off-site. We will need to consider adding church to our policy.
- If there is a need for transportation between the school and the church, we have a 15-passenger van, which we will likely station at the church, with faculty on-site who can drive it.

- Regarding the Hawbridge Buddies program, we will do our best to keep it in place, but it will require some logistically thinking in the future.
- Regarding the meal program, we will need to talk to the General Store about logistics, if they could accommodate the new site, knowing that our students and family really like this program. The church has a full kitchen, and we have extra microwaves we can put in it.
- Q: At what point will parents applying know the plan for their students?
A: Once we finalize agreements with the church board, our plan is to notify all families who are in the lottery, include pictures of the site, and let them know that their children will be in a transition space for the first half of the school year. As far as how deterring this will be, we don't know. We hope not much, because we will emphasize that it is temporary and that once construction is complete, we will have a brand-new facility with amazing resources.
- Q: What are the stipulations around the graveyard area?
A: This is a big portion of the memorandum of understanding. Church will continue to maintain it. Don't want to rope it off, because we don't want to deter families who have loved ones there. It will be a teaching point with our students. Hawbridge students are used to being around spaces that don't belong to the school, so this will not be new to them.
- We want to give something back to Bethlehem Presbyterian for letting us use this space, leaving it better than we found it—maybe the school's outdoor beautification organization can do something to this end.

VIII. Adjourn – 7:11 p.m.