



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

Date: Wednesday, June 23, 2021

Location: Virtual Meeting

I. Call to Order – 6:02 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, Dianne Ford, 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), Emily Martin (School Counselor), Jennifer Shelton (Assistant Director of Curriculum and Instruction)

Other Attendees: Jason Imhof (Aspire Construction Management), and Megan Glancy and Davida Reid (incoming new board members)

III. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved unanimously.

IV. Public Comment

A. There was no public comment.

V. Consent Items

A. Approval of previous meeting's minutes

The board unanimously approved minutes from May 26, 2021.

B. Future Meetings/Events:

The board unanimously approved our next meeting for Wednesday, July 28, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

C. Grievance Policy Review

The board agreed to discuss the questions April raised regarding the latest changes to the Grievance Policy language from September 2020.

VI. Reports

A. Board

- Topping-Out Ceremony Committee (Kathryn Brown) – Jennifer got the invitation out last week, and the event is scheduled for Tuesday, July 6, at 9 a.m. The committee is meeting weekly and working on a sign-up sheet to help with setup and breakdown for the event, and we're working on finalizing the program. There has been some disappointment expressed about our timing, especially since so many faculty members and even some of our board members won't be able to attend. Given the schedules of our donors, plus the pandemic, and the unpredictability of the construction, this was the best date we could do. Important to note that this will not be our only form of commemorating and celebrating as a community. Once construction is finished, we will do a ribbon-cutting ceremony to include everyone. Also remember that this was in lieu of our groundbreaking, postponed because of COVID. The committee feels good about how everything is coming along, but we will need "all hands on deck" that day (even though we know several can't make it) to help everything run smoothly.
- Fundraising Committee (Kathryn Brown) – The fundraising committee has not met this month; three of the four committee members are also working hard on the beam-signing ceremony committee, and the remaining committee member will be rolling off the board next month. The committee could use some new folks to serve.
- Communications Committee (April Williams) – The communications committee exchanged e-mails in lieu of a meeting this month to share thoughts on Arlen Hanson's email to the board in which he raised concerns about the noise and disruption to neighbors on Mulberry Lane caused by our site preparations for the portable classrooms. Arlen sent his email to the board and Mya on June 11, and Todd replied to him individually on June 14, but we need to respond collectively as a board. The committee will draft a letter for the full board to review and approve, which we will distribute door-to-door to all of the Mulberry Lane neighbors. Closer to the start of school, we will also announce to the full Hawbridge community the new members to the board, so we need a written bio from the two new members to include in that email as well as for posting on the website.
- Renovations Committee (Renee Lynch) – We are still focusing on the beautification of the school's exterior, working with Ginny of Sprout Community to schedule a volunteer day to put in the new raised flower beds that will be used as pollinator gardens in the after-school program as well as part of the lower school curriculum. We do not want to be in the way of the renovations crew, so we are working on getting a date for the volunteer day, possibly waiting a couple of weeks for the dumpster to be moved. Regarding the new exterior mural, Renee

is meeting tomorrow with Katie, the artist chosen to paint it, and will work out a schedule with her. Renee will also share the chosen mural design with the board.

- Selection Committee (Matt Buckmaster) – Matt introduced the new members, Davida Reid and Megan Glancy, who were in (virtual) attendance. The board expressed a heartfelt thank you to outgoing members, Dianne and Matt, for their outstanding service. Dianne and Matt thanked the board for their gifts and expressed their appreciation of the board, the admins, and the school. We are sad to see Dianne and Matt go—we will miss them!—and we are also excited to be working with Megan and Davida starting next month. Kathryn will be Megan’s mentor to the board and April will be Davida’s, helping answer questions and provide orientation as they make the transition.

B. Director

- Thank You to Outgoing Members – Mya thanked the outgoing board members, Matt and Dianne, for their service and support of the school during their time on the board. We will miss them!
- Lower School Assistant Director and Part-Time Athletic Director – We’ve hired Matthew Bello to be our Lower School Assistant Director and part-time Athletic Director. He is a former principal fellow and P.E. teacher, and we are thrilled to have him joining the administrative team!
- Financial Audit – Tomorrow’s financial audit is at 9 a.m. Once the report is ready, it will be shared with board.
- Upper School Temporary Location – The grading in the back lot behind the Saxapahaw Museum is officially completed in preparation for the new portable classrooms, which will serve as our temporary Upper School location for the fall. An additional obstacle has been to try to work with the portable classroom installer for an appropriate placement for the fifth mobile building. We are trying to preserve as many trees as possible. As of now, we are ahead of schedule.
- New Faculty Transition – An event is scheduled for July for all new hires and existing faculty to get together at a local park for food, story sharing, orientation, and getting-to-know-you activities to help prepare everyone to come together as a new team on Day 1. Many of the newly hired faculty have already been in to see their classrooms, even though they are not obligated to until August 1.
- Faculty Representatives and Reporting for the Upper and Lower Schools – Jonathan Farmer, our faculty representative, pointed out that the current by-laws only require one faculty rep to the board; however, with the addition of the new Upper School, he asked that we consider that it may be better to have a faculty representative from each facility, both the Lower and Upper Schools. He also noted that it is not a quick or casual process to change the by-laws, so this issue is one that would need careful consideration and further input from more of the faculty, perhaps using this next year to see how everyone feels. In the interim, perhaps we could have Daryl and Jennifer give reports for each of their respective schools along with Mya’s ED report. Ultimately, we want to make sure both facilities have a voice in our board meetings.

C. Treasurer

- Dawnya reported that we are 92% through the fiscal year at the end of May, and our revenue is generally on track. She's looking to see if there are any special funds that need spending before the end of the year.
- Dawnya asked Mya about a discrepancy in the state and federal COVID funds. Mya clarified that we're still waiting on the federal funding, as that is what's funding our summer program this year; we're waiting for the final approval of that grant, meanwhile using supplemental funds from our salary line item, then once the federal funds are available, Nicole will reimburse that line item.
- We still have a small amount in REAP grant, and we have until Sept. 30, 2022, to fully use that. Because we're using some of that money for Lower and Upper School materials, we're using that money in increments. We are drawing amounts from this grant to meet priorities one at a time, because once the money is drawn, it must be spent within five days, a rare grant that doesn't follow a fiscal year timeline.
- We are only halfway through instructional items and textbooks—it's likely that before June 30, we will use a big chunk of both of those line items. We have been doing a lot of research trying to figure out best resources for K-3 and asking new teachers for their preferences; it's taking quite a bit of time to figure out the best materials.
- For summer remedial education, 22 students have signed up, but that doesn't mean we'll have 22 the entire summer because it is self-paced; not every student will need to stay the whole time. Teachers are compensated using grant money according to their daily rate; we bought materials and then whatever was leftover, we divided into a daily stipend for the teachers.
- Best practice reserve comparison is now at the bottom of the page in our budget document—we're almost triple where we want to be. We're now showing \$1.5 million, but we haven't expensed out everything, and we have more things to pay out at this point than we have coming in; likely around a million when we're done, which Dawnya said is pretty healthy.
- Recap for new members—our best practice is to maintain 90-days' cash on hand in our reserve funds in case there's an emergency when the school must shut down and still be able to pay our faculty and staff their salaries and keep paying the mortgage; a.k.a. our crisis, worst-case-scenario fund. For the most part, these funds are usually untouchable; however, they can be used carefully and in smaller quantities for small-scale crises, as long as we're confident that we can replace the funds quickly (for example, if the AC goes out, something that helps us keep the school in operation).
- Note that next year the reserve will need to be bigger to support the expanded school; however, we're already pretty close to what we anticipate that amount needs to be, due in large part to the fiscal restraint of the board and the school admins. We're still figuring out that exact new number; Nicole can get us that soon. Also note that it will take a year or two to understand the operating costs of

running two schools in two locations; knowing the salaries of all the faculty will get us close to this number, but that operating information is important too.

D. Faculty Representative

Jonathan welcomed the new board members and expressed gratitude to the outgoing board members.

VII. Unfinished Business

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

- Jason reported that the steel was delivered a couple days ago, so we're ready to go vertical! They did have to add a fire department connection recently, which we will see on the change order log. They'll be working on getting some paving done while things are dry. Overall things are tracking generally, but Jason would like to see them further along. We are just shy of six months before C.T. Wilson's contract completion date is up, and Aspire has had discussions with them about how they can accelerate the work. Steel and gym will go up very quickly; it will be a race to get the roof on and the interior finished. They're having monthly meetings with all the constituents (USDA, the bank, C.T. Wilson, etc.).
- When asked how far behind we are, Jason answered that the last schedule from C.T. Wilson was from a month ago and they estimated being behind 2-3 days, which is incidental; however, Jason estimates that they are likely a couple weeks behind, but it's very possible for them to accelerate the progress and make up that time. We'll have a better idea in the next six or seven weeks if they will be behind more than they're estimating.
- Regarding the recent change orders, the largest was for permits, and this was more of a budget allocation. The soil issues and fire department connection are good size numbers but still reasonable for contingencies.

B. Renovation Update

- Good start to everything. Sheet rock is going up. Electrical is done. Happy with the progress so far. Mya included photos in a slide show in the board folder for us to be able to see how quickly it's moving!
- Todd introduced Jason and his associate Ben (not in attendance) to the new members and explained their roles as project managers, how important and integral they have been to the whole expansion project and their roles with the new renovation project for the Lower School. Jason informed us that another Aspire rep (Nick) will be joining us soon.

C. Grievance Policy Review

The board reviewed clarification comments in the Grievance Policy from last September. After discussion and clarification, April agreed to draft the proposed new language to send to Mya, who will review it as well as send it to our lawyer for review

and approval. Note: The attorney (Donna Rascoe) is retained by the board, not the school.

VIII. New Business

A. Board officer elections

- Chair – Todd nominated Natalya Barker, who accepted the position. Natalya was unanimously elected as Chair.
- Vice Chair – Natalya nominated Kathryn Brown, who accepted the nomination but noted that her term ends next summer, so she would not be able to serve as Chair in the future. At this time, it was noted the best practice of having the outgoing Chair serve on the board one full year before her or his term ends to help the new Chair with the transition. However, Natalya could serve two years as Chair and still have a transitional year, because she's just entering a new three-year term. Following this discussion, Kathryn was unanimously elected as Vice Chair.
- Treasurer – Todd nominated Dawnya Bohager, who accepted the nomination. Dawnya was unanimously elected as Treasurer.
- Secretary – Nominations for secretary were deferred until our July meeting.

B. Approval of Amended FY 2020-2021

After brief discussion, there was a motion to approve the current budget as revised and reflected in the budget dated 5.31.21. The board unanimously approved the amended FY 2020-2021 budget.

C. Approval of Proposed FY 2021-2022 Budget

After brief discussion, there was a motion to approve the proposed FY 2021-2022 budget. The board approved unanimously the proposed budget.

IX. Closed Session

The board voted to move to closed session at 7:51 p.m. to consider confidential matters pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11, i. Subsection (a) - (5).

X. Adjourn – 8:32 p.m.