



The Association for the Advancement of Education, DBA, The Hawbridge School

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 25, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.
Hawbridge Lower School – Huth Commons

I. Call to Order: 6:04PM

II. Roll Call

Attending Board Members:

Natalya Barker, Christina Fisher, Megan Glancy, Nick Harrison (Secretary), Josh Horton, Renee Lynch (Vice Chair), Amanda Rose (Treasurer), April Williams (Chair)

Attending Directors and Faculty/Staff:

Cheryl Beierschmitt (Director of Lower School), Lora Wilder (Lower School Faculty Representative), Kierca Kimbel (Upper School Faculty Representative), Jennifer Shelton (Director of Upper School)

III. Approval of Agenda

April Williams proposed a number of amendments to the Board meeting agenda as it had been previously published to the Hawbridge website on Monday, January 23rd, 2023. One amendment was a new item to Section 6 (Reports), where Renee Lynch will provide an update on next year's Board Selection Committee. A second amendment is to Section 7 (Unfinished Business), which will cover a vacant seat on the Hawbridge Board of Directors. A third amendment is to Section 9, which will add a reference to the closed session of the Board meeting.

No further additions were offered to the agenda. A motion to approve the proposed agenda was submitted and approved unanimously by the Board.

IV. Public Comment

A. No public comments were offered.

V. Consent Items

A. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes

The Hawbridge Board of Directors met twice in the previous month: December 14th, 2022, and December 20th, 2022. A motion to approve the minutes for these meetings was passed unanimously. The approved minutes will be posted to the Hawbridge website in the coming days.

B. Future Meeting: Wednesday, February 22, 2023 (Virtual)

The next Hawbridge Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for February 22nd, 2023, at 6PM. This meeting will take place virtually; there will be no in-person portion of the meeting. No Board member reported concerns with the timing or venue of this scheduled event.

VI. Reports

A. Directors

■ Lower School Director (C. Beierschmitt)

The school playground planning effort continues. Official rental of this space has begun, and fencing is scheduled to be placed around the playground as soon as weather permits. Following the fencing, planning and review of several aspects of the playground will begin.

With school approval, a student has initiated a compost project as part of a girl scout project. This student has also communicated with the folks that keep up the SaxPatch Garden, and the school will deliver its compost to them following completion of the project. A participant in the SaxPatch Garden will also visit some classrooms later in the year to talk about the composting process. This is a great way for students to get some real outdoor experience while learning about the composting process, how it works, and what it does.

We are working to create mentorship and relationship opportunities across grades. For example, Ms. Robertson (Lower School Counselor) has a small group of 5th and 6th graders that will occasionally share activity check-ins with kindergarteners and 1st graders. A number of 6th grade students will visit a 3rd grade classroom each Monday of this quarter, with the 2nd grade to come later. Ms. Robertson is also creating a "shadowing" opportunity for 4th graders to follow 5th graders later this semester. The intention is to allow 4th graders to see the classrooms they will occupy next year and meet next year's teachers.

Similarly, Ms. Robertson and Ms. Nahatis (Upper School Counselor) are

creating an opportunity for 6th graders to shadow Upper School students. These opportunities will begin in the next couple of months, with the goal of helping students familiarize with the Upper School across the road.

Some recent classroom highlights include Ms. Morris' kindergarten class, which learned a special song for another member of the community that has been out for ongoing medical needs. Also, the parent of a 6th grade student recently visited Ms. Lohr's science classes to share his interest on the topic of entomology. The parent later commented that he was "happy to see so much participation" and interest from the students. C. Beierschmitt expressed appreciation to the students for representing themselves and the school well during this learning experience.

- Upper School Director (J. Shelton)

The Upper School gymnasium is very popular right now; there are lots of requests to reserve it. The Winter Semi-Formal dance is scheduled for Friday, January 27th for 9th-12th grades. C. Ratliff has secured the rental of a baby grand piano. A theater production of William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is coming soon and will be the first full production in the gym. Volunteers are working to get the lighting and sound to a point where they can be considered "theater quality". J. Shelton is receiving input on what these efforts are estimated to cost.

Lynne Pierce (Assistant Director of Operations and Athletics) organized a safety training event after school recently that involved teachers and the Alamance County Sheriff's Office, with the goal of ensuring that school staff are prepared in the event of extreme emergencies.

The Hawbridge Open House will take place on February 7th (5:30PM to 7:30PM) at both the Upper School and Lower School. The annual school lottery will take place on March 1st. This year, the school is advertising on local radio station 102JAMZ. Similar to last year, in-person and virtual attendance for the lottery will be offered. A member from the Hawbridge Board of Directors will need to be present onsite to witness the lottery. The Hawbridge School Calendar for 2023-2024 will soon be presented to the Board for approval, hopefully in February. This would allow the calendar to be handed out as part of the lottery process to next year's school attendees. As of January 25th, the school has received 374 applications for approximately 120 slots.

J. Shelton also described a future goal for the 2025-2026 school year: Hawbridge seeks to have two sections of kindergarten through 8th grade, and for grades 9-12, three sections each. Working toward this goal

responsibly will take time.

Renee Lynch asked if there are grade levels in the lottery that receive more applicants than others. J. Shelton responded that the typical grades to receive the most applicants are kindergarten and transition years like 9th grade. Another section of third grade may be added next year. There are no concerns on the amount of physical space available at this time.

Megan Glancy asked if there were ways to determine if any current students might not return in the coming year. If that could be projected, it might be helpful for planning purposes around the lottery. J. Shelton said that this number is typically difficult to determine ahead of time and past efforts to estimate have proven unreliable.

B. Faculty Representatives

■ Lower School Representative (L. Wilder)

The Hawbridge theater classes put on a play for the 5th and 6th graders, which the students enjoyed. Report cards went home on Friday, January 20th. The Alamance County Mobile Library visited the school, which allowed classes to view available books. Teachers checked out the books on behalf of the students; books typically stay at the school.

The Instructional Council is planning an event for Black History Month on February 22nd for both the Lower and Upper Schools, where local actor and activist James Shields will visit to talk about the history of the mill, Saxapahaw history, and the Quakers and Underground Railroad. J. Shields has performed as Frederick Douglas in the Snow Camp area before, and he is currently the manager of the African-American Cultural Arts and History Center in Burlington, NC. He will teach some songs and talk to classes.

The Instructional Council is also beginning to plan Earth Day activities and end-of-year events. The council is looking for teachers to coordinate these events with the hopes of creating a feeling of community between the Lower and Upper Schools.

■ Upper School Representative (K. Kimbel)

The Upper School has multiple upcoming events. As mentioned by the Lower School representative, Mr. Shields is coming later in February. The 6th grader shadow day is also approaching, along with a Career Day as well. More teachers are planning field trips for the spring, including a trip to the capital and a ski trip. The Hawbridge basketball season is

underway, and the middle school team is currently undefeated. Volleyball is also taking place. The teachers went through an ALICE training session recently for school emergency preparedness, and that was found to be very helpful. The training helped put participants' minds at ease, as the trainers answered all questions, took their time with the training, and were very thorough. Overall it was a great experience.

C. Board

- Committee Updates
 - a) Fundraising (R. Lynch)

The Fundraising Committee met on January 19th to discuss its main goals. These include 1) the Capital Campaign; 2) looking into an overall organizational method to support the school through grants; and 3) the creation of a living document to help create future fundraising opportunities. The focus of the committee now will be shifting from the Capital Campaign to identifying specific needs that remain to support the school playground, beautification, and its learning environment. The committee discussed reaching out to local businesses to find sourcing for materials like sand, gravel, mulch, and more in the playground planning process. The goal right now is to gather that information, with C. Ratliff also assisting in the creation of this list.

The committee has created a "beginner document" to record grant opportunities, along with the purpose, amount of money provided, and other relevant details. In this document, we hope to create something that can be viewed by school administration, PASTA, and be used year after year. Each committee member hopes to find at least one grant opportunity with small dollar amounts this year. Many applications are due in the spring, so the work will take place soon.

Recently, a member of the PASTA Facebook group asked for help in writing a grant to obtain an automated external defibrillator (AED) for the school. It was initially unclear if the school had purchased a similar device previously. Upon review, it was determined that there was an AED located in the Saxapahaw village between the bike shop and the General Store. However, there is some distance between this device and the school premises, so it makes a lot of sense to seek purchase of another device. The committee plans to reach out to that member of the PASTA Facebook group to try and coordinate the grant pursuit efforts, with the goal of obtaining additional AED devices for closer

placement around the school.

A. Williams asked if the committee had considered asking parent volunteers to assist with the grant research effort. R. Lynch commented that this was a good idea overall, but attention will have to be paid to the degree of experience that any volunteer might already possess. Different grants require different levels of effort, with the larger amounts of financial support typically requiring significant effort. C. Ratliff expressed gratitude to R. Lynch for the ongoing efforts for fundraising and offered to be available for any coordination or collaboration that might be helpful to identify spending priorities for the school. For example, Mr. Mayer's class is pursuing a Whole Foods grant to fund garden and fruit tree installation.

M. Glancy observed that many grants ask what the school administration and students are seeking for the school, which reflect a focus to serve the needs of those with "boots on the ground". As a result, input from the school for potential ideas or uses of grant money is welcome.

b) Board Selection Committee (R. Lynch)

R. Lynch reported that next year's Board Selection Committee has been formed. Board members include Nick Harrison, Josh Horton, Renee Lynch, and Amanda Rose. The PASTA representative on the committee is Anthony Pergolotti. Kierca Kimbel and Lora Wilder are the faculty representatives. In the coming weeks, the committee will examine which skills and areas of focus will need to be filled by three exiting Board members at the end of this term. The application for Board membership should be posted to the website by late February. The anticipated deadline to apply will be April 14th, which will give interested candidates two months to submit applications. The committee will meet in the month of May to review the applications and make the selections.

A. Williams asked for clarification on the process for updating the board application. R. Lynch explained that the board member representatives on the Selection Committee provide input regarding the board's evolving needs in order to inform the development of the new board application. The Selection Committee will share its work and findings with the full Board in future meetings.

In terms of procedure, the Board Selection Committee selects a

slate of three applicants from the pool. The Hawbridge Board of Directors reviews the slate and approves it as a whole or rejects it as a whole. If rejected, the Board Selection Committee will create a new slate of candidates. It is not necessary to select three entirely new candidates in the new slate to be presented to the Board.

Board members whose terms are expiring this year are: Christina Fisher, Renee Lynch, and April Williams.

c) Strategic Planning (C. Fisher)

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee met on January 19th at the Upper School for its first in-person meeting. The planning effort is examining the strategic plan and direction of the school for 2023 through 2028. The Steering Committee has nine members in all, with four Board members, two school administrators, two parent representatives, and a faculty representative.

The timeline has shifted from the original plan, with the strategic planning effort now anticipated to conclude in December 2023. An email update will be sent to parents who expressed an interest to participate in the sub-teams by early February with news of the new projected end date to confirm continued interest. Input from the sub-teams will be aggregated and synthesized, which will create a final portion of the strategic plan.

R. Lynch asked if it was apparent to the Steering Committee whether parent input in this effort was coming from both the Upper School and the Lower School. It is important to have input from both schools. C. Beierschmitt commented that in the original survey, a question asked the participant to identify their affiliated school. When C. Ratliff was also forming the original sub-teams, attention was paid to the school affiliation in their formation. However, it is acknowledged that with the new prolonged timeline, some original volunteers may no longer wish to participate.

The parent representatives on the Steering Committee - Emma Jones and Matt Buckmaster - are preparing a survey for an evaluation of the current school plan. Ultimately, parents, faculty and school administrators will have an opportunity to offer input on the historic strategic plan. The Steering Committee will also collect input from the full Hawbridge Board of Directors.

C. Fisher concluded with an expression of gratitude to C. Ratliff for the notes taken during the January 19th meeting.

D. Treasurer (A. Rose)

Hawbridge is 50% of the way through its school year. Through December 2022, 46% of projected revenue was recognized and 46% of expenses were realized. A. Rose called attention to legal expenses in the budget. An original projection of these expenses amounted to \$10,000, but in the month of December, the school jumped to 88% of expected legal costs. This number will be monitored and if necessary, costs may need to be reallocated to that line item.

Two surplus expense items were recorded in December 2022 that were non-recurring and were not originally budgeted for. The first was the mold remediation at the Lower School, which cost approximately \$103,000. COVID Relief funds were used for \$19,000; the operating budget recorded an expense of approximately \$84,000. The second item was related to a security deposit on the books since 2021. The security deposit was paid for mobile classrooms, and the asset was recorded at \$63,625. When the mobile classrooms were removed from the premises in 2022, Hawbridge had expected to receive the full value of that back but only received \$11,467. As a result, about \$52,000 had to be expensed this school year. Even with those significant costs in December, Hawbridge is still expecting a surplus of \$127,000 for the remainder of the year.

VII. Unfinished Business

A. Board Vacancy (A. Williams)

The Hawbridge Board of Directors seeks to fill a vacant seat. To this end, A. Williams reported that that school bylaws necessitate an active search to take place in the current term to fill the vacant seat. Earlier, there had been questions whether a search was required, given the relatively short amount of time remaining in the current term. A review of the bylaws - Section 16, in particular - provides guidance that a search must be pursued regardless of time remaining in the term. In short, if the term begins with nine Board members, nine Board members should be present at the end of the term.

Section 16 - entitled "Vacancies" - reads as follows as of January 2023:

"(a) Voting Members: When a vacancy occurs, either by death, resignation, removal from office, or for any reason other than the completion of a term in office (the "Vacant Term"), the remaining Board members shall give appropriate notice to the school community of such vacancy, shall allow appropriate time for persons to respond to such notice, shall accept application or expressions of interest from persons regarding such vacancy, shall allow interested persons to

make reasonable presentation to, and/or be interviewed by, the remaining Board members. Thereafter, the remaining Board members shall elect an eligible person to fill the vacancy. Any person elected to fill a Vacant Term shall serve until May 30th the current fiscal year or the end of the Vacant Term, whichever is shorter. If there are remaining years in the Vacant Term, the balance of the Vacant Term shall be filled by a candidate elected at the next regularly scheduled Board election to serve out the remainder of that term. (b) Faculty Representatives: When a vacancy occurs in the position occupied by a faculty representative to the Board of Directors, either by death, resignation, removal from office, or for any reason other than the completion of a term in office, the Hawbridge full-time faculty shall vote to elect another representative. The teacher elected to fill any such vacancy shall be eligible to serve to the completion of the term of the teacher replaced and shall be eligible for reelection by the Hawbridge full-time faculty."

A. Williams stated that the first step is to fill the vacant term. Actions that the Board must now begin are 1) announcing the vacancy to the school community; 2) allowing an appropriate amount of time for potential applicants to respond; 3) reviewing the applications; and 4) convening a meeting of the full board to elect the new Board member to fill the vacant seat. The elected replacement will serve until May 30th. The remaining eight members of the Hawbridge Board of Directors will elect the replacement in the February session to finish out the 2022-2023 term.

Beyond May 30th, 2023, the vacant term has one year remaining in its three-year term. To fill the vacant term for the 2023-2024 Board term, the bylaws state that the vacancy will be filled at the next regularly scheduled Board election to serve out the remainder of the term. In other words, the Board Selection Committee (chaired by R. Lynch), will fill the vacant seat for the third and final remaining year of the recently vacated Board seat.

The Board discussed various methods and approaches to communicate the vacancy to the school community. The regular "Friday Update" emails that go out to parents and students each week is one communication channel that will be used. A special announcement email, dedicated to a call for applicants, will be sent to the school community in the coming weeks. The applications that were submitted to the 2022-2023 Board Selection Committee in Winter 2022 will also be reviewed for potential candidates that may still be interested in serving until May 30th of this year. A. Williams recommended that the Board also use last year's applicant pool to help identify potential candidates to fill the vacant term through May 30th.

To summarize, on January 27th, the Board will send out an initial announcement to the Hawbridge community that there is a vacancy and encourage those

interested in serving to apply. The deadline to submit applications will be Friday, February 17th. This will allow the Board to review the submitted applications and vote on the replacement in closed session during the Board meeting scheduled for February 22nd. If the selected applicant accepts the invitation to serve out the vacant term, that applicant will join the Board on February 27th.

VIII. New Business

A. Budgeting for Lower School Mold Remediation (C. Beierschmitt)

The mold remediation effort at the Lower School is now complete. A report of the cleaning presented to the Board mentioned that some affected areas are now fifty times cleaner than before. The remediation effort was handled by a vendor named Sasser; the air quality testing was conducted by a separate external group. The original estimate of the work was \$97,352.96. Additional to that was the rental of the large air filters that were placed through affected areas and the Huth Commons. During the second phase of the cleaning - which included the ductwork - additional air filters were deployed.

Hawbridge has remitted payment for the work. As A. Rose mentioned earlier, the school was able to use approximately \$19,000 of COVID Relief money to this effort, but that left the school with \$84,000 remaining. As a result, the school administration is requesting that the Board approves a move of this amount to the Lower School building maintenance line item from the Upper School mortgage line item. Because the start date of the mortgage was later than anticipated, there was additional money there. C. Beierschmitt then invited questions from the Board.

M. Glancy asked if insurance might cover any of these expenses. C. Beierschmitt responded that upon investigation, insurance tends to cover "sudden" occurrences. Because there was no evidence at the time that this happened suddenly - akin to an emergency situation like major flooding - insurance would not cover the damages. The vendor estimated that the event took place over a four- to six-month period.

R. Lynch asked if the company mentioned ongoing maintenance. L. Pierce reported that several HVAC companies were contacted on this topic, and details around ongoing maintenance ultimately depend on which component or piece of equipment is being discussed. Quarterly and annual maintenance has taken place in the past, but talks are scheduled in the coming weeks with the vendor to confirm quality and details of these scheduled maintenance events. Considering the age of the building, some components involved are old and need to be handled carefully. The mold remediation effort has been useful in making this information much better understood.

After the Sasser contract, ultraviolet (UV) lights were installed in areas of the Lower School ductwork, with the aim of preventing future incidents. Temperature levels within the school have been reviewed, and recommended levels are being followed.

A. Williams commented that it may be worthwhile to file a claim with the school's insurance provider and use that process to see if any mold damage expenses might be defrayed. Josh Horton agreed to draft the initial letter to the insurance. Along with the documentation the school maintained throughout the event, the Board's letter to the insurance company requesting reimbursement will further demonstrate due diligence and due care is exercised on behalf of Hawbridge.

Following questions, a motion to move funds to the Lower School building maintenance line item from the Upper School mortgage line item was passed unanimously by the Board.

IX. Closed Session

Motion to move into closed session at 7:53PM. Motion passed unanimously.

A. To Consider Confidential Matters Pursuant to NC G.S. §143-318.11(a)(7)

The board returned to open session at 8:50PM.

X. Adjourn:

The board unanimously approved a motion to adjourn at 8:50PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nick Harrison (Secretary)