

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, December 8, 2020

Present: Chair Patti Oldmixon, Vice Chair Christian Sparling, Treasurer Peter Montano, Secretary Nik Charov, Thorn Dickinson

Guests: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, Head of School Cicy Po, School Physician Charles DeSieves, Attorney Daniel Stockford, Attorney Daniel Amory

Agenda item

I. Opening Items

Chair Patti Oldmixon called the meeting to order at 5:32pm on Zoom.

A. Approval of previous meetings' minutes

Secretary Nik Charov motioned to approve the minutes from the special and regular board meetings on May 19, June 2, and October 13, 2020. *Seconded by Patti Oldmixon. Motion passed unanimously.* Approved minutes will be posted to the BA website.

II. Finances

A. Financial statements

Treasurer Peter Montano presented the budgeted to actual financials for the current fiscal year through October 31, 2020. BA is currently running a \$500K positive variance to budget, but our assets to expenses ratio will even out to normal by the end of the fiscal year. To date, BA has not received any additional information on state budget cuts for 2021 and beyond. More details are expected in February 2021.

B. Coronavirus Relief Funds

Federal Covid Relief Funds, administered by the State of Maine, are distributed on a reimbursement basis, so BA has to spend its own cash first, on only eligible items, and then apply for the relief funds. The process for CRF, put together so quickly, is not ideal and reimbursement can be slow. In addition, it is a full-time job for 1-2 people at BA to track expenses, eligibility, and reimbursement of these funds. Purchases have included new laptops for all students, 3D printer hubs, and upgrades for fabrications lab equipment to have digital remote capacity. Staff costs were not eligible for CRF. BA has participated in two rounds of this funding so far, totalling more than \$300K. A surprise third round was announced for pandemic-related materials and supplies, but those purchases must be in hand by December 31, making it quite difficult to turn around so quickly. Thorn Dickinson commended Peter, Kelli, Kerry, Tyler, Amos, et al on their hard work on the CRF process.

III. Board

A. Emergency Operations Plan revision

Executive Director Kelli Pryor presented the revised Emergency Operations Plan for board approval. The plan was developed with emergency management agencies, other tenants on the block, and state guidance. Staff have received federal emergency response trainings. Specific procedures are internal documents kept by the school administration. The emergency management team will continue to develop “functional annexes” that will train and prepare for the types of situations discussed in the plan. *Patti Oldmixon motioned to adopt the plan as presented, Thorn Dickinson seconded. Motion passed unanimously.*

IV. School program

A. Enrollment report

Kelli Pryor presented the new online virtual tour of the school and the enhanced FAQs about enrollment. In addition, students and faculty are creating recruitment videos. Enrollment opened on December 1, with a current lottery drawing date of February 3, though BA is exploring extending that date with the state. Applications will be accepted and tracked with the new PowerSchool platform.

B. Interim Head of School report

Interim Head of School Cicy Po presented on the ongoing transition from Slate+IC to PowerSchool. “It’s not merging two cells; it’s more like transplanting two brains into one.” Academic reporting will mostly remain the same; however, student grade point averages will now be determined by course. Progress report and report cards dates have been set, to help keep the system transition on track. Benefits so far have been increased efficiency, more communication among the Student Care team and with students, better alignment of grades and standards, higher level of detail available to parents, and increased student effort. BA continues to develop the processes for standardizing data entry into PowerSchool and evaluating courses, teachers, and students.

C. Head of School hiring process

Kelli Pryor returned to explain the hiring process for finding a long-term Head of School. The hiring committee will meet by December 31, if possible, to review the community survey. Kelli will take feedback, consult with the board, and make a recommendation to either offer the position to current interim HoS Cicy Po or convene a search committee to find other candidates.

D. COVID-19 response

BA Physician Dr. Charles DeSieves continued to update the BA community on the coronavirus pandemic. With 2,000+ deaths per day across the nation, the pandemic is not under control; Covid-19 is now the #1 cause of death in America. There has been an eight-fold increase in test positivity rate in Maine since September, with a tripling of disease incidence in the under-30-year-old population. Another area school has staff and students in

quarantine; still another has closed schools due to lack of bus drivers. “Baxter is in a great place, given its early adoption of fully remote learning.” Maine CDC says PCR tests are recommended for anyone feeling symptoms; the less reliable antigen tests are also available in our area. A 5-minute at-home test should be available over-the-counter within six months. Exposure guidance has been updated by Maine CDC to define “close contact” as being within six feet of an infected person for 15 minutes total over 24 hours, which puts most maskless indoor work off limits. Mobile apps are in development by Apple and Google to aid contact tracing.

V. Public Comment

There were no questions submitted via chat or the online spreadsheet.

VI. Executive Session*

The board voted to go into executive session at 6:43pm *for the purpose of consulting with legal counsel pursuant to Section 405(6)(E) of Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes.*

Next regular meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, January 12, 2021