

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at Baxter Academy

Present: Patti Oldmixon (chair), Peter Montano (treasurer), Nik Charov (secretary), Ruth Dean, Thorn Dickinson, Simon McGurk, Jana Lapoint (arrived at 6:15pm)

Staff: Executive Director Kelli Pryor, Head of School Cicy Po, Vice Principal Mary King, Director of Special Education Laura Parks, CFO Kerry Bush, IT Director Amos Cooper, Compliance Coordinator Tyler Beaulieu

Agenda item

I. General items

Chair Patti Oldmixon called the meeting to order at 5:36pm.

- A. Approval of minutes

Secretary Nik Charov motioned that the draft minutes from the February 8, 2022, meeting be approved as presented. Patti seconded, all in favor.

II. Finance updates

- A. Q2 Financial statements

Treasurer Peter Montano presented the profit & loss report through February 28, 2022. "Nothing out of the ordinary over the first nine months of FY22," said Peter. The assets to liabilities ratio decreased to 2.4, though cash on hand increased to 64 days (it is expected to decrease to 45 days by the end of the school year). Most variances are still expected to equalize by the end of the fiscal year. BA currently has \$639k in unrestricted net assets, along with \$600k in the debt service fund that will be applied to the May 2024 balloon payment. Peter recaps that the \$4.184 million borrowed will be paid down by \$700k by May 2024, and an additional \$700k will be forgiven through the New Market Tax Credit program. Ultimately, the school will have to refinance \$1.3 to \$1.5 million..

- B. Executive Director report

BA Executive Director Kelli Pryor gave an update on enrollment and budget progress. Unexpected pressures this winter have included: an insurance snafu with the landlord's policy and format that has resulted in the school having to buy coverage at \$7500 per year on leasehold improvements; safety and security measures falling more on BA's responsibility due to staffing shortages at the Portland Police Department; and inflation driving up fuel and utility costs. Some highlights of the winter include: Wendy Betts helping with grant writing to secure ~\$120k for wifi coverage enhancements, PPE and cleaning supplies, and additional computer purchases. Enrollment is also

back up to near pre-pandemic levels, with 392 students committed for SY23. The enrollment in SY22, counted on October 1, was 370, which equated to a \$60k decrease in funding, so returning to >390 will have a positive effect on the SY24 budget. There will be a full ninth grade (103 students), and backfilling is possible to bring up the sizes of grades 10 (95), grade 11 (103), and grade 12 (91). The school is still seeing an average of 6 prospective students per week, and a waitlist is building. Kelli credits the social media and website marketing pushes and thanks Tyler Beaulieu and Jon DeLorme for their extraordinary efforts.

The March 4 meeting with Patti, Thorn, Kelli, and Cicy and the Maine Charter School Commission went well. Work continues on the draft monitoring report..

III. School updates

A. Safety and Security

Director of Operations Mike Thorp gave a presentation on his work to advance safety and security at the school. He noted that social service providers in the neighborhood are challenged coming out of the pandemic, and the Portland PD is overstretched. Mike has worked with business neighbors to share costs in contracting with First Protection Services to augment Portland PD patrols in the Bayside neighborhood. There will be three daily site inspections around the school's parking lot and perimeter, including on weekends. First Protection Services will also keep an eye on known facility issues, such as ice buildups. In addition, security infrastructure has been addressed: Staff have new encrypted digital radios. Hallway cameras, doors, and the intercom system have all been upgraded.

B. Head of School report

BA Head of School Cicy Po gave an update on school progress. Abigail Gardner won 2nd place at the Maine State Science Fair with her work on horse genetics (a Flex Friday project). Scholastic Art award winners were also named. In student wellness, mental health and stress counseling have continued. Student-led conferences are under way. Faculty will have a staff retreat at the Wells Reserve on May 9 to discuss the curriculum. For end of year events, senior awards will be handed out on June 2 at Hannaford Hall. Graduation will be held in Merrill Auditorium on Saturday, June 4. The class of 2026's step-up day will be June 15.

C. Policy updates

BA Executive Director Kelli Pryor sought the Board's approval on additional policies recently updated through work that includes consultant Wendy Betts, BA counsel Dan Stockford, and compliance coordinator Tyler Beaulieu. Seven policies were presented for approval.

Patti motioned to accept the EEAEAA "Drug and Alcohol Testing in Transportation" policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the EEAEAA-R “Drug and Alcohol Testing in Transportation Procedures” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the DN “Disposition of School Properties” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the IKF “Graduation Requirements” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the JL “Wellness” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the EFC “Eligibility for Free and Reduced Lunch” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

Patti motioned to accept the EFE “Food Sales within School” policy. Seconded by Thorn Dickinson, all in favor.

E. Executive Director search

Patti gave an update on the Executive Director search. Twelve applicants to date will be discussed in the Executive Session. Teams of three board members will interview candidates selected for advancement. Subject matter experts (finance, compliance, legal, etc.) will then help interview finalists.

IV. Public Comment

Jana Lapoint shared an update from the Maine Charter School Commission in Augusta earlier in the day. Harpswell Coastal Academy’s charter is at risk of not being renewed, despite hours of testimony. Chronic absenteeism was seen as an issue, along with a shrinking pipeline of students. HCA has a board meeting on 4/13 to try to salvage the situation, but the school needs \$100k to stay open.

There were no other public comments.

V. Executive Session

Chair Patti Oldmixon motioned to enter Executive Session at 6:47pm for the purpose of discussing personnel pursuant to Section 405(6)(A) of Title 1 of the Maine Revised Statutes. Thorn seconded, all in favor.

The board came out of Executive Session and Patti motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:37pm. Thorn seconded, all in favor.

Next regular meeting moved to: [May 17, 2022](#)