

Baxter Academy for Technology and Science

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

5:30 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, January 13, 2015

54 York Street, Portland, Maine

Directors Present: Kelli Pryor, Peter Montano, Allison Crean-Davis, Kim Gustafson (left at 6:43pm), Christian Sparling, Ruth Dean

Guests Present: Carl Stasio (Executive Director), Michele LaForge (Head of School), Shanna Guevin (Business and Operations Manager), Lizzie K (Student), Len Cole

Agenda Item & Accompanying Minutes

I. Opening items

Kelli Pryor, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm.

A. Minutes

Peter Montano, Board Treasurer, made a motion to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors meeting on November 3, 2014.

Kelli seconded. All unanimously approved the board minutes from November 3, 2014.

II. Academic affairs

A. Tiny Mural project

A current sophomore at Baxter Academy, Lizzie K, presented to the Board her group's Flex Friday project -- Tiny Mural Project. This project group, which includes two additional Baxter students, would like to create a small mural on a wall in the basement. The mural depicts an owl, which was used to express wisdom. The students' plan was for the mural to be painted directly on the wall with the use of a projector. This project has already been approved by Head of School Michele LaForge.

The Board suggested the use of panel to increase work and display flexibility. Michele will look into funding for the additional cost of the panel.

III. Executive session

To accommodate the anticipated early departure of a Board member that evening, the original agenda schedule was rearranged. Kelli moved that the board conclude the public portion of its meeting and proceed to an executive session to discuss a confidential student matter and the possible lease and use of real property for classroom space during the 2015-16 school year, as permitted by the Freedom of Access Act, section 405, paragraphs (6)© and (F)¹ and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Board member Ruth Dean seconded the motion. All board members unanimously approved that the board move into Executive Session at 5:57 pm.

At 6:36 pm, Ruth proposed the board proceed out of executive session. Vice Chair Allison Crean-Davis seconded the motion, and all board members approved.

IV. Board business

A. Adopt new policies

Executive Director Carl Stasio, has updated Baxter Academy's policies and sent the Board a copy of the updated policies to review. Allison moved to replace all existing policies (with exception of FOAA, which was approved on September 9, 2014) with the new policies presented by Carl during the meeting. Kelli seconded the motion. All board members unanimously approved the revised school policies.

V. Finances

A. Tax return

Board Treasurer Peter Montano presented to the Board the tax return copies for their review. There is one amendment on this draft (a title correction for Carl and Michele). Peter will file the tax return on Monday, January 18, 2015.

B. Financial statement

Peter presented a financial statement for Baxter Academy through December 31, 2014. Baxter's budget is in good shape, but additional fundraising is needed to increase the financial health of the School. The financial statement is due to the Charter Commission on January 15, 2015. Carl will send this financial statement to the Maine Charter School Commission.

C. Development

Kelli presented information on the fundraising efforts of the school thus far. Baxter has had incredible support from Baxter families and community members in response to the Annual Appeal. Thus far, \$82,093 has been raised towards the goal of \$100,000 for contributions. With grants included, \$106,693 has been raised toward the total fundraising goal of \$205,000. Several grants have been submitted to various organizations, and many more are in process. Developmentally, Baxter is in on path to reach its fundraising goals for this current fiscal year.

VI. Enrollment

A. Enrollment/ Lottery 2015-16

Michele LaForge, Head of School, spoke about the enrollment and lottery process for this upcoming school year (2015-16). There are currently just over 135 applicants for next year's anticipated 80-85 freshman spots. The opening of online enrollment for next year began on December 11, 2014, and it will continue until February 6, 2015. As there are more applicants than available spots, a lottery will be Wednesday, February 11th, 2015, at the Irish Heritage Center (34 Gray Street, Portland). There have been over one hundred requests from interested applicants for student shadowing, so Baxter will hold a Shadow Day on January 28, 2015 to accommodate all of those who are interested. While prospective students are attending mock classes at Baxter, the current enrolled Baxter students will be job shadowing at sites and locations of their choosing.

VII. Outreach

A. Charter School coalition

Carl spoke about recent combined efforts among all seven Maine Charter Schools. School leaders from each Maine Charter School met at Baxter to build relationships and propose solutions for current issues facing all charter schools. The school leaders will meet again with representatives from the Department of Education in two weeks (January 27, 2015) at the Maine Academy of Natural Science. At this meeting, compliance questions will be addressed. In addition, the group will explore whether there is an opportunity to share costs for common responsibilities, such as payroll support, compliance officers and transportation, to name a few.

VIII. Facilities

Additional space will be needed next year to accommodate the increased number of students at Baxter Academy. Baxter is considering a satellite space on Free Street. Peter Montano moved that the Board authorize Kelli and himself, in consultation with Michele and Carl, to negotiate in the best interest of the school and enter into a three-year lease for this Free Street property, which would include approximately 5400 ft². Board member Christian Sparling seconded the motion. All present board members unanimously approved the motion.

IX. Public Discussion

There was no public discussion.

Kelli moved that the board conclude the meeting. Allison seconded the motion. All board members present unanimously approved. The board meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Next meeting: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, February 10; 54 York Street, Portland, ME 04101

¹ MRSA § 405(6) provides as follows:

Deliberations on only the following matters may be conducted during an executive session: * * *

C. Discussion or consideration of the condition, acquisition or the use of real or personal property permanently attached to real property or interests therein or disposition of publicly held property or economic development only if premature disclosures of the information would prejudice the competitive or bargaining position of the body or agency; * * *

F. Discussions of information contained in records made, maintained or received by a body or agency when access by the general public to those records is prohibited by statute