

Thomas Academy
Board Meeting
January 12, 2021

Thomas Academy

CALL TO ORDER – Larry Hewett, Chairperson

The Thomas Academy Board of Education met January 12, 2021 by way of "Zoom" at 3 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Hewett.

Roll Call Mr. George Ward, Director of Thomas Academy

Board members present by "Zoom" video conference: Dr. Zelphia Grissett, Larry Hewett, Owen Robinson, and Dave Wyatt. Sheila Boles was not in attendance. **Staff members attending:** Mr. George Ward, Director of Education for Thomas Academy and Ricky Creech, President/CEO Boys and Girls Homes of NC.

Approval of Agenda Larry Hewett, Board Chair

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the January 12, 2021 meeting. Dr. Zelphia Grissett made a motion to approve the agenda. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Dec. 8, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes Larry Hewett, Board Chair

The Chair asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the Dec. 8, 2020 meeting. Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the minutes of the Dec 8, 2020 meeting. Dr. Grissett seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

School Report (events/activities)

Chairman Hewett turned the meeting over to Mr. Ward for his report on school activities. Mr. Ward began with an enrollment update. Currently there are 88 students in membership. Of those, 18 are BGH students. Mr. Ward then turned to the schedule and Covid response. Last semester it went well until the last week. Then, there were a number of staff and students that were in quarantine or recovering due to Covid and that really impacted reopening. The start of school was delayed until Jan. 13. We are starting off in and will be remote for awhile. We have to remain vigilant and make sure no sick students are in school. During the break, the building was sanitized by a professional team and there will be new masks and water bottles. Under staff updates, Mr. Ward noted that he would be seeking board approval for two staff members. Mr. Ward said that the requirements for history have changed and he has been able to locate a candidate a master's in business administration and experience in working with youth named Sharon Jones. Travis Green will be working in vocational education in a shared capacity with BGH. He will be teaching vocational course with topics in carpentry, welding, and automotive groups. Mr. Ward then shared the results of the End of Course testing that recently took place. Tests were administered in Biology, Math 1, and Math 3. In Biology no students were proficient. The average converted score was 75 but an 80 was needed. In Math 1, 3 students were proficient. The average was 66. In Math 3 no students were proficient, and the average score was 65. We are disappointed in the results and we will have to address those results and look at how we can provide support and what we need to realign. One idea with math is a course that occurs over the entire school year. Success story. A student and BGH resident graduated this fall after being in the school for a year and a half. She enrolled with 4 credits, needing 22 to graduate. She graduated with 23 credits! In order for this to happen a lot of things have to line up. She was very motivated – a smaller school where she wasn't lost. Credit recovery opportunity where students can go back and make up failed courses. She also enrolled in a cosmetology program at Southeastern Community College – she had a plan not just to graduate but to have future ambitions. Handbook update. Mr. Ward noted that his understanding was that the handbook was being looked at by an attorney. Dave Wyatt reported that he had asked Jim Hill (BGH legal counsel) to look at the handbook. Mr. Hill didn't have any updates. He was going to ask the attorney for the Columbus County Schools to review it for us. There was nothing further to report. Financial update. Our total budgeted revenue is [REDACTED] based on 118 students. Our expected budget is [REDACTED] based on an ADM of 94 students. Expenses were budgeted at [REDACTED] a difference in what the board approved. Mr. Ward says he is working with Julie Ward & Nolan to make sense of the budget (due to expenses from Acadia). Our projected budgeted expense has changed

so we are looking at a small surplus. Salaries and benefits are the biggest expense. Those items run about \$70,000 a month. We were fortunate to get some Covid funds of about \$30-40 thousand dollars to help with some of the gaps in the budget because we didn't have as many students as projected. We are trying to be fiscally responsible!

PersonnelMr. Ward
Mr. Ward indicated there were two positions to consider. Sharon Jones will be teaching our Business Education and Personal Finance program that students are required to take due to the changes in History. Travis Green will work in Vocational Education and is in a shared position.

Membership DiscussionBoard
(Adding additional members to the Thomas Academy Board of Education) The Chair asked if there were any updates from the board on this topic. Dave Wyatt reported that he and Owen Robinson had been working together. He noted they didn't have a name to bring but would get together soon to discuss some ideas. Mr. Creech reported that there was a Lake Waccamaw resident, a retired educator that is interested. He believes this person will be willing to serve on the board. Dr. Grissett reported that she and Shelia Boles were relying on Mr. Ward for information related to a parent candidate. The Chair thanked everyone for their efforts in securing additional members of the Thomas Academy School Board.

Board Action.....Board

Personnel. Mr. Ward indicated there were two positions to consider. Sharon Jones will be teaching our Business Education and Personal Finance program that students are required to take due to the changes in History. Travis Green will work in Vocational Education and is in a shared position. The Chair asked for a motion to approve these candidates. Owen Robinson made the motion to approve Sharon Jones and Travis Green. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved.

The Chair brought before the board an item related to the meetings of the board as stated in the bylaws. The question of the meaning of "Bi-Monthly" for the frequency of board meetings was discussed. After considerable discussion it was consensus to continue looking into the meaning of bi-monthly with the understanding that the board would do whatever was needed to support the children and the school.

Board Comments The Chair asked if there were any comments from the Board. There were none.

Adjournment
The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Dave Wyatt made a motion to adjourn. Owen Robinson seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The next meeting of the Thomas Academy Board of Education is scheduled for Feb. 9, 2021 at three o'clock p.m.



Larry Hewett, Chairperson, Thomas Academy Board

Approved June-8-21

Thomas Academy
Board Meeting
April 13, 2021

Thomas Academy

CALL TO ORDER – Larry Hewett, Chairperson

The Thomas Academy Board of Education met April 13, 2021 by way of "Zoom" at 3 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Hewett.

Roll Call.....Mr. George Ward, Director of
Thomas Academy

Board members present by "Zoom" video conference: Sheila Boles, Dr. Zephia Grissett, Larry Hewett, Owen Robinson, Julie Wolfe, and Dave Wyatt. **Staff members attending:** Mr. George Ward, Director of Education for Thomas Academy. Thomas Academy teacher Mr. Harper was also in attendance to report to the board on some of his responsibilities at the school. The Chair thanked board members for their attendance and support of the staff and students of Thomas Academy.

Approval of Agenda.....Larry Hewett,
Board Chair

The Chair asked if there were any corrections/additions to the agenda. There were none and the Chair asked for a motion to approve the agenda for the April 13, 2021 meeting. Dr. Grissett made the motion to adopt the agenda for the April 13, 2021 meeting. Julie Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of March 9, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes Larry Hewett,
Board Chair

The Chair noted that there were a few little corrections to the minutes that were submitted for approval and thanked Dave Wyatt for his finding those and noted that he had sent an "adjusted" copy of the minutes to everyone. The Chair asked for a motion to approve the revised minutes of the March 9, 2021 minutes as submitted. Sheila Boles made a motion to approve the minutes. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the minutes were approved unanimously.

School Report (events/activities)

Chairman Hewett turned the meeting over to Mr. Ward for his report on school activities.

Mr. Ward said it had been a real exciting time with a lot happening these last several weeks. Mr. Creech joined the meeting at that point and the Chair welcomed him to the meeting and asked if he could attempt to reach Mr. Tatum (new TA board member) and see if he could join the meeting.

Mr. Ward continued his report and noted that this semester the school had attempted to incorporate a number of new electives. He and Mr. Harper, in their conversations, found that Mr. Harper was a farm dweller. They talked about the horses (at BGH) and how could that be captured for the benefit of students. He asked Mr. Harper to report on how that program was developing. Mr. Harper reported that he grew up on a farm and had a passion for horses and livestock. He and Mr. Ward came up with the idea of offering an equine

class of basic horse management. The course involves understanding the different types of horses and how that might be helpful to the students in the long run. Not all of their students will attend a four-year university. Having an interest in horses might provide students with a career they can pursue. He noted the upcoming Kentucky Derby and that students might aspire to become a horse trainer at the derby or other worker in the field of horses. He also noted the benefit of horses as therapy animals and a real good opportunity for students to get hands on experience with something outside the classroom. He and Mr. Ward also looked at other things involving agriculture and horticulture. As the year progresses they plan to look at things such as poultry management. He shared that they had received a grant from Tractor Supply to get a start on the chicken management program. Later they will provide support for chicken coops, waterers, feeders, and feed. Horticulture is another area they are looking at providing. All that to provide one on one hands on experiences for the students. Aquaponics and hydroponics are areas of horticulture that might be a part of the experience. All this can be used to teach life skills, take ownership, and have pride. Several board members expressed their approval and excitement for this program. The Chair offered that this is a great opportunity for the children and thanked Mr. Harper for his efforts. Mr. Ward shared that Mr. Harper teaches art at the school and they were looking at things they could offer students to provide them with different options. He said between the school and Boys and Girls Homes there were a lot of different options they could offer students.

Mr. Ward then shared information about TA with board members. There are 88 students at TA, 18 are BGH residents. During the past weeks they have gotten in four new students from a couple of local high schools. During Covid and remote instruction, kids have not done well, and parents are looking for other options for their children. Being open and offering face-to-face instruction has been a draw for TA. Restrictions are getting better. Daily health screenings are not required anymore. A lot of the teachers have gotten the vaccine. We still must wear masks, but social distancing requirements have lessened. Next year I have an idea there will still be a remote option for some families. He said he might bring some ideas to the board on how some policies might be strengthened, example, in some school districts and you are an "in-person" student and you want to sleep in but choose to attend virtually, you are still counted absent, but to continue to be able to assist students with genuine health concerns.

Mr. Ward then gave updates on grants pending. Grants are a great source for achieving things you want to do.

1. The summer mini grant. \$130,000 that deals with learning loss and to provide summer assistance. This is a summer program. Doesn't look like a traditional school day. It enhances student desire to be in school. Six weeks approximately 9 to 1 day. I Excel will help students improve. Students will receive lunch and have enrichment activities in the afternoon. It is a voluntary program that can include incoming students as well. We get bonus points because our county and school are "low wealth" which can work in our benefit.
2. United Way. \$75,000 over three years. Provides students with realistic options. Visiting colleges. Developing career options. Can support the audio video program by providing equipment for that program. It offers students opportunities to learn behind the scenes skills of the audio/video industry. It can also be used to support some of the aspects of the horticultural program such as a drone to look at crops.
3. Innovative Partnership Grant. Approximately \$950,000 over three years. Designed to improve your school. External partners are selected to focus on improving your school. RTI will partner with TA and is a great opportunity for growth. RTI is a great partner and has experience in working with "winners." It has an alternative licensure program and can work with teachers that want to become licensed in another area and at much lower costs. We're trying to make our school one that can help children dealing with trauma, that have needs beyond normal school counseling. It can provide the school with a clinician that can be school based and meet the needs of all students. Social-emotional training is provided as a staff development piece. Trauma informed care on the campus side - related to "The Waccamaw Way" provides customized training for the school in some of the principles of The Waccamaw Way. There is a big emphasis on the need for mental health care. It will also provide an IPT Coach that works with the school to help with the school improvement planning process to improve instruction.
4. The Community Learning Centers. Up to 1.4 million over three years. It addresses learning loss from Covid and helps students feel

better about school. It bolsters an after-school program. It looks at what happens on campus after school that can benefit all students. It helps students understand more about their emotions and helps capture all the stuff that happens on campus and benefits all students. It works with academics but deals with the whole child and works through the things occurring on campus already.

Mr. Ward reported on the 2021-22 school calendar. First day of school is August 4 and last day is May 25. (Mr. Creech had an emergency and had to leave the meeting) Typically when the school year is over you try to have summer school to help the students that didn't do well. By revising the calendar there will be two weeks between each quarter and students that have gotten behind can receive assistance to deal with their learning gaps and other enhancement activities normally requiring students to miss school. June and July can be available to do summer programs. This will also provide opportunities for potential graduation at the end of each semester and potentially at the end of July for students that might not make it at the end of the semester.

Mr. Ward reported on an issue with the admission policy. If students don't submit a letter of intent to return they would be unenrolled or not have their seat the next year. Soon we will have a waiting list. A lot of people will want to come to our school, but we won't be able to help everyone. The school is intentionally designed to be smaller with good offerings. Priority for BGH students has been a priority but may require board action. Dr. Grissett asked if there were statistics on the percentage of students that are siblings. Mr. Ward stated probably 5%. Julie Wolfe asked about the two-week intercession sessions. Mr. Ward stated that teachers will be working - just not regular day-to-day offerings. Students needing help can receive it during this period. Field trips, remediation, or enrichment for families desiring that can get that. It can also accommodate family trips. Ms. Wolfe asked if the family dynamic were such that it would be better for the child to attend school during that time, would there be things for the child to do. Mr. Ward stated that there would be and listed some of the ideas. Ms. Wolfe commented on the positivity that surround these programs and how these things can enrich kids' lives! Dave Wyatt thanked Mr. Ward for his work on these grants. He noted that Mr. Creech and his wife worked with the BGH kids on dyeing Easter Eggs - saying that many of the children had never done that. It opens his eyes to the number of things kids have never done and may now have the opportunity to do some of them. He asked if Mike Garrell assisted with the grants and Mr. Ward affirmed that he does and is a great asset, along with Pastor Joe. Dr. Grissett said she was very impressed with Mr. Harper's presentation on the chickens, but it didn't bring back pleasant memories because she remembers childhood memories of getting chased by roosters and stepping in chicken "stuff!!!" Mr. Ward responded on some of his childhood experiences as well! That's what I like about Mr. Harper - he knows it! The Chair responded that this has been great and all of us can see that Mr. Ward has been working diligently to come up with resources and new thinking to make TA a great place for kids and to hear staff members give their reports of what they are doing and their interest in helping the kids is very special. He shared a story that former employee and resident Tom Simmons talked about an experience he and other residents had with chickens! Mr. Ward noted that none of these grants provide funding for BB guns.

The Chair asked Mr. Ward if there was anything that he needed to share about the school financial report. Mr. Ward said there wasn't anything further to share at this time but that there would be some other aspects that he would bring later such as the budget. We've been fiscally responsible and staying healthy.

PersonnelMr. Ward
There were no personnel actions.

Board ActionBoard
The first item for action was the school calendar for 2021-22. The Chair noted that they had received a copy of the proposed calendar and had heard Mr. Ward's remarks about it. The Chair asked for a motion to adopt the 2021-22 TA school calendar. Owen Robinson made a motion to adopt the proposed 2021-22

calendar. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The second item was action on the updated admissions policy. The Chair asked for a motion to adopt the updated admissions policy. Julie Wolfe made a motion to adopt the updated policy. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Board Comments The Chair asked if there were any comments from the Board. Dave Wyatt noted that he hadn't had an opportunity to contact Mr. Hill on whether he had an update on reviewing the TA Parent Handbook. He stated that he would contact him before our next meeting to see if there is an update on that matter. Newly selected member Julie Wolfe reported that she had been able to scan the document but couldn't really get into it at this point.

Adjournment

The Chair asked for a motion to adjourn. Owen Robinson made a motion to adjourn. Sheila Boles seconded the motion. Prior to the vote, the Chair stated that this had been exciting today to hear all this good stuff that's going on at TA and to be a part of that. It's a little school, but what opportunities are there for children who need opportunities, and Mr. Ward we are very appreciative of you and all the efforts that your staff are making to make those good opportunities for the children! There was no other discussion, and the motion was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the Thomas Academy Board of Education is scheduled for May 11, 2021, at three o'clock p.m.



Larry Hewett, Chairperson, Thomas Academy Board

Approved June 8, 2021

**Thomas Academy
Board Meeting
May 13, 2021**

By Way of Zoom

CALL TO ORDER – Larry Hewett, Chairperson

The Thomas Academy Board of Education met May 13, 2021, at 7 p.m. by way of Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Hewett.

Roll Call.....Larry Hewett, Chairman

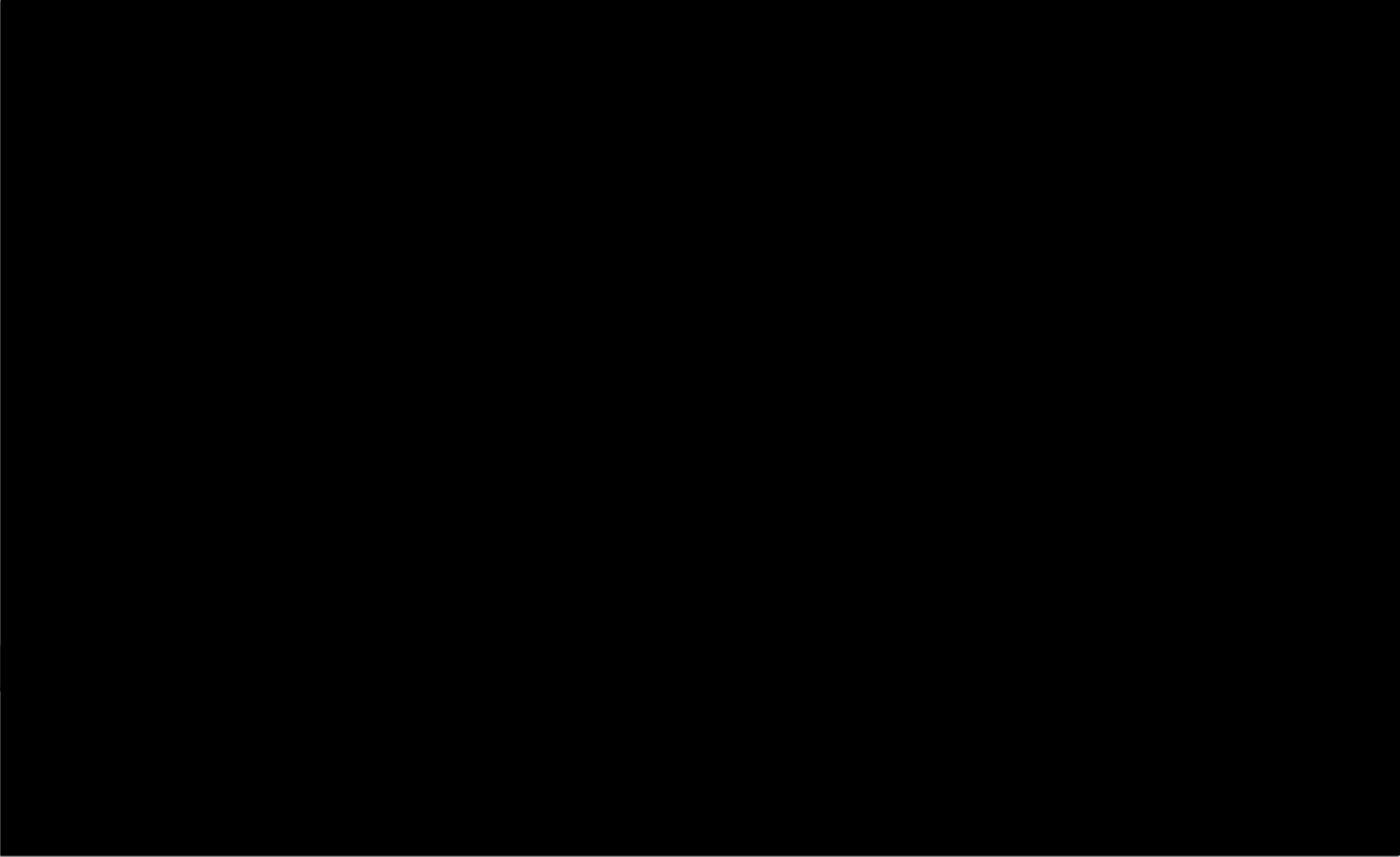
Larry Hewett, Thomas Academy Board Chairman called the roll. After introducing recently selected board member Rupert (Rudy) Tatum, board members were asked to introduce themselves and share information about themselves to Mr. Tatum and he to them.

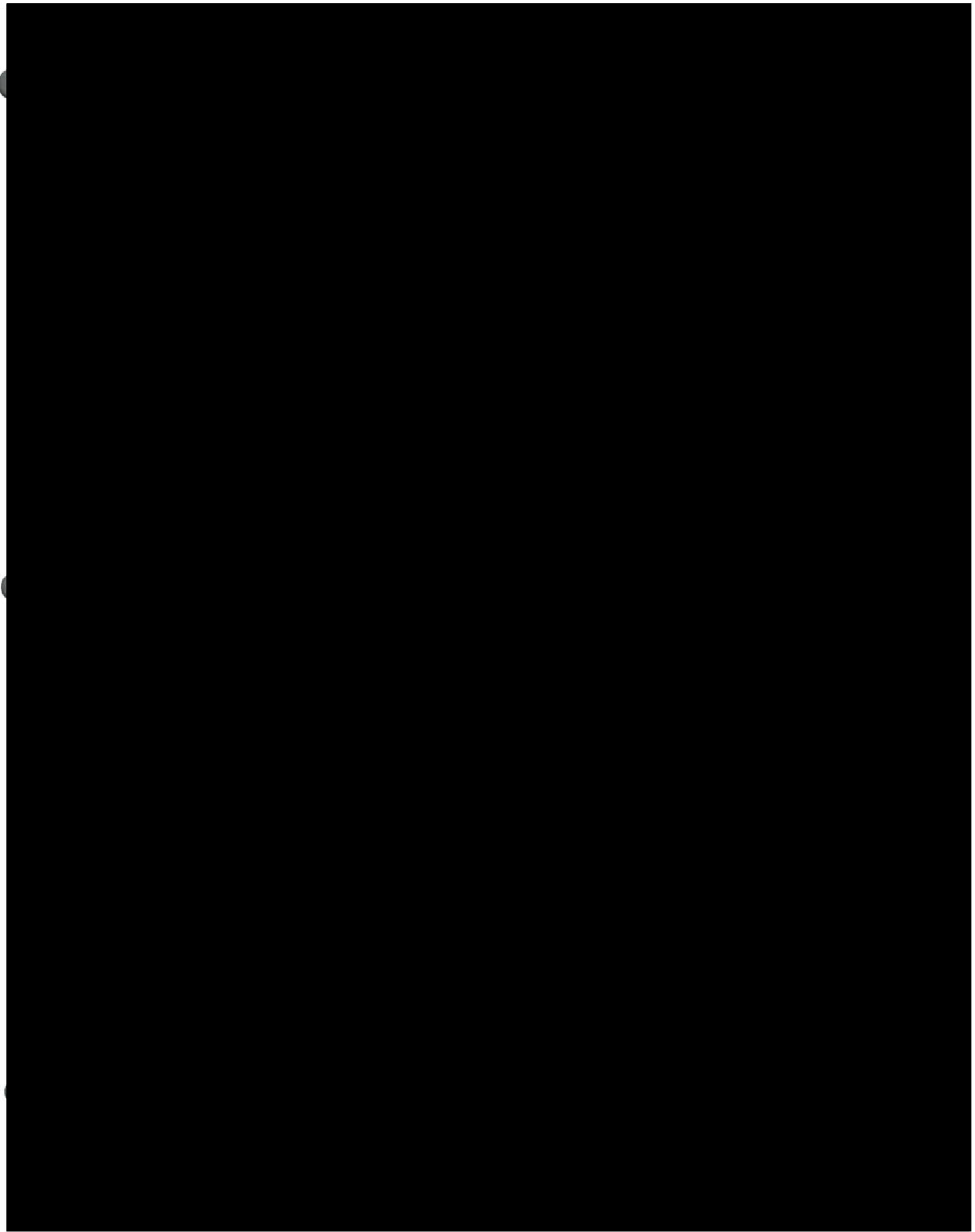
Board members present by Zoom conference were: Shelia Boles, Dr. Zephia Grissett, Larry Hewett, Owen Robinson, Rudy Tatum, and Dave Wyatt. Julie Wolfe was not in attendance due to traveling.

Staff members attending were: No staff were present.

Approval of Agenda.....Larry Hewett, Board Chair

The Chair reviewed the meeting agenda and asked if there were any changes. There were none. The Chair called for a motion to go into closed session to discuss grievances, complaints, student, and personnel matters. Dave Wyatt offered a motion that the Thomas Academy Board enter closed session pursuant to Article 33 of the general statutes of North Carolina, G.S. 143-318.11, (a), (6) to ...hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance... The motion was seconded by Sheila Boles and was passed unanimously.





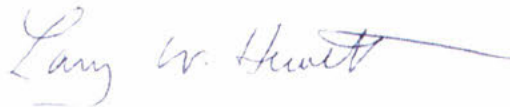
passed unanimously.

The Chair noted that he would talk with Mr. Ward the following day to summarize the board meeting and the key points including:

1. Security and safety procedures at the school.
2. The designation of the person in charge of the school when Mr. Ward is absent.
3. Communication between Mr. Ward and Mr. Creech.
4. Mr. Crawley's report on the incidents of April 30 and May 3.
5. A weekly meeting between Chairman Hewett and Mr. Ward to discuss school happenings.

The Chair thanked board members for the time devoted to addressing the issues of concern at Thomas Academy. He called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was made by Sheila Boles. Owen Robinson seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 p.m.



Larry Hewett, *Chairperson Thomas Academy Board*

Approved July 13, 2021

**Thomas Academy
Board Meeting
By Zoom
June 8, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER – Larry Hewett, Chairperson

The Thomas Academy Board of Education met June 8, 2021 by way of “Zoom” at 3 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Larry Hewett.

Roll Call.....Mr. George Ward, Director of Thomas Academy
Board members present by “Zoom” video conference: Sheila Boles, Dr. Zelphia Grissett, Larry Hewett, Owen Robinson, Rudy Tatum, Julie Wolfe, and Dave Wyatt. **Staff members attending:** Mr. George Ward, Director of Education for Thomas Academy. Boys and Girls Homes President/CEO Ricky Creech and Daniel Nolan, BGHNC CFO.

Approval of Agenda.....Larry Hewett, Board Chair
The Chair asked if there were any corrections/additions to the June 8, 2021 meeting agenda. Mr. Ward stated that he wanted to add the selection of our Modified Accountability Systems Participation to the agenda. After adding that topic to the agenda, the chair asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as modified. Dave Wyatt made the motion to adopt the agenda for the June 8, 2021 meeting. Sheila Boles seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of April 13, 2021 and the May 13, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes Larry Hewett, Board Chair
The Chair stated that he would accept a motion to adopt the minutes of the April 13 and May 18 meeting minutes separately or together. Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the April 13 and May 13 meeting minutes together. Dr. Grissett seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

School Report (events/activities)

The chair stated that he had put the Thomas Academy Audit Report under the School Reports and that he had sent a copy of the report to each member. The chair thanked Mr. Nolan for attending the meeting and asked that he and Mr. Ward provide information about the fiscal year 2020 audit report. Mr. Nolan noted that the audit report was an “unmodified opinion” report which means it is a good clean report. There are no findings or misrepresentations. Page 3 - basically Thomas Academy is like every other charter school, they're completely funded by DPI so there is a strong correlation with census numbers. Page 5 - there are numbers in the negative there but... the children are getting their lunch. There's nothing of concern there. Page 6 - that's a breakdown of county allocations. The numbers fluctuate a little and that's due to the census in the school and these are NCDPI revenue streams. The bottom pie chart is an indication of how the revenue is spent. Page 7 - is another account of fund allocations. The bottom chart shows federal allocations. You can see that George (Mr. Ward) and the grant team are capitalizing on federal grants. To keep this short, it is an unmodified opinion report, it's a clean report, there were no findings, no material misrepresentations. That would conclude my audit report. Mr. Ward added that it is nice to know things are clean - and will remain clean. The chair asked Mr. Robinson and Mr. Wyatt - as business people - what does this report say to you? Mr. Wyatt responded that a no comment report was the best

you could get and we could consider this a no comment report. It's as good as it gets. Mr. Robinson agreed, saying I know how stressful an audit can be. To come back with something this clean is remarkable. Mr. Creech responded that he was very pleased with it.

Mr. Nolan stated that the audit contract has come up for BGH and we've been working with Thompson, Price, Scott, and Adams on the contract. Last year the cost was \$7500 and Allen has agreed to extend the contract for two years and reduce his cost to \$5950 per year, a reduction of \$1500. In order for the firm to begin the 2021 audit he would need the audit engagement letter to be signed and returned. The chair wondered if the audit report was formally accepted in the past, and asked Mr. Wyatt and Mr. Robinson their recollections. Mr. Wyatt said he believed we should formally accept the audit report and approve the upcoming two year contract.

2020 Audit Report Acceptance. The chair asked if each item be considered separately and stated that he would accept a motion to approve the 2020 year audit report. Owen Robinson made a motion to accept the 2020 audit report. Sheila Boles seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Letter of Engagement. The chair stated that he would accept a motion to approve the letter of engagement from Thompson, Price, Scott, and Adams for the two year contract to audit the Thomas Academy financials. Julie Wolfe made a motion to approve the proposed contract for the upcoming two fiscal years with Thompson, Price, Scott, and Adams proposed by our CFO. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

FY2021-22 Budget. The chair noted that the next item was the Thomas Academy Budget Report for FY 2021-22 and noted that Mr. Creech, Mr. Nolan, and Mr. Ward worked on the upcoming budget following graduation on Saturday. He asked for a report on the proposed budget for FY 2021-22. Mr. Nolan said he would give the report. The chair noted that the proposed budget had been provided for each member. Mr. Nolan gave highlights of the proposed budget. Page 2 - this is a breakdown of the proposed budget. This is a zero dollar budget - revenues and expenditures must match - as per NCDPI. The proposed budget will be compared to last years budget so the differences can be seen. On page 4, an income statement comparison, the percentages of each category as it relates to income and expenses. Of note is the federal ADM money, this shows how this money is helping. This is roughly 38% of the budget. As to expenses, the greatest expenditure goes for personnel. Page 5 - an income comparison report so we can see income compared to last year. Pages 6&7 compares individual line items budget to budget. Page 6 shows where the budget is being increased and why. There is a 317% increase in the federal income. Much of this is grant money and the grant team is doing a great job getting these monies. There is an asterisk on the revenues for the BGH "in kind" to Thomas Academy. There is a 100% decrease which means that BGH is not putting in any money for Thomas Academy to keep it afloat. Federal grants and state population has made them self-sustaining for this upcoming year. With the expense section - the FICA line - a 37% increase compared to last year. These are increases in people and summer programs. LP gas prices have increased. Internet expenses have increased due to new virtual learning styles. Food purchases and costs have gone up along with updated meal policies. Academic education costs have gone up - the Century 21 summer grant resulting in almost a 900% increase in costs and is very exciting for TA. A recreational line item with almost a 100% increase providing recreational funding. Computer supplies have gone up quite a bit. Office supplies have gone up in part due to virtual learning. Safety supplies due to Covid are up. Classroom supplies are up. The Century 21 summer grant is helping with some of these expenses. Software maintenance has increased as a result of virtual learning. Remembrances and recognitions - Christmas bonuses are budgeted for this year. Equipment costs have increased. The auditing and accountability cost is actually less than listed as previously reported on. Licenses and other taxes - the actual costs were used in this. Professional fees and services - there is an increase here and this is through joint ventures of TA and BGH - a clinician will be in the school - a great

resource for the students. There is also an all call nurse and then there are the Acadia fees in there. This is the revenue and expenses. Things are a little different this year, we are taking the approach of the zero based budget this year. That means the budget is what it is. This way we can see true and real growth from budget to budget. Mr. Nolan spoke to Acadia Northstar, it is the mandated liaison to NCDPI. They provide services due to the computer system NCDPI requires. Once this budget gets approved, Mr. Nolan has to get the budget to Acadia in the format Acadia uses and they send it to DPI. They basically provide accounting services. Mr. Ward added that they manage Power School data for the school. Mr. Wyatt asked how many staff are being added. Mr. Ward noted that he would address that further in his school report. Mr. Wyatt asked about the increase in revenue and expense in July and August in the monthly breakdown, presuming that it is the grants coming in. Mr. Nolan responded that it is, its the Century 21 mini grant for the summer program - \$300,000 - for those two months. Page 7 is a summary page and is the place for signed approval of the budget. The Chair thanked Mr. Nolan, Mr. Creech, and Mr. Ward for their assistance with getting the budget together. Mr. Ward added that this is a great budget. We've brought in the most revenue ever and we project bringing in even more. We've just started tapping in to a lot of resources that provide services to support our students, the thing that the school was created for. We're in a great spot and we're well-positioned to provide great offerings and programs for our students. Mr. Wyatt said this is the first year that BGH hasn't to make any contribution to this budget. The Chair thanked Mr. Nolan for his contributions.

School Activities - Mr. Ward. The end of the year has come really quick! We ended the year at 89 students - 13 BGH students were enrolled. As to Covid, we ended the year on a 5 day week with minimal social distancing and masks required indoors. On staff additions, we are very happy to have a school-based clinician. The needs of many of our students go beyond the traditional school counselor and we are happy to have those services, especially in the implementation of the "Waccamaw Way" in our classes and with our teachers becoming mental health certified.

The Chair asked Mr. Ward to take a moment to talk about the "Waccamaw Way" and what it means for students. Mr. Ward stated that's what we're doing, and he would ask Mr. Creech to jump in (with his expertise), the WW is being implemented on campus with residential students and we're bringing it to TA because we believe those practices work for all students and the language will be consistent whether you're residential or community. Mr. Creech added that the WW is a therapeutic model of care that we have developed with a consultant I've worked with for many years, Joy Kelleher (sp?) from Gainesville, Ga. She is an international consultant in child welfare and that modality of treatment. She recently worked with the government of Ireland who hired her to work with them on reforming the country's foster care system. He has worked with her over the years because of the needs child welfare is going through in residential and community based services in having a model of treatment that is trauma informed, governance based, and outcomes driven. Traditionally clinicians are trained in one or two modalities - cognitive behavior treatment or dialectical behavior treatment or some other model. With the diversity of our kids, a general knowledge of all of those modalities is necessary. I ended up working and developing our own that was a broad spectrum that allowed us to diversify our resident population and to be able to use various modalities of treatment throughout the course of their stay. The WW meets all the state and federal requirements and the Family First as it is the only therapeutic model of its kind in the state of NC. We're excited about that because it's been contextualized for the type of profile kids that Boys and Girls Homes admits, both in community-based and residential services. The WW drives the entire organizational culture, meaning from residential to academic to our spirituality to our activities to our child advocacy center to our community-based services because what it does is create not only a culture but an environment that is therapeutically driven, meaning there is a reason for everything that we're doing. There is a meaningful moment in doing laundry. There is a meaningful moment in leaving one's cottage and walking to the academy. There is a meaningful moment in why I'm having to learn this theorem of geometry. It's getting kids to understand that in this therapeutic environment, everything we do, say, or act upon, there is a reason behind it. When they know that, they excel, they understand and

they don't resist. Mr. Ward has been so open to implementing this in the school because the majority of our day students are at risk. They haven't and hopefully won't get connected with DSS, and one of our passions as well as one of the things we should be doing in our community-based services is showing that we're adhering to Families First, is working with these day students so that they do not become one of the statistics of DSS. That is our preventative work. The school-based therapist will be there and trained in the WW, every classroom will have sensory stations, when kids get anxious they have these sensory stations, for up-regulation, for down-regulation. Residential kids have their own therapist. We've never been able to offer group or individual therapy sessions for the day students. The school-based therapist focus is not on the residential but on the families and kids who are day students because they have many needs. Every Friday, we have "backpack buddies" that is, we have to fill them a bag full of food so they will be able to eat over the weekend. That's great - but what else can we do? With this school-based therapist we'll be able to do that. So basically, what we have on campus is a bubble where everything is driven therapeutically. There's a reason - it's a healthy environment, we're looking for all those things happening on campus with kids that can turn sideways that we can intervene in and keep them from making a poor choice or doing something that would get DSS involved, but also being that place of safety, where kids know, there is some junk going on at home and I know I can come to a school that is a safe place and I can go talk confidentially with a patient therapist about the junk I'm having to deal with from mom and dad at home. Mr. Creech concluded with I may have given you more than you wanted! Dave Wyatt responded that was an outstanding answer to that question. I learned some stuff in the last few minutes that I'd never heard before, especially about the backpack buddies, well done! Mr. Ward responded that's something I'm happy about. Mr. Creech added, I have to tell you this one story because it became an issue on campus. We had one guy on a Friday that came back and filed a grievance, this was before we had a Human Rights Advocate, so the grievance came to my desk. So I said I don't know what you're talking about you've been denied food at school. He responded that other students were taking bags of food home and that he wanted his bag of food to take back to the cottage! So that became a meaningful moment and we talked about why they took food home and that he had his meals in the cottage and he understood that. Mr. Ward responded that it's something families have come to depend on. We get calls from families looking for resources for food. That's a good thing about summer school. We're taking care of that.

Mr. Ward then gave a report on S.O.A.R. - Strategic Optimization of Academics and Recreation. That is looking at the things we do across this huge 150 acre campus and look at the academic resources and make that program. That's what we're calling our summer program and our after school program to go along with the EAGLE. We have a program coordinator to work out all the logistics and collect a lot of the data and reporting from that 21st Century Grant I'll talk more about later.

School Nurse. Mr. Ward stated that we're also happy about our school nurse. Nursing has become a big component for schools, especially with Covid, not necessarily to have someone there 24/7, to help if you need someone to review a medical history or if you need someone with that expertise. Fortunately we are able to have that.

Mr. Ward then spoke on New Courses. JROTC has been very popular. One parent reported to Mr. Ward that her son was very detailed in making sure his uniform was ironed at night and neat. She was very surprised because for a teenage boy to iron his clothes almost never happens! She really appreciates the program. Students are enjoying the broadcasting skills they are learning and being able to create practical stuff. We have really expanded the number of collective offerings to provide students. We have some great personal finance things, some great supplements to the standard curriculum.

We also have some great new positions. With our new Chromebooks, the level of upkeep would increase and created a new position to service this equipment, to insure our testing program worked smoothly. We have an exceptional children/ESL assistant. Our Career and Technical Education department is enhanced

by having a business education teacher. JROTC, College & Career readiness and a vocational instructor are areas we can provide instruction. We are sending some students to Southeastern Community College so they can get experience in and pay in the job field.

Grant Update - 21st Century Schools - we requested \$130,000 and received \$300,000! A Homeless Grant of \$4000 to help displaced and poor living conditions students. \$75,000 over three years. The Innovative Partnership grant would provide almost \$1,000,000 over three years. Then there is the other 21st Century Grant which would provide 1.4 million dollars over three years that we should hear about in August. We have a real opportunity to provide great things for students through these.

Awards and Special Recognitions - We were a Beta Club School of Distinctions. We had four stories of a positive nature published in the newspaper.

Mr. Ward asked if there were questions. Dr. Grissett asked about the Waccamaw Way. What would one observe in a sensory station in a classroom? And as to the "mindfulness room," is that a separate room and are there standards that would be applied as to how long a child might be in a sensory station versus in the mindfulness room? Mr. Creech responded that a sensory station is a basket filled with sensory objects for kids when they feel fidgety and need to re-direct themselves, that's one of the coping mechanisms that we teach. They don't need permission, they just get up and go and get an object from the basket that appeals to them, take it back to their desk, hold it, squeeze it, whatever. The "mindfulness room" is a separate room that is utilized when a child is being escalated and the sensory object is not working, so rather than have a blowup in the classroom, the behavioral specialist comes in and asks the kid to let's go to the MR. It is a peaceful environment, where they be by themselves, de-stress, gain a sense of peace, calm, and safety. They are not isolated. They are allowed to get to a state where they can return to the classroom. All this is being designed by our consultant.

The Chair - having had a power and internet issue at home - rejoined the meeting at this point after driving to McDonald's in Whiteville to reconnect.

Mr. Ward asked if there were further questions regarding his report. Mr. Wyatt noted that it was an exciting report, well done and thank you! Ms. Boles added that it was a lot of work getting those grants.

Board Action.....Board

The first item for action was The Internet Safety Act. Mr. Ward reported that they were going through a process of E-rate that would fund a lot of their internet capability and increase bandwidth. One of the requirements is to make sure there is an internet policy in line with The Child Internet Protection Act. Mr. Ward shared the policy on his screen and explained its major points. All internet traffic is filtered through NC Dept. of Public Instruction and users must log on through them. The use is monitored and the school gets reports and notified if there is inappropriate use detected. Mr. Wyatt asked if this was an updated policy or a brand new policy. Mr. Ward responded that there was a smaller policy in the Handbook but this one expands the policy to include E-rate requirements and is compliant with The Children's Internet Protection Act. Mr. Creech asked if at the end of the document there should be section about violating the policy. Mr. Ward responded that this will be on the school website to show that we are compliant. In our Handbook we can have actions due to violations of the policy but for this piece we just have to have public notice. Ms. Wolfe said her understanding was that what Mr. Ward is saying is that isn't required by this and he would be able to institute violation consequences under his ability to implement regulations needed to implement the policy. One way we could handle this is to approve this as written with the understanding we will at least be informed of the regulations that get adopted. Mr Creech agreed that this would be placed on the website and would be addressed further in the Handbook. The Chair asked if this would be the appropriate time for a motion to approve this policy. Ms. Wolfe

made a motion to approve the Internet policy as presented. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. There was no further discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

2021-22 School Budget. The Chair thanked Mr. Nolan, Mr. Ward, and Mr. Creech for their work on the proposed 2021-22 budget for Thomas Academy and asked for a motion to approve the proposed budget. Dr. Grissett made a motion to approve the proposed budget. Owen Robinson seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Nominating Committee. The Chair reviewed the provisions for the Thomas Academy fiscal year and the election of officers as included in the bylaws. The fiscal year begins in August and an Annual Meeting, including the election of officers, takes place at the August meeting. The Chair stated that he would like to appoint Sheila Boles and Owen Robinson to serve as a Nominating Committee and bring to the board by the August meeting a list of nominees for the offices of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Alternative Schools' Modified Accountability System Options - Mr. Ward stated that each year we have to formally select how our school Accountability Scores are calculated. There are three options - Mr. Ward shared these on his screen and noted that we've been using option B. B is a modified system that gives more weight to student growth, 60%, and looks at scores on EOG and EOC data, have students been taking the right math courses, using 3 years of that data, the student persistence piece to make sure students stay enrolled. You can be rated as progressing, maintaining, or declining. Option B gives more weight to student growth and not so much if they make 4 or 5 on the EOG, but at this level if they make more than a year's progress, which really helps us. Mr. Ward stated that he recommends we continue using Option B which gives more weight to growth and recognizing progress students make while with us. Mr. Wyatt stated that his recollection was that we really need to use Option B. Dr. Grissett stated that B appears to be the best choice for the student population we have. Ms. Boles asked Mr. Ward if that is how he sees it? Mr. Ward affirmed that was correct because we want to show regardless of how students come in, we want to show that we can get them from here and keep moving them forward, and that counts more than just the proficiency score and experiences they encountered before they got to us and wasn't an accurate indication of our performance as opposed to other schools that don't go after the most vulnerable students. He recommended the use of Option B. The Chair asked for a motion on the model to adopt as proposed by Mr. Ward. Dave Wyatt made the motion. Shelia Boles seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion to approve option B was approved unanimously.

Board Comments The Chair asked Dave Wyatt if he would comment on the Board's request that he and Mr. Hewett meet with Mr. Ward and Mr. Creech to improve communication between the school and the campus and the meeting that was held with Tom Simmons regarding the relationship between BGH and TA. Mr. Wyatt responded that we did have a Zoom meeting that included Larry Hewett, himself, George Ward, Ricky Creech, and Tom Simmons who was one of the organizers and principal/director of Thomas Academy along the way. We met for about an hour. We used the Risk Assessment Report produced by John Cobb and the points in that report. Some of the items had been accomplished. Clearly Mr. Creech and Mr. Ward had been meeting and working on some of the items. One of the major TA board's concerns was that for security measures students were not being required to go through metal detectors or have bags searched. All those were addressed. We had a very positive meeting. Tom Simmons covered the history of what was originally Flemington Academy and now Thomas Academy. Tom explained to us the way the school was set up and that there is no question, Thomas Academy has no employees, every staff member is an employee of Boys and Girls Homes. In the initial application documents that you were sent, it talks about wrap-around services between the school and the Homes. It talks about TA being steeped in the history of BGH. It becomes very clear, that even though they are clearly two separate legal institutions, Thomas Academy is a mutual benefit corporation. It technically is not a subsidiary but very clearly these two organizations are intertwined with each other. Our educational

director was directed in those application documents to meet weekly with the President/CEO of BGH. There is also on the organizational chart a line to the VP of Programming, and the Educational Director, they were to meet weekly, and they were to cooperate on services, so BGH very clearly was to provide behavioral and therapy services to the students of TA. Mr. Simmons also commented about his relationship and Mr. Faircloth's relationship as the prior President/CEO of BGH, and now of course George Ward, Tom Simmons and Gary Faircloth had a very special relationship. They both were residents of BGH and went to the county schools while there. Mr. Simmons also commented that he and Gary Faircloth had a standing meeting, I believe it was once a month that they met, the two of them, to talk about whatever they needed to discuss, to be sure that the school and BGH, that everything was functioning properly. All in all it was a very positive meeting (the meeting with Hewett, Wyatt, Ward, Creech, and Simmons). Tom clarified who the employees were employed by. The organizers decided, BGH is the sponsoring organization, to make the employees of TA employees of BGH. That way they were included in the BGH defined benefit/retirement plan (medical, dental, life insurance, etc.), they received all the benefits as other BGH employees. That's my best recollection. It turned out to be a very positive, very good partnership type of meeting. The Chair thanked Dave for his summary and noted that we have worked very well together, the four and five of us, to look at some issues and come to some understanding and resolution. My feelings are that we have better clarity about the relationship between the school and the campus. We believe that Ricky, as the overseer of programs for BGH, has oversight of Thomas Academy, and that can put to bed some of these issues we're dealing with and as Dave has suggested in some of our discussions, we might need some sort of letter of understanding to give some legal closure to that and we'll continue to look at what that will look like. It appears to be a definite understanding that TA was formed (chartered) by BGH to serve the children of BGH and has authority over that. We wanted to share that with you because I know we were off on one tangent but I believe our understanding is the two organizations are very closely intertwined and under the auspices of BGH and Mr. Creech. We'll continue to work on the letter so that Mr. Creech is protected in his works and his control and watch care over the program. Mr. Creech added, I think Tom nailed it that Gary and I had this understanding but we should have written it down. We'll get it down now. The Chair added that Mr. Creech has the wherewithal and experience and expertise to make things happen. There are still some issues that need to be resolved and we'll try to work through those things and let you know where we've been and where we're going. Dave Wyatt responded that in thinking of the letter, he would like to ask Ricky and George to be working on what they would like to see in the agreement. There is a lot of minutiae that only they know and some of the stuff could come out of that MSA we were studying. There will be detail that only Ricky and George can know because they live it! Mr. Creech agreed that we need something in writing because if ever DPI comes for a review it needs to look like BGH is not running the academy. George and I will be looking at that. The status of TA employee employment is something to look at. Shelia Boles noted that was a matter of confusion for her, asking if tax dollars were used to employ TA staff. The chair noted that yes, they are. The budget approved this meeting has monies that come from tax dollars. Ms. Boles asked about being part of the state retirement plan and insurance plans and Mr. Ward and Mr. Creech gave some explanation on that. Dr. Grissett asked if the charter would have to be amended if there were a management agreement and there were discussions on that. Ms. Boles asked if we had ever been in a state audit. There were no recollections of that kind of audit. The Chair noted that schools work with firms such as Thompson, Price, Adams to have their own independent audit to assure that funds are expended appropriately. Dr. Grissett noted that there are program audits for EC, vocational, and other areas. The Chair agreed, noting that those programs can have their own audits. Mr. Ward noted that we have had these kinds of program audits. Dr. Grissett suggested that we give Mr. Ward and Mr. Creech time to work through the nuts and bolts and have them come back to us with something in hand. Mr. Wyatt suggested we (Hewett, Wyatt, Ward, and Creech) have a meeting with Linda Oldham on this. Mr. Wyatt talked about the TA employee benefits contributions that Mr. Simmons stated originally existed. This will need to be worked on going forward. Ms. Wolfe asked about the employee benefits but in the current adopted budget those benefits are part of the budget. Ms. Wolfe noted that when talking

about the relationship document the financial report is very clear with the intertwined relationship between the two entities that the auditors have an opportunity to weigh in on.

Mr. Wyatt noted that so far as the Parent Handbook, he had spoken with Jim Hill and asked if there was any progress on a review of the handbook. He said there had not been. Mr. Ward asked Mr. Wyatt to share with Mr. Hill to please pause because there would be stuff to add and update, get the new stuff in, make sure the Families First stuff gets in and then work on it.

The Chair said he had one other item and didn't know if Dr. Grissett had left the meeting yet but that she has submitted her notice of resignation from the TA board to him. He noted that he had offered her an opportunity to rescind it but that if she is listening he wanted to thank her for her service and her general boardsmanship, calm and collected and thoughtful in all that she has done. He said he hopes she will look at continuing but if she isn't able he understands and we will accept her resignation with regret and thanksgiving for all that she has been as a member of the board. We will want to move as quickly as we can to fill that vacancy so that we have all the advice and support we need to work through things for the school and children.

Adjournment

The Chair thanked everyone for all they do and asked for a motion to adjourn. Sheila Boles made the motion to adjourn. Dave Wyatt seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting of the Thomas Academy Board of Education is scheduled for July 13, 2021, at three o'clock p.m.



Larry Hewett, Chairperson, Thomas Academy Board

THOMAS ACADEMY
Called Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday, August 17, 2021
3:00 pm

The Thomas Academy Board of Directors held a called meeting on Tuesday, August 17th by Zoom, the purpose of which was to continue the agenda from the August 10th meeting with additional information to be provided.

Dave Wyatt called the meeting to order by proxy pending the attendance of member Owen Robinson who soon thereafter joined the meeting.

Dave Wyatt called on George Ward to call the Roll. Members in attendance were Dave Wyatt, Julie Wolfe and Owen Robinson. Board member Rudy Tatum had consented to the meeting by email which is attached to these minutes. BGHNC CEO Ricky Creech and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator, were also in attendance. Sharon Connor was asked to take minutes.

Dave Wyatt confirmed that with the recent resignations Dr. Grissett, Sheila Boles and Larry Hewett, all remaining Board members have consented/agreed to having the called meeting.

Dave Wyatt recommended the agenda be amended to add two items: the Election of Officers, and a Report by CEO Ricky Creech. Julie Wolfe made a motion to approve the amended agenda, Owen Robinson seconded and the motion carried.

Election of Officers – Owen Robinson

Owen Robinson stated he had spoken with former chairman Larry Hewett and asked that he reconsider his resignation but Mr. Hewett declined to reconsider. After a discussion on a finding a new Chairman, Owen Robinson affirmed that he has agreed to fill the position as an interim Chairman until the position can be filled permanently.

The Nominating Committee, represented by Owen Robinson, then presented for consideration by the Board the following slate of nominees for officers: Owen Robinson, Interim Chair; Rudy Tatum, Vice Chair; and Julie Wolfe, Secretary. He then moved that the slate be approved by the Board. With the motion coming from Committee, no second was required, and the motion carried.

Interim Chairman Robinson requested that Dave Wyatt continue to conduct the meeting.

Employment Recommendations – George Ward

Mr. Ward reported three positions open at Thomas Academy: Middle School Math Teacher, IT Support, and Receptionist/Spanish Teacher. Recommendations for approval were:

- Middle School Math Teacher: Jalen McCall, who taught school in Cumberland County
- IT Support: Irvin Braddy, who worked with BB&T and is well versed in technology. His daughter is a student at Thomas Academy.
- Receptionist / Bilingual Support Teacher: Denise Lozano who is fluent in

Spanish and will work with students and parents who don't speak English and also work as receptionist.

Mr. Ward shared the starting salary of each nominee, and noted the applicants have filled out applications, and are going through the hiring process with Human Resources, including background checks, which are pending. He also noted that another individual he had mentioned at the prior meeting was no longer under consideration.

Dave Wyatt, Owen Robinson and Julie Wolfe asked that going forward Board members receive a copy of the application, resume, and salary offer for individuals being considered for hire. It was suggested that these items can be emailed to Board members along with a deadline, when needed. Julie Wolfe noted a clear salary band should be established in the future.

Questions/Discussion regarding SOAR Bonuses to Staff

Dave Wyatt stated the Board needs to consider for approval the amounts of SOAR staff bonuses and who received them, and the total of the bonuses. Julie Wolfe noted the bonuses have already been paid out to Thomas Academy teachers and the Board will need to consider ratifying these payments.

George Ward was asked to share the information on the bonuses that have been paid out. There were 3 different bonuses paid to teachers along with a per diem of \$245, and a \$1000 bonus for 60% participation.

- Early Bonus - \$2000
- 3-week Bonus - \$500
- 6-week Bonus - \$2000

Mr. Ward stated there will be a 9-week bonus, but that has not been calculated. Mr. Ward noted this funding was from a federal grant (SOAR).

There was discussion on the teachers' bonuses that were paid. Mr. Ward stated 21 out of the 22 teachers participated in the summer program (one teacher did not participate due to personal reasons).

Mr. Ward stated Thomas Academy was awarded more money than was sought and that the funds had to be used between May 10th and September 10th. It was noted that not all of the funds were used and some funds will have to be returned. Mr. Ward noted the last round of funding, \$5000, \$1000 and \$500 for field trips has not been paid out.

Following further discussion, it was determined that the total bonuses paid were estimated at \$39,000. The total paid in August was \$75,000 (includes per diem and bonuses). Mr. Ward stated NC DPI had approved the number of participants, roles, and total salary amount, however, NC DPI does not approve payouts to specified individuals, they just approve the total amounts.

Mr. Ward stated 14 people were eligible to receive the \$500 bonus; 9 were eligible to receive the 6-week \$2000 bonuses and six or seven would be eligible to receive another \$2000 bonus.

President Creech noted he had a spreadsheet with the names and total bonus received by each employee that includes the daily per diem from SOAR (\$245) and an attendance bonus of \$1000 if a teacher works 60% of the summer program. The last round of the bonuses has not been paid out. It was also noted that these amounts are in addition to each teacher's regular salary that is paid throughout the entire calendar year regardless of whether that teacher participates in a summer program.

Owen Robinson made a motion to ratify the amounts given to the teachers as bonuses for the summer program (SOAR) based on the information the Board has. Second by Julie Wolfe. Motion carried. The spreadsheet will be available for review purposes only.

President Creech stated a separate motion is needed to approve the bonus received by Mr. Ward. The amount he received will be included in the spreadsheet.

Julie Wolfe made a motion to approve payments made to George Ward in conjunction with the SOAR program. Second Owen Robinson. Motion carried.

School Financial Report – George Ward

George shared his screen with members showing the financial report. The total revenue

The total expenses were [REDACTED] Mr. Ward noted the report does not include the latest grant, and that there will be a meeting tomorrow concerning funding for a school-based clinician, professional opportunities for teachers, and supplies for the mindfulness room, as well as other items. He noted the clinician is already included in the budget, and there would be additional expenses associated with management of the facility.

Action Items – Dave Wyatt

1. Employment Recommendations

- Jalen McCall
- Irvin Braddy
- Denise Lazono

Following discussion Owen Robinson made a motion to approve the three teachers as presented by George Ward. Second, Julie Wolfe. Motion carried.

2. Nominations for Directors

Owen Robinson stated there was no report, but work is continuing on prospective Board members. Dave Wyatt noted he had sent an email to the BGHNC Board members asking for potential names of at least three to four Board members. Former Board member Sheila Boles has a couple of prospects she will approach and ask to serve.

3. BGHNC Board of Trustees Report

Dave Wyatt shared that the BGHNC Board of Trustees annual meeting took place on Saturday, July 31st. The Board approved a subcommittee (Corporate Realignment Committee) that will study the feasibility of the reorganization or restructuring of several operations currently managed by BGHNC.—BGHNC legal counsel Jim Hill and

Attorney Linda Reid Oldham will be assisting in this project. Mr. Wyatt noted that the committee might recommend dissolution of some corporations or the creation of other entities in order to protect the assets of BGHNC.

Dave Wyatt emailed a motion for consideration to members addressing the impact on Thomas Academy of any actions that may be taken by BGHNC at the recommendation of this committee. After a lengthy discussion, the motion was defeated. Several additional motions then were proposed and, after extensive further discussion, abandoned.

Julie Wolfe then moved that, since it has come to the attention of the Thomas Academy Board that BGHNC is investigating an alternative structure that will affect the organization of Thomas Academy, this Board, at this time recognizes, the mutual benefit of the investigation that is being conducted and expresses the Board's support for the efforts being made by BGHNC to clarify and mitigate any confusion with regard to the structure and relationship between BGHNC and Thomas Academy. Second Owen Robinson. Motion passes.

Dave Wyatt proposed for discussion/consideration addressing the need for the Board's authorization of Thomas Academy entering into any hiring contracts, issuing any bonuses, and engaging in any grant related activities. Following discussion, Julie Wolfe moved that, because of concerns that had been raised, the Thomas Academy Board institute a new policy requiring review and approval by the Board prior to Thomas Academy entering into any hiring contracts, bonuses and grants. Owen Robinson second. Motion carried.

Report from Boys and Girls Homes - Ricky Creech, President/CEO

Mr. Creech reported he had met with George Ward concerning the Thomas Academy student maximum capacity of 120. There are 118 students now and his concern was that when Level II opens at BGHNC there will be 16 possible placements in the Level II program who would attend Thomas Academy. Mr. Ward shared with Mr. Creech that a letter would be sent notifying NC DPI if the student population exceeds the 120 cap and that it is expected that NC DPI will approve the increased capacity limit.

Mr. Creech reported as of Friday August 13th, the Harbor is at 100% capacity after only being open for three months. The Harbor is feeding the Level I program on campus and BGHNC is working diligently on opening another 10 beds because the need is so great.

Owen Robinson made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second Julie Wolfe. Motion carried.

Dave Wyatt adjourned the meeting at 6:15 pm.

THOMAS ACADEMY
Board of Directors Meeting (Zoom)
Tuesday, September 14, 2021
3:00 pm

Call to Order – Owen Robinson, Chairman

The Thomas Academy Board of Directors met Tuesday, September 17th at 3:00 pm by Zoom. Chairman Owen Robinson called the meeting to order.

Roll Call – George Ward, Principal

George Ward called the roll. Members present by Zoom were Dave Wyatt, Julie Wolfe and Owen Robinson. Board member Rudy Tatum was absent. BGHNC CEO Ricky Creech and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator, were also in attendance.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second Julie Wolfe. Motion approved.

Approval of August 10th and August 17th 2021 Board Minutes

Julie Wolfe made a motion to approve the August 10th and August 17th minutes. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion approved.

School Report – George Ward

Mr. Ward stated there were 110 students enrolled (113 budgeted) at Thomas Academy. Twenty-three were residents of BGHNC.

Mr. Ward gave an update on the Innovative Partnership Grant “IP Grant” (which is filed with a digital copy of these minutes):

- IP Grant provides support for teachers in Teaching and Learning, Leadership, Strategic Consulting and Peer Learning Networks. He noted teachers went through training with Joy Kelleher on the Waccamaw Way and it was a very positive training.
- IP Grant provides professional development, coaching teachers in classroom, and helps in collecting and reviewing data throughout the year.
- IP Grant offers uncertified teachers access to the Aspire Teacher Prep program to gain teacher licensure at no cost to the teachers through a 15-month program.

Mr. Ward noted the IP Grant had been reviewed and approved by the Board in April.

Mr. Ward called attention to the Face Covering Policy Proposal (attached). He stated House Bill 654 requires the Board vote monthly regarding a face covering policy. He noted the policy TA adheres to is the BGHNC policy which requires all students and staff to wear masks inside. Masks are optional for outdoors. There is an exception if a student cannot wear a mask due to a medical condition or disability. President Creech suggested if there is a medical issue that Mr. Ward contact the Director of Nursing to verify.

School Financial Report – George Ward

Mr. Ward stated Acadia sent the August financials via email today, but he did not have a chance to review the financials before the meeting. He noted that NC has yet to pass the State Budget which has delayed NCDPI in their budget process and has resulted in a halt of funding to all public schools statewide.

As indicated in an email sent to Board members from BGHNC CFO Daniel Nolan (attached), NCDPI is the primary funding source for Thomas Academy which does not have any funding outside of limited private grants and restricted accounts. Mr. Nolan’s email states that BGHNC is preparing to cover the September payroll and submit for reimbursement from TA when funds are available. The timeline for the State budget approval is vague with hopes the budget will pass between the months of October and November but not later than December 31, 2021. Mr. Nolan suggested in the email that Thomas Academy financing/spending

activities should be frozen immediately until State funding has been secured. He noted that BGHNC has the capacity to cover Thomas Academy payroll through the end of the year through the BGHNC Reserve Account.

President Creech stated he would notify the Executive Committee of the BGHNC Board of Trustees through email that BGHNC would cover four months of payroll and utilities for Thomas Academy through the Reserve Account.

Action Items

1. Face Covering Policy Proposal

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the Face Covering Policy used by BGHNC with the exception for medical reasons. Second Julie Wolfe. Motion approved.

2. Cleaning Contract

Mr. Ward noted he had received two proposals for a cleaning contract for Thomas Academy. He noted he was difficult to get a third proposal.

Following discussion and concerns on the one proposal that was being considered, the Board recommended Mr. Ward handle acquiring the contract with help from CFO Daniel Nolan, COO Mike Garrell and HR Manager Tesa Bush. Companies will need to have a certificate of insurance and background checks will be needed for anyone cleaning the school.

Owen Robinson suggested to table making a decision until Mr. Ward has a company for recommendation. Board members will be notified by email of the recommendation.

Thomas Academy Board Members Nominations

There were six names suggested for nominations as members of the Board of Directors:

- Tony Pagrabs
- Seeky Gregory
- Clare Herrington
- Sara Thompson
- Pat Medlin
- Gary Winslet

The nominees will be contacted and asked if they want to be considered to serve as Board members at Thomas Academy. The names of those individuals who agree to be considered will then be turned over to Nominating Committee Chairman Ken Bland for recommendation to the Thomas Academy Board.

Board Comments

Chairman Robinson proposed that, going forward, President Creech and Mr. Ward meet prior to TA Board meetings to discuss any issues that may impact both BGHNC and Thomas Academy. Mr. Robinson suggested items should be addressed through these discussions and meetings and that the TA Board meeting agenda be amended to provide an opportunity for President Creech and Mr. Ward to report a summary of their findings. It was noted that President Creech and Mr. Ward are currently meeting weekly through the Executive Team meetings and have the opportunity at that time to discuss issues affecting both Thomas Academy and BGHNC. But, it was agreed that additional effort will be made to focus more completely on the issues of joint interest. Mr. Robinson then stated this agenda item would be added to the TA Board Meeting Agendas at the next Board meeting on October 12th.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Dave Wyatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Second Julie Wolfe. The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 pm.

FACE COVERINGS PROPOSAL

As announced on August 16, 2021, face coverings are required for students and staff indoors and on school-provided transportation.

Face coverings are optional outdoors.

If a student cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition or disability, a parent may request a face covering accommodation by submitting a written request to the Principal. This request must be signed by a licensed health care provider. Students are required to wear a face covering in school while their request is under review.

Face coverings should:

- Fit snugly against the sides of your face without gaps
- Be reasonably comfortable
- Allow you to breathe easily
- Be secured safely over the nose, mouth, and under your chin, and completely cover your nose and mouth
- Be changed if it becomes soiled or wet
- Cloth face coverings should be washed as needed
 - Wash face covering in a washing machine using soap and water
 - Dry face covering in a dryer or allow to air dry

Layering Face Coverings

You have the option of layering face coverings, but it is not required. The [CDC](#) provides two options for layering face coverings:

- Use a cloth face covering that has multiple layers of fabric. All cloth face coverings provided by Thomas Academy to students and staff have multiple layers.
 - Wear one disposable mask underneath a cloth face covering. The cloth face covering should push the edges of the disposable mask against your face.

- Surgical masks are acceptable. Do not combine two disposable masks.

Disposable masks are not designed to fit tightly, and wearing more than one will not improve fit. **Gaiters and Face Shields** If you choose to wear a gaiter, select one with two layers, or fold it to make two layers. Face shields are not a replacement for face coverings but should be worn in addition to a face covering. Face shields protect the wearer from droplets getting into their eyes. Since a face shield is open at one end, a face shield by itself will not protect the wearer from breathing in germs or from spreading germs if the wearer is infected and doesn't know it. A face shield is available for any employee who wants or needs one.

Good Afternoon,

I was informed today by a Representative at Acadia NorthStart that NCDPI has not passed their budget as of yet and the delay in their budget process has resulted in a halt of funding to all Schools Statewide, not just Thomas Academy. NCDPI is the primary funding source for Thomas Academy; therefore, as of today Thomas Academy does not have any Funding outside of private grants and restricted accounts which are limited. This is very unfortunate news for BGHNC and T.A., I do not anticipate the Budget being passed and funds released prior to September Payroll for Thomas Academy. With that said, BGHNC is preparing to cover the September payroll and submit a reimbursement to T.A. when funds drop. The timeline for NCDPI Budget approval & funding to drop was vague and hopeful of somewhere between the months of October & November but no later than December 31, 2021.

On brighter news, BGHNC does have the capacity to float Thomas Academy payroll through the end of the year via our Reserve Account. We are looking at roughly \$300,000 for four months of payroll and utilities given no other surprises.

Thomas Academy Financing/Spending Activities should be frozen immediately until State funding has been secured. I will follow up when an update is given.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

VR,

Daniel Nolan, MSF

Chief Financial Officer

Boys & Girls Homes of North Carolina

P.O. Box 127

400 Flemington Drive

Lake Waccamaw, NC

Office: 910-646-3083

Fax: 910-646-3609

Daniel.nolan@bghnc.org

www.boysandgirlshomes.org

The MISSION of the Boys and Girls Homes of North Carolina is dedicated to providing a comprehensive array and continuum care of programs and services to meet the physical, emotional, mental, behavioral, social, educational and spiritual needs of children, youth and families in distress or at-risk.

Our VISION is to provide an environment of care that promotes health, healing and hope among children, youth and families who enter our continuum of care.

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THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

October 12, 2021

3:00 pm – Zoom

Call to Order

Owen Robinson called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

George Ward called the roll. Members attending by zoom were Julie Wolfe, Dave Wyatt, Owen Robinson and Rudy Tatum. TA staff attending was Principal George Ward. BGHNC Staff in attendance was Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator. BGHNC President/CEO Ricky Creech was absent.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second Rudy Tatum. Motion adopted.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes: September 14, 2021

Julie Wolfe made a motion to approve the September 14th minutes. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion approved.

School Report – George Ward

Mr. Ward reported the total number of students enrolled was 119 (113 budgeted). The total number of B&GH students enrolled is 21. TA has started aspects of the Waccamaw Way. Due to Covid students are still eating lunch in their classrooms. There have been two students positive with Covid and 5/6 students are in quarantine. Thomas Academy has been enrolling students year-round but will hold off on enrollment to make sure there is space for B&GH residential children. There have been fewer incidents at the school with cell phones, students use clear book bags and metal detectors are in place.

Mr. Ward shared two incidents that will require student discipline recommendations:

- (1) Student N.M. was found in possession of drugs with the intent to sell/distribute, he has shown physical aggressions, harassment/bullying, with aggravating factors of felony conviction for theft (outside of school); prior expulsion from Columbus County Schools. Law enforcement was not called. Member Rudy Tatum voiced concerns that this was not reported to law enforcement or recorded.
- (2) Student T.L. – sexual assault/sexual offense; aggravating factors: not forthcoming with information, greater than four years age difference and no remorse.

Mr. Ward noted that these students pose a clear threat to the safety of other students and have repeatedly violated the Thomas Academy student code of conduct, including drug distribution offenses and sexual harassment. He recommended that these students be expelled from Thomas Academy.

School Financial Report – George Ward

Mr. Ward will email the financial report to Board members. The state budget has not been approved and TA does not have access to all their monies. The state released funds for TA payroll only. The financial report will be attached to these minutes.

Thomas Academy & BGH Collaboration – George Ward/Ricky Creech

President Creech notified Board members before the meeting that he had a conflict with an on-campus event and would not be able to attend the meeting. Mr. Creech sent an email with the following report:

I would like to report that George, Director of Nursing and myself have been working on two exciting initiatives funded by three grants (two COVID Relief Grants and a \$200,000 grant for nursing services).

- We received a grant to conduct on-site COVID testing among TA students. The Director of Nursing has the program regulations and is taking point. George will be reporting this out as we roll it out. This is a great venture.*
- We have received a \$200,000 grant to provide nursing services through Thomas Academy. The Director of Nursing has the State Regulations to create such a Department and will be taking the lead on implementing this initiative. The Director of Nursing will also have to work towards her Certification as a School-Based Registered Nurse. Another excellent find by George!!!*

Board Member Nominations

Dave Wyatt reported he has been working with Ken Bland, Chair of the BGHNC Nominating Committee to start the process of finding new TA Board members. He noted he had sent an email to the BGHNC Board asking for any recommendations that they may have. He received two recommendations from Kim Sheeks - Haywood Weddington and Christy Hopkins; two recommendations from Grace Thomas - Pat Medlin and Sara Thompson; and Pete Locklear recommended Dr. Lynn Holmes, UNC-Pembroke Chemistry Professor.

Ken Bland made contact with Pat Medlin and she is interested, Sara Thompson declined. Dave Wyatt will set up a meeting with Mr. Holmes.

Dave Wyatt shared two resumes for the Board members to consider (Council Haywood Weddington and Christy Taylor Hopkins). The resumes are attached to these minutes.

Following review and discussion of the two nominees, Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the nomination of the two individuals as Thomas Academy Board members. Second Rudy Tatum. Motion approved.

Action Items:

(1) Student Discipline Recommendations

Julie Wolfe made a motion with regard to N.M. that we approve position taken by Principal Ward which will result in N.M.'s expulsion from Thomas Academy. Second Rudy Tatum. Motion carried.

Rudy Tatum made a motion with regard to T.L. that we approve the position taken by Principal Ward which will result in T.L.'s expulsion from Thomas Academy. Dave Wyatt second. Motion carried.

(2) Face Mask Policy

The policy now states that face masks are worn by students and staff indoors and are optional for outdoors. Julie Wolfe made motion to continue to keep the policy as is. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion carried.

Adjournment – Owen Robinson, Chair

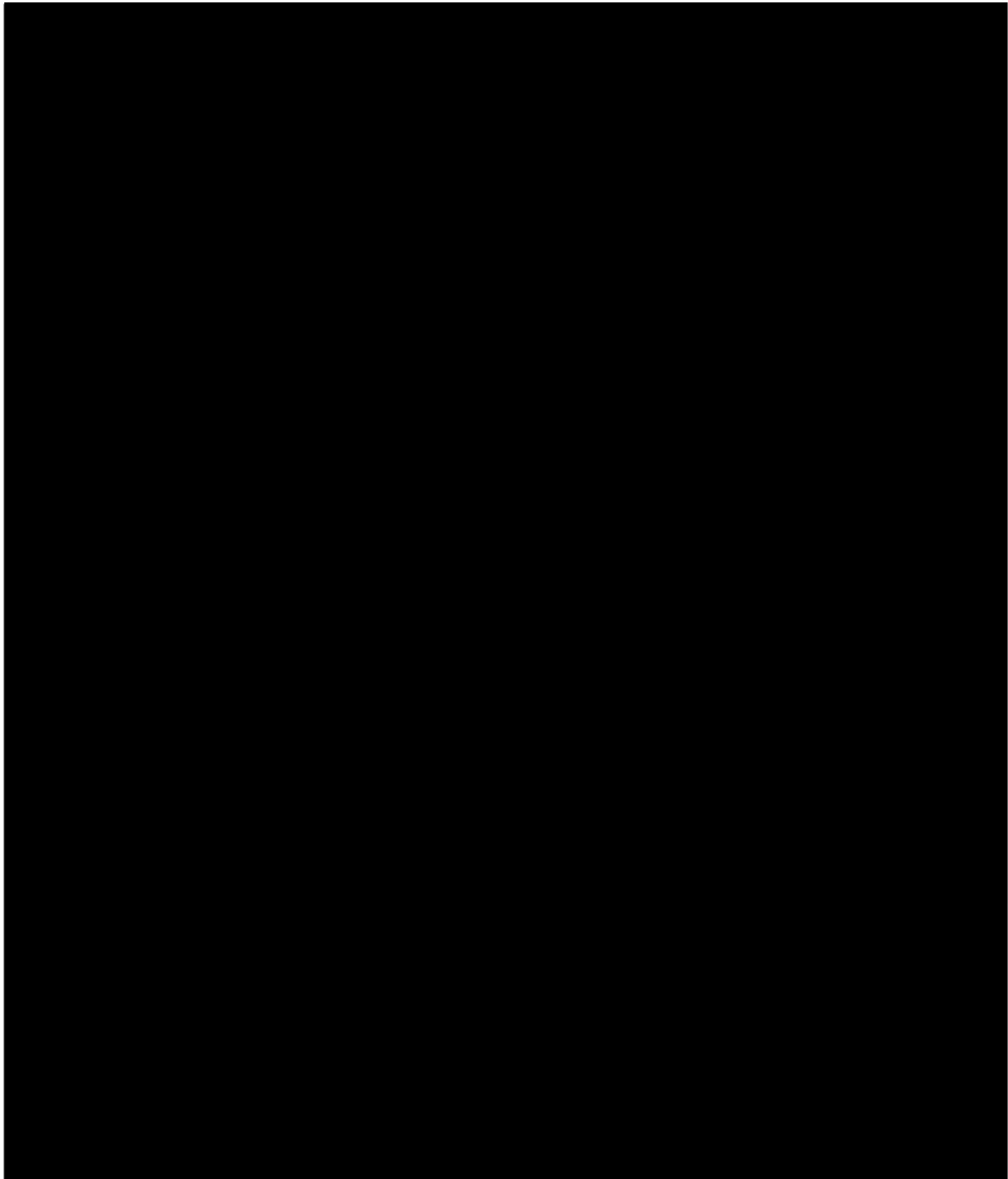
Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dave Wyatt, second Rudy Tatum. The meeting adjourned at 4:47 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 9th.

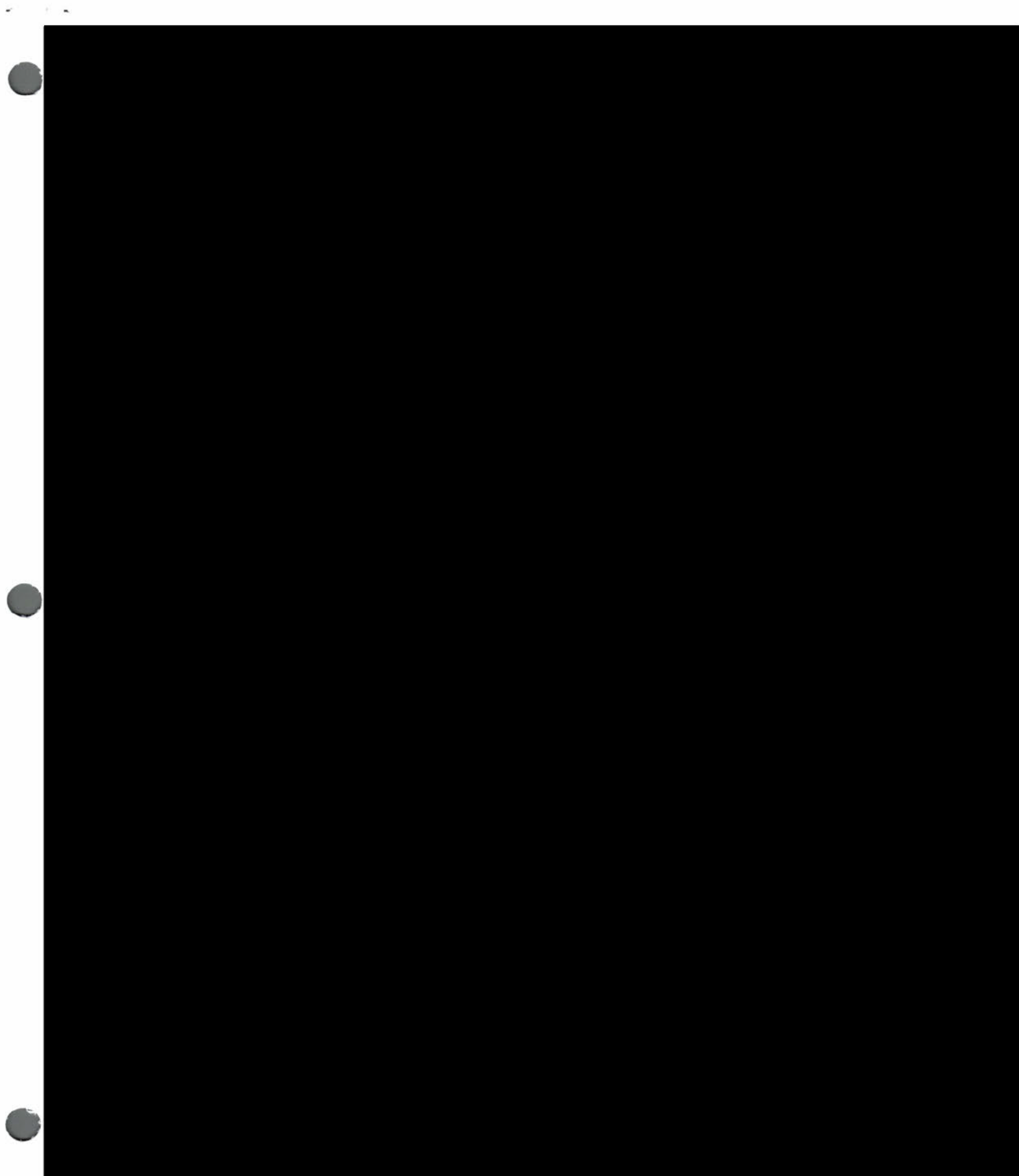
**THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SPECIAL CALLED EMERGENCY MEETING**

-MINUTES-

November 3, 2021

7:15 pm – Zoom





THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

November 9, 2021

3:00 pm – Zoom

Call to Order

Rudy Tatum called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Owen Robinson.

Roll Call

Sharon Connor called the roll. Members attending by zoom were Julie Wolfe, Dave Wyatt, Rudy Tatum, Christy Hopkins and Woody Weddington. BGH Staff in attendance was President/CEO Ricky Creech, CFO Daniel Nolan and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Dave Wyatt amended the motion to include the adoption of the minutes from the Called meeting on 11/3/21. Second Julie Wolfe. Motion adopted.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the November 3rd and November 9th minutes. Second Julie Wolfe. Motion approved.

School Report – Ricky Creech

Mr. Creech reported the total number of students enrolled was 110 (-9 from October 12th report), and the total number of B&GH students enrolled is 20.

Mr. Creech referred members to his Executive Report (*attached to these minutes*) which covered Administrative Updates, Issues/Priorities and a Timeline for the next three weeks at the school. He noted with the termination of Principal George Ward he has taken over duties at the school. Mr. Creech stated in week three of his timeline he will meet with Rudy Tatum regarding the template buildout for reorganization, staffing, DPI concerns/opportunities, etc. at Thomas Academy.

After reviewing his report Mr. Creech turned over to Vice Chair Rudy Tatum. Mr. Robinson had joined the meeting concluding Mr. Creech's report, and took over as Chair of the meeting.

Chairman Robinson welcomed the new members, and asked everyone to introduce themselves and give brief background information on each other.

School Financial Report – Daniel Nolan

Mr. Nolan reviewed the TA financial statement from BGH, and noted when he received the Acadia financials he would send to members. He stated NCDPI budget has not passed, and BGH is covering payroll and will absorb costs until the budget is passed. (*The financial report is attached to these minutes*).

Board Member Nominations

Dave Wyatt shared two resumes (Patricia Medlin, and Dr. Leonard Holmes) he had received as TA Board members. He stated BGH Board member Grace Thomas recommended Patricia Medlin, and BGH Board member Pete Locklear recommended Dr. Lynn Holmes, UNC-Pembroke Chemistry Professor to serve on the TA Board.

Mr. Wyatt reviewed the resume of Patricia Medlin, noting she had worked at Thomas Academy as an Academic Coordinator - Spanish from 2013-2017, and has recently retired from teaching. Mr. Wyatt reviewed the resume

of Dr. Leonard Holmes noting he is a professor of Chemistry at UNC-Pembroke. Mr. Wyatt noted that Mr. Holmes had recently visited BGG, met with President Creech, and toured the campus.

Following review and discussion of the two nominees, Julie Wolfe made a motion to accept the application/nomination of Patricia Medlin to be a member of the Thomas Academy Board. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion approved.

Julie Wolfe made a motion to accept the application/nomination of Leonard Holmes to be a member of the Thomas Academy Board. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion approved.

Old/New Business – Owen Robinson

There was no old business to discuss. President Creech stated DPI requires that each TA Board member have a file with an updated bio/resume. He noted he will have Sharon Connor to reach out to Board members and ask them to send her an updated bio/resume, along with others forms that will need to be completed. Mr. Creech stated he will work to get those forms ready.

CFO Daniel Nolan stated auditors are requesting two forms of identity verification (license, utility statement, etc.) from Board members in order to complete the audit. He asked that members send the information to him by email at daniel.nolan@bghnc.org as soon as possible.

Adjournment – Owen Robinson, Chair

With no other business to discuss a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dave Wyatt, second Rudy Tatum. The meeting adjourned at 4:31 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 14th.

THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2021

3:00 pm – Zoom

Call to Order

Rudy Tatum called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Owen Robinson.

Roll Call

Sharon Connor called the roll. Members attending by zoom were, Dave Wyatt, Rudy Tatum, Woody Weddington, Patricia Medlin and Dr. Leonard Holmes. BGH Staff in attendance was President/CEO Ricky Creech, Principal Cathy Gantz, CFO Daniel Nolan and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator. Board members Owen Robinson, Julie Wolfe and Christy Hopkins were absent.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second Cathy Gantz. Motion adopted.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the November 9th minutes. Second Pat Medlin. Motion approved.

Introduction of New Board Members

Board members and staff introduced themselves to the new Board members, and gave brief background information. Dave Wyatt introduced new Board members Pat Medlin and Dr. Leonard Holmes and called on them to give brief background information on themselves.

Introduction of Dr. Gantz

President Creech introduced Cathy Gantz, newly hired Principal of Thomas Academy, and noted the excitement at Thomas Academy of students and staff with her hiring. He called on Dr. Gantz to give brief background information on herself.

School Report – Cathy Gantz

- Principal Gantz reported she met with DPI on December 12th concerning the Innovative Partnership Grant and Targeted Support and Improvement for Thomas Academy.
- Principal Gantz met with faculty and staff to help develop relationships, and is visiting classrooms and doing informal observations. She stated there will be Professional Development training on Wednesday, December 15th at 2:45 pm on quality instruction and the delivering of instruction of teachers and will give teachers feedback.
- Principal Gantz stated a certified History teacher has been hired, and an ELA History teacher has been hired and will start January 3rd. There is an opening for a middle school and high school Science teacher, and middle school Math teacher.
- Principal Gantz has met with the BGH Executive Team, and discussed BGH sponsoring a TA day student for Christmas.
- Principal Gantz will meet with CFO Daniel Nolan on invoice training on Thursday, December 16th.
- Principal Gantz stated there is a request from parents to move the TA graduation to Saturday, June 11th at 10:00 am. She noted this is only a request and will be up for discussion.
- Principal Gantz stated she is working on getting the stage at the gym cleaned and furniture moved so that plays, different events, and graduation can take place in the gym.
- Principal Gantz and Daniel Nolan received the Janitorial Services contract for TA and reviewed the responsibilities of TA and the janitorial services. A walk through of the school will be done in January to help clarify the expectations and needs of the company.

School Financial Report – Daniel Nolan

Mr. Nolan reviewed the BGH Income Statement for Thomas Academy and the Condensed TA Budget Report. He stated the state budget has passed, and noted the report does not reflect the December numbers. *(The financials are attached to these minutes).*

Mr. Nolan stated the state budget included bonuses and incentives for full-time teachers who were hired prior to December 1st (\$1,500). He noted teachers will also receive a bonus from BGH and the Holt Trust of \$250 (as did all BGH employees). The bonuses and incentives total \$1750 and teachers will receive in their January payroll check.

Thomas Academy & BGH Collaboration – Cathy Gantz/Ricky Creech

- Dr. Gantz reported TA has a very strong relationship with BGH and feels very supported. She stated she reached out to the Executive Team about sponsoring two TA day students for Christmas and they agreed to sponsor the children and provide Christmas for them. She noted she meets with the team once a week and shares information concerning happenings at TA.
- President Creech reported there have been challenges in the past and disconnect between BGH and TA, but with the hiring of Dr. Gantz transparency is taking place.
- President Creech reported Principal Gantz attends weekly Executive Team meetings and reports on TA happenings, opportunities and needed support. He stated Principal Gantz and her team are working on various ways to build stronger relationships among day students and their families and with BGH residents and campus staff. Cottage Coaches from BGH have been assigned to TA to help with behavior and student safety.
- President Creech reported that beginning in January, all new TA hires will be required to attend BGH New Employee Orientation and will be required to continue their ongoing education through on-line training with Relias.
- President Creech reported he and Jess Hill, Governance Chair will be meeting with BGH contracted legal counsel in January to discuss agency Realignment recommendations to help protect BGH properties from risk. The realignment will have some impact on TA, and he will keep the Board updated on the progress.

Board Member Nominations

There are no new Board nominations at this time.

Action Items

- **Student Discipline Recommendations**
There have been no student discipline recommendations at this time. Any time a student is expelled from TA, DPI requires the TA Board be notified. The student's parents/guardian has the right to appeal any recommended expulsion. If appealed the guardian appears before the TA board to be heard.
- **Plan to transition Board Meetings Public**
DPI requires all TA Board meetings be publicized and open to the public. This has not been happening. TA should begin opening the zoom meetings to the public and publicizing the date, agenda and zoom link to all day and residential students guardians/parents. Principal Gantz and Chairman Robinson will work to develop an agenda for each meeting. Some information provided in Board meetings will need to be discussed in Executive session. This will be discussed further at the January meeting, and maybe go public at the February meeting.
- **Face Mask Policy**
The TA Board reviews the Covid-19 Policy/Precautions each month. The following protocols are currently in place:
 - Students arrive early to have temperature screening

- Face Masks are worn indoors by students, staff and any visitors to TA. All staff and visitors entering Academy buildings will have their temperature checked and provided a mask if necessary.
- All persons should wash their hands and watch their distance as appropriate.

Pat Medlin made a motion to keep the current Covid protocols and precautions in place. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion passed.

Board Comments/New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Dave Wyatt asked if TA is still doing the Backpack Buddy program that was specific through the summer and which is funded by the Century 21 grant. He stated if there is a need during the summer could it be done throughout the year. Dr. Gantz will follow up with a survey to parents on continuing the program year round.

Adjournment – Rudy Tatum, Vice Chairman

With no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Pat Medlin, second Dave Wyatt. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2021

3:00 pm – Zoom

Call to Order

Rudy Tatum called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Owen Robinson.

Roll Call

Sharon Connor called the roll. Members attending by zoom were, Dave Wyatt, Rudy Tatum, Woody Weddington, Patricia Medlin and Dr. Leonard Holmes. BGH Staff in attendance was President/CEO Ricky Creech, Principal Cathy Gantz, CFO Daniel Nolan and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator. Board members Owen Robinson, Julie Wolfe and Christy Hopkins were absent.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second Cathy Gantz. Motion adopted.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the November 9th minutes. Second Pat Medlin. Motion approved.

Introduction of New Board Members

Board members and staff introduced themselves to the new Board members, and gave brief background information. Dave Wyatt introduced new Board members Pat Medlin and Dr. Leonard Holmes and called on them to give brief background information on themselves.

Introduction of Dr. Gantz

President Creech introduced Cathy Gantz, newly hired Principal of Thomas Academy, and noted the excitement at Thomas Academy of students and staff with her hiring. He called on Dr. Gantz to give brief background information on herself.

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Thomas Academy & BGH Collaboration – Cathy Gantz/Ricky Creech

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Adjournment – Rudy Tatum, Vice Chairman

With no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Pat Medlin, second Dave Wyatt. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, 2022.

THOMAS ACADEMY BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

December 14, 2021

3:00 pm – Zoom

Call to Order

Rudy Tatum called the meeting to order in the absence of Chairman Owen Robinson.

Roll Call

Sharon Connor called the roll. Members attending by zoom were, Dave Wyatt, Rudy Tatum, Woody Weddington, Patricia Medlin and Dr. Leonard Holmes. BGH Staff in attendance was President/CEO Ricky Creech, Principal Cathy Gantz, CFO Daniel Nolan and Sharon Connor, Executive Office Administrator. Board members Owen Robinson, Julie Wolfe and Christy Hopkins were absent.

Adoption of Meeting Agenda

Dave Wyatt made a motion to adopt the agenda. Second Cathy Gantz. Motion adopted.

Approval of Board Meeting Minutes

Dave Wyatt made a motion to approve the November 9th minutes. Second Pat Medlin. Motion approved.

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Thomas Academy & BGH Collaboration – Cathy Gantz/Ricky Creech

- Dr. Gantz reported TA has a very strong relationship with BGH and feels very supported. She stated she reached out to the Executive Team about sponsoring two TA day students for Christmas and they agreed to sponsor the children and provide Christmas for them. She noted she meets with the team once a week and shares information concerning happenings at TA.
- President Creech reported there have been challenges in the past and disconnect between BGH and TA, but with the hiring of Dr. Gantz transparency is taking place.
- President Creech reported Principal Gantz attends weekly Executive Team meetings and reports on TA happenings, opportunities and needed support. He stated Principal Gantz and her team are working on various ways to build stronger relationships among day students and their families and with BGH residents and campus staff. Cottage Coaches from BGH have been assigned to TA to help with behavior and student safety.
- President Creech reported that beginning in January, all new TA hires will be required to attend BGH New Employee Orientation and will be required to continue their ongoing education through on-line training with Relias.
- President Creech reported he and Jess Hill, Governance Chair will be meeting with BGH contracted legal counsel in January to discuss agency Realignment recommendations to help protect BGH properties from risk. The realignment will have some impact on TA, and he will keep the Board updated on the progress.

Board Member Nominations

There are no new Board nominations at this time.

Action Items

- **Student Discipline Recommendations**
There have been no student discipline recommendations at this time. Any time a student is expelled from TA, DPI requires the TA Board be notified. The student's parents/guardian has the right to appeal any recommended expulsion. If appealed the guardian appears before the TA board to be heard.
- **Plan to transition Board Meetings Public**
DPI requires all TA Board meetings be publicized and open to the public. This has not been happening. TA should begin opening the zoom meetings to the public and publicizing the date, agenda and zoom link to all day and residential students guardians/parents. Principal Gantz and Chairman Robinson will work to develop an agenda for each meeting. Some information provided in Board meetings will need to be discussed in Executive session. This will be discussed further at the January meeting, and maybe go public at the February meeting.
- **Face Mask Policy**
The TA Board reviews the Covid-19 Policy/Precautions each month. The following protocols are currently in place:
 - Students arrive early to have temperature screening

- Face Masks are worn indoors by students, staff and any visitors to TA. All staff and visitors entering Academy buildings will have their temperature checked and provided a mask if necessary.
- All persons should wash their hands and watch their distance as appropriate.

Pat Medlin made a motion to keep the current Covid protocols and precautions in place. Second Dave Wyatt. Motion passed.

Board Comments/New Business

There was no new business to discuss.

Dave Wyatt asked if TA is still doing the Backpack Buddy program that was specific through the summer and which is funded by the Century 21 grant. He stated if there is a need during the summer could it be done throughout the year. Dr. Gantz will follow up with a survey to parents on continuing the program year round.

Adjournment – Rudy Tatum, Vice Chairman

With no other business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Pat Medlin, second Dave Wyatt. The meeting adjourned at 4:21 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 11, 2022.