

Benson Polytechnic High School Alumni Association Monthly Board of Directors Meeting – Final



Date: Feb 10, 2025
Starting Time: 5:33 pm
Ending Time: 7:10 pm
Hybrid meeting

ATTENDEES:

Board Members: Josh Piper (JP); Mike Landstrom (ML); Roger Edwards (RE); Dale Bajema (DB); Rob Johns (RJ); Kevin Clark (KC); Thomas Smith (TS); Jeff Strachan (JS); Bobbie (Rob) Walker (BW)

Online: Maj Britt (Max) Baker (MB), Bob Trimble (BT)

Guests: Jacob Patterson, alum and KBPS Instruction, BATS advisor; Dick Spies (DS), alum; Dan Malone (DM)

ABSENT: Gerry Ochs (GO); Anthony Reimer (AR); Rachael Kuryunny (RK)

BUSINESS

- Guest – Jacob:
 - Heidi Sprecher – hsprecher@pps.net is taking over the BATS advisory position. Desire is to grow it from the Theater Tech club into a program for theater Tech, similar to Grant H.S.
 - First need was headsets for communications during events. After several groups donated, they have 6 now as of last week.
 - BATs are already working on what they can do to assist during 1st tech show back at the building.
 - They have been concentrating on auditorium, since the new communal space is easy to control with minimal assistance.
 - There is a drama club, but the person that previously had it took on journalism and yearbook, so it seems like it's not very active now.
 - Idea – Karaoke nights? Mini skits, improv.
 - KC talked about tech show thoughts:
 - Night 1:
 - DM state of the school speech
 - Amy Henry 7th grade night presentation
 - Night 2:
 - Guest Speaker: Chet Benson, grandson of Simon Benson
 - Class of 03 Benson Documentary speaker

- Great to hear BATS will have a presentation as well; highlighting their skills and importance to the school is good to help push new official classes.
- Jacob loves those ideas.
- RJ: what's the best way to communicate? Jacob is acting as a liaison between Heidi and BATs since she's not at Benson Tech currently, so it's fine to reach out to him to plan auditorium schedule. Once finalized it can be circulated for promotion.
- He's also the bowling coach. Happy to be more involved, attend these meetings, site council, when he's done passing off the torch.
- Bowling team took 4th place. There has been a scholarship for some of the students, and some funds to build a showcase for trophy's etc. Next year hoping to make it to state. The team gets free bowling due to connections/donations. They may want to look for sponsorship for team jerseys. He does have friends who donate a lot of equipment.
 - Suggestion – talk to JS about helping at concessions. 1949 Benson Tech had the state championship. JS talked about bowling shirts, shoes, and balls for the kids. If you can give us a bottom-line budget and have it to us by Sept 1st, we may be able to help.
- Dan Malone update of school:
 - PPS budget deficit.
 - PPS is trying to balance retirements and no backfills with cuts.
 - New time capsule that will be welded shut.
 - There will be decades pictures included.
 - There are 2 pianos at Benson Tech. They are fixing keys on one.
 - Music room has a piano, and there's another on the main stage.
 - We have people ready to donate things for a music program, but until we have a club, class, and needs defined, we can't really accept donations. Same with lighting.
 - Tech Show
 - 30-45 min increments in the auditorium.
 - May need someone to have a keycard for the elevator.
 - No food/drink in the auditorium.
 - Suggests presence in common area.
 - May ask alums during tech show if they have something to contribute.
- Member Report (JP)
 - Around 70s. Last year counted subscription. This year, just counting who has renewed.
 - By the end of the year, we should be over 100.
- Financial Report (BT)
 - \$3465.93 in savings; \$3021.33 in checking at end of Jan.
 - Need to determine budget for Tech Show, depending on what we want to do.

- Prior Meeting Minutes Approval (MB)
 - ML moved to accept the minutes for Jan 2025 as amended. JP seconded. Motion passed.
- Tech Show Subcommittee:
 - KC – Parking?
 - DM: we might do a shuttle? But he'll check with neighbor businesses.
 - KC – We just need to get the word out because we need to inform folks that parking is limited.
 - RJ – Invitations
 - Let's think of who we want to invite, who were or will be helpful to Benson Tech.
 - KC – organized invite for former faculty/staff?
 - PPS Communications folks roll over too much to have institutional information.
 - DM will put it out on the reader boards.
 - JP – we do send email to everyone on our list. First blast after membership will go out before the next meeting. Maybe 2 more before tech show to mention it.
 - ML and RJ will compile information.
- Site Council – DB:
 - Talked about how clubs can be a stopgap to enrich the student experiences both in tech (Robotics) but also music, drama etc. So we will be working on this to strengthen curriculum.
 - Almost finished the vision for the coming year, Curtis was poised to approve it. DB mentioned that it wasn't unique to Benson Tech. JP suggested a few ideas.
 - Discussion of ideas like describing the physical state of the art spaces reserved for technical spaces. Uniquely modern spaces to advance technical skills for the next century.
 - Again, there is attention on technical career readiness. Challenge is not to use stale language.
 - Will Site Council continue as is, with alumni included?
- Alumni vision – DB:
 - We tend to take for granted what we have today. Society, democracy, the people we have working with us like DM. Close relationship with Principal Wilson. It's not always been that way.
 - DB talked about his wife's alumni base which is great, but has no connection with the school (no ready access to the Principal, teachers, building)
 - DB gave a history of the start of this organization, which started as a picnic at Blue Lake Park to raise money for the scholarship fund.
 - Ken Bakke, Neal Gallash, Tammy Hite, and Dale Bajema, and soon joined by others, initiated the creation of an Alumni Association to resist an effort to close Benson and to sponsor alumni events.

- Once created, the group was welcomed by Tech's principal and teachers in the fight to save the school, to have the old gym during Tech Show as an alumni welcome area, and to participate on Benson's Site Council.
- As a vibrant organization the Alumni Association had a strong voice during the 2009-10 High School Design project and saving.
- By initiating meetings with successive Principals Olczak, Campbell and Wilson, our Association developed mutual respect and support leading among other things to having extra Association members on the Master Planning Committee and the Design Advisory Committee and significant influence in the eventual Benson modernization. Benson Association Director Dick Spies participation on PPS Building Committee helped make Benson's modernization occur sooner than later.
- With cultivated and close relations with Benson's Principals and teachers, it has been easier for individual Association members to develop working relationships with many CTE instructors, clubs and teams as well as for the Association to have continued use of the gym at Tech Show (early on some teachers pushed back on this), lawn space and access to the building for annual Benson Community Picnics, more recently special alumni tours of the modernized building.
- With Benson Tech saved and modernized, Principal Wilson a few years from retirement, and perhaps a next Principal less amenable to an 'aggressive alumni group, it is time to reflect on how we got here, where the Association wants to be in the future, and again proactively chart a course of action. The past and present is not a given.
- RJ talked a bit about how each of us finds opportunities to interact with the school – JS with concessions, meeting all the coaches, etc. We just find spaces to be proactive and active with the schools.
- DM spoke about what this group does well – connecting Alums to the school. Sparkling spaces and programs to attach people to the school. The unique connections to everyday classes. Math, English, History – everyone has those.
- Specialized learning spaces.
- Robotics – RJ
 - Facility to host the competition was beautiful. Kids were hyped. Matt Pellico and John DeLacy (Benson Tech graduate, former employee of Tektronix, founding member of the BPHS Robotics club) host 2 teams. Advisors can't do any of the work. Matt's team was invited to compete in the next level.
 - Shirts said Benson Alumni Association – RJ told them to add Tech.

- Seeing how the other teams looked...made our team's boards looked handwritten and sort of not professional. Maybe this is the difference between a club and class.
- The support of all the adults was nice. It's incredibly technical. They have to program the robots to do tasks. It's amazing.
- There's like 800 clubs around the country. For kids that compete with their brains. Super cooperative competition. You can offer competing teams help.
- Boosters – JS
 - Around \$4000 mark for dispersing money to kids.
 - This year there were new groups – Avid 11, Avid 12. Such great kids. Diversity, Prom, Student Gov.
 - 5 more gigs, though biggest game was taken from us. Anticipate about \$2000 more.
 - It's the smaller groups you don't hear anything about that are getting participation.
 - They also feed a lot of kids. The players can show up and get food.
 - JP is taking over when JS goes on vacation.

UPCOMING BUSINESS

- Mar 10, 2025 – 5:30 PM Board Meeting- Hybrid; Tech Show subcommittee meets at 4:30

Respectfully Submitted,

Maj Britt (Max) Baker
Secretary
BPHS Alumni Association



BUSINESS SAVINGS		BEGINNING BALANCE	TOTAL DEPOSITS	TOTAL WITHDRAWALS	ENDING BALANCE
BSAV00		\$3,465.84	\$0.09	-\$0.00	\$3,465.93
	YTD DIVIDENDS	YTD DIVIDENDS WITHHELD			
	\$0.09	\$0.00			
Actual Effective Transaction Description				Amount	Balance
01/31	01/31	Dividend Annual Percentage Yield Earned= 0.03% For 31 Days		0.09	3465.93

TOTAL OVERDRAFT AND RETURNED ITEM FEES		
Fee Type	Total For This Period	Total Year-To-Date
Total Overdraft Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Returned Items	\$0.00	\$0.00

BUSINESS FLEX CHCK		BEGINNING BALANCE	TOTAL DEPOSITS	TOTAL WITHDRAWALS	ENDING BALANCE
BFLX00		\$2,889.66	\$131.67	-\$0.00	\$3,021.33
	YTD DIVIDENDS	YTD DIVIDENDS WITHHELD			
	\$0.00	\$0.00			
Actual Effective Transaction Description				Amount	Balance
01/13	01/13	Deposit ACH PAYPAL*TRANSFER		131.67	3021.33

TOTAL OVERDRAFT AND RETURNED ITEM FEES		
Fee Type	Total For This Period	Total Year-To-Date
Total Overdraft Fees	\$0.00	\$0.00
Total Returned Items	\$0.00	\$0.00