



HIGHLANDS
BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

HBF Board of Trustees Winter 2024 Meeting

A meeting of the HBF Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, December 11th at 3:00 PM via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83261072395?pwd=ufGQz9OaH2RKjJkeOt4M8CCCh8nZcL.1>

AGENDA

1. Call to order and Welcome (John Mitchener)
2. Approval of Minutes from October meeting
3. Finance Update (Tom)
 - a. Budget Update
 - i. YTD 2024
 - ii. Investments - Jim Landon wants to see a 12 month presentation. Jamie will ask Justin.
 - b. 2025 Budget Review
4. Development Update (Keller)
 - a. Events update - see notes for details
 - i. Soiree
 - ii. Patron Party
 - iii. N Campus Sculpture Reception
 - iv. Highlands on the Half-Shell
 - b. EOY Giving
5. Strategic Planning Update (Gayle)
 - a. Scope and Timeline Presentation
6. Education & Outreach Update (Jamie/Julie)
 - a. Zahner/Carpenter Lectures
 - b. Nature Center/Programming Update
7. Operations Update (Jamie)
 - a. Marketing & Communications Specialist
 - b. Reminder - COI and Whistleblower forms
 - c. Proposed 2025 dates
8. HBS Update (Jim)
9. IE Program Presentation (Dr. Rada Petric, Field Site Director)
10. Closed Session
11. Adjournment



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Upcoming Meetings and Events:

2024

December 11 – Winter Trustee Meeting 3 PM (Virtual)

December 23-January 1 – HBF Office Closed

2025

April 9 - Spring Trustee Meeting 3 PM (Virtual)

May 26 – Nature Center Opens for Summer Hours

June 25 – Annual Membership Meeting + Summer Trustee Meeting 3 PM

July 28 – Summer Soiree

August 24 – Nature Center Moves to Fall Hours

October 5 - Highlands on the Half Shell

October 22 – Fall Trustee Meeting 3 PM

October 28 – Enchanted Forest Halloween (Volunteers Needed)

November 27 & 28 – HBF Office Closed

December 10 – Winter Trustee Meeting 3 PM (Virtual)

December 22 - January 1 – HBF Office Closed



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HBF Committee Reports
HBF Winter Board of Trustees Meeting

FINANCE

Members: Tom Holmes (Chair/Treasurer), John Mitchener, Frances Oakley, Vernon Skiles, Bob Strickland, Jim Landon, Jamie Creola

Jamie began pulling all relevant data and developing a spreadsheet for the draft 2025 budget. Jamie/Tom met to review, the Finance Committee met, reviewed and approved the draft budget, and the Executive Committee did the same.

**See 2024 Budget and 2025 Proposed Budget documents attached to email.

<u>Investment Account Revenue</u>	<u>EOY 2023</u>	<u>AS OF 12/09/24</u>
Dividends, Interest, & Other Income	\$57,454	\$24,422
Investment Gains & Losses	\$289,813	\$489,661
Total Investment Account Revenue	\$347,267	\$514,083

DEVELOPMENT

Members: Keller Torrey (Chair), Jennie Stowers, Lindy Harrison, Jim Landon, Martha Stibbs, Ruthie Edwards, David Martin, and Jamie Creola

The Development Committee has not met since the last Board mtg. in late October however, work has been done on End of Year Giving and next year's events.

2025 Events update:

- Soiree
 - Location - Lori and Ed Hey's property
 - Date - Monday, July 28th
- Patron Party
 - Location - Kathy & Bestor Ward's house



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- Date - Wednesday, June 18th
- N Campus Sculpture Reception
 - Sometime in spring - will work with Julia to finalize the date
- Highlands on the Half-Shell
 - Location - HBS
 - Date - Sunday, October 5th

EOY Giving Letter and eblast sent in November. Will send an additional eblast at the end of the week.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Members: Charley Tarver (Chair), Linda Barlow (Sub-Committee Chair - New Office), Alex Smith, Frank Langford, Lisa Daily, Vernon Skiles, Lisa Armstrong, Karen Patterson, and Jamie Creola

The B&G committee had its inaugural meeting to discuss its role and scope of work - review/assess what we own, why, is it serving our mission, how much is it costing HBF. Also, on how to plan and implement one-time projects and ongoing maintenance. Linda, Charley and Jamie gave updates on each of the properties - maintenance and assessments. Much of the focus has been, and will continue to be, on the new office.

Karen updated the committee on each of the land properties - history, restrictions, etc. Howell, Coker Trail and Dulaney Bog.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Members: Gayle Watkins (Chair), Leslie Manning, David Martin, Bob Strickland, Bill Bush and Jamie Creola

The committee met twice to discuss process and participation and begin the compilation of information needed to move the process forward. Including - Stakeholders, visitor/program/participant data, current mission/vision statements, engagement/data collection methods, etc.

The goal is to present a draft Strategic Plan at our annual Membership and Summer Board meeting in June. While the committee's role will be to implement and steward the process, participation by the entire Board, community partners, and constituents will be critical to its success. Gayle will be reviewing the process at the Winter Board mtg.



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EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Members: Jennie Stowers (Chair), Karen Patterson, Jonnie Swann, Leslie Manning, Carol Stewart, Cathy Jones, Jason Love, Julie Thomson, Jamie Creola

Gift Shop: Melanie Mauldin, Lori Heys

Work has begun on the 2025 Zahner Lectures, as well the bi-annual Carpenter lecture. The committee met and reviewed prospective speakers/topics. Next step (after the first of the year) will be to reach out and engage interest and availability.

Julie has been busy doing outreach programs and hosting small group tours/engagements at the Nature Center. The Nature Center closed for the season right before Thanksgiving, but we are planning to pilot having the NC open once-a-month for programming and self-discovery during January - March. More to come.

Jamie, Melanie, and Lori met to discuss the gift shop and plans for 2025. All three will be attending the big "Atlanta Market" in January and Jamie/Julie have already started providing ideas for future merchandise.

HBF 2024 Funding to HBS and Other Community Organizations:

Along with running the Nature Center and the variety of summer programming just mentioned, the Foundation also supported the research and education efforts of the Highlands Biological Station and community.

HBF provided \$25K annual operating and maintenance grant per our new MOU with WCU/HBS

HBF provided \$11,200 in Grants-in-Aid funding to 6 researchers conducting local research while in residence at the Station.

This year marked HBF's 5th year funding the MAPS bird banding program at the Station in partnership with Blue Ridge Bird Observatory.

HBF awarded approximately \$14K to the Macon County STEM program to support projects during the '24- '25 school year, including the Migration Celebration, providing professional development for teachers and transportation for students to various natural areas in our region.



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HBF has awarded \$10,000 to Dr. Rada Petric, Field Site Director for the Institute for the Environment, and the BatPack Citizen Science Project this year supporting bat population monitoring along the Appalachian Trail. We also granted \$9,500 to support a major bat research event “Bat Blitz” in September. This provided funding to support housing for ~20 bat biologists from several states who came to the region for a few days to conduct bat research.

This year, HBF has provided the Station with approximately \$25,600 to fund two Research Assistants – one year-round assistant and one summer assistant. Both of these individuals are former field site students. The summer Research Assistant funding is covered by the Sanger Scholarship Fund set up by Frances Oakley. These assistants are helping with local microplastics, small mammal, and bat research. They will also help lead the BatPack trips along the Appalachian Trail this summer.

HBF has granted \$3,000 to help support the Needmore Game Land Bioblitz which will be held in mid-May. This funding will help support the scientists participating in the event as part of a huge collaboration with Needmore, Mainspring Conservation Trust, and more.

HBF also provides funding for HBS Course Grants, providing financial aid to students taking HBS academic courses.

HBF has agreed to contribute additional funds to cover costs of the HBS Wayfinding & Signage Project (\$16K)