



HIGHLANDS
BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

HBF Board of Trustees Spring 2025 Meeting

A meeting of the HBF Board of Trustees will be held on Wednesday, April 9th at 3:00 PM via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87984275130?pwd=SAETLWA72c9kYX8gu4n3VaoHMopE8a.1>

AGENDA

1. Call to order and Welcome (John Mitchener)
2. Approval of Minutes from December meeting
3. Finance (Tom/Jamie)
 - a. 2024 Budget Review
 - i. YTD
 - ii. Investments
 - b. 2025 Budget Update
 - i. YTD
 - ii. Investments
4. Development (Keller)
 - a. Events update
 - i. Soiree - Garden Party theme
 1. Location - Lori Heys
 2. Date - Monday, July 28th
 - ii. Patron Party
 1. Location - Kathy & Bestor Ward's
 2. Date - Wednesday, June 18th
5. Building & Grounds (Charley)
 - a. New Office and Side lot updates
6. Strategic Planning (Gayle)
 - a. Surveys
 - b. Consultant
7. Operations (Jamie/Marissa)
 - a. New Staffing
 - i. Marketing and Communications Specialist - Marissa Nieddu
 - ii. Education Specialist - Maddie Wikstrom
 - iii. Summer Naturalists (4) - one returning, 3 former IE students
 - b. Communications
 - i. Annual Report



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- ii. Spring Campaign
 - iii. Programs Brochure
 - iv. Successful Summer Camp Registration
 - v. Webpages
8. Education/Outreach (Marissa/Julie)
- a. Zahner/Carpenter Lectures
 - b. Outreach Programming
 - c. Nature Center - hours and programs
9. Nominations (Jamie/Jenny)
10. Closed Session
11. Adjournment

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

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

June 18 - Patron Party

July 28 – Summer Soiree

August 24 – Nature Center Moves to Fall Hours

September 10 - Carpenter Lecture (Zoe Schlanger)

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 Spring Board of Trustees Meeting

FINANCE

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

The Finance Committee met and reviewed the 2024 EOY financials (Budget and Investment Accounts) and discussed 2025 Budget and Investments YTD (first 2 ½ months), and the Executive Committee did the same.

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

Below is the cumulative return for 2024. The investment objective is moderate growth and currently the entire portfolio is weighted about 79% stocks, 21% bonds & cash.

Account	Value 1/1/24	Value 12/31/24	Gain Of	Inception Date	Value
Operations	\$2,028,268	\$2,325,180	14.63%	02/04/2019	\$1,610,119
N Campus	\$537,693	\$591,565	10%	11/04/2020	\$500,000
Sanger Sch.	\$108,135	\$127,609	18%	8/11/2023	\$102,000
TOTAL	\$2,674,096	\$3,044,354	13.84%		

NOTE - not including a distribution of 25K for New Office Maintenance.

Operations: a total of \$564,281 has been drawn since inception.

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. however, meetings with the Soiree sub-committee have and a lot of work has been done on both the Patron Party and Summer Soiree (catering, rentals, etc.).



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2025 Events update:

- Soiree
 - Location - Lori and Ed Hey's property
 - Date - Monday, July 28th
- Patron Party
 - Location - Kathy & Bestor Ward's house
 - Date - Wednesday, June 18th
- Highlands on the Half-Shell
 - Location - HBS
 - Date - Sunday, October 5th

2024 Annual report is being finalized and will go out in mid-April. We will be launching a virtual (social media, eblast) campaign in April as well.

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 has not met since the December Board meeting. However, much work has been done by its committee members. Charley, Linda and Jamie have been busy addressing water and plumbing, HVAC, and bridge/structural aspects of the new property - meeting with contractors and technicians. Work on the water filtration system, HVAC and bridge/deck will be taking place this spring.

Charley and John have been involved in the acquisition of the lot/property beside the new office. As of mid-February, HBF now owns that land as well. Amy Patterson will be gifting HBF the funds for this property over the next two years.

Charley, Marissa and Jamie have been busy ordering and assembling furniture (office, tables, chairs) for the new office. Slow but steady progress.



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STRATEGIC PLANNING

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

The committee has met numerous times to discuss process and participation and begin the content development and design of several surveys that will be going out shortly - Board Member and Community. It has been an extensive, iterative process that will give us crucial information for moving forward.

The committee has also discussed hiring a consultant to steward the process and help with data collection, facilitation of focus groups and interviews, as well as data analysis and reporting. The committee is working on an RFP to be reviewed by Executive and Finance Committees.

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

The 2025 Zahner Lectures series as well the bi-annual Carpenter lecture have been finalized and we're very excited. See below and links:

- Zoe Schlanger - Sept 10th <https://authorsunbound.com/zoe-schlanger/>
- Zahner Series:
 - o June 12th
Healthy Land, Healthy People: Centering Indigenous Voices in Conservation
Bonnie Claxton (Chickasaw) Deputy Director, The Center for Native Health
 - o June 19th
Are You Bearwise? - Expert recommendations on coexisting with black bears
Tanya Poole, Conservation Initiatives Engagement Coordinator
 - o June 26th
Cohabitate; Living with Nature
Sonya Carpenter, Co-founder and President of Co-habitate Inc.



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- o July 10th
Bats in Your Backyard
Rada Petric, Assistant Research Professor and Director of the UNC IE Highlands Field Site, UNC Institute for the Environment
- o July 17th
Lesser-Known Medicinal Mushrooms of the Southern Appalachians
Christopher Parker, Mycologist and Co-Owner The Forest Farmacy
- o July 24th
Understanding Helene as a Geologic Event in Southern Appalachia...and What is a "Geologic Event" Anyway?
Philip S. Prince, Ph.D., Project Geologist, Appalachian Landslide Consultants, PLLC, Virginia Tech Department of Geosciences
- o July 31st
The Good, the Bad & the BUGly
Dr. Kelly Oten, Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist, NC State University
- o August 7th
Finding the Fabulous Ordinary - A guidebook to seasonal joys of ecosystems in the Southeast
Georgann Eubanks, author, University of North Carolina Press
- o August 14th
Southern Appalachian Forest Resilience in a Post Hurricane World
Megan Sutton, The Nature Conservancy, Southern Blue Ridge Program Director

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 piloted having the NC open once-a-month for programming and self-discovery during February and March with much success and positive feedback from the community.

Melanie and Lori attended the big "Atlanta Market" in January. Jamie/Julie have been giving input on new/improved items. Inventory is arriving and we're getting ready for the spring/summer season.

STAFFING UPDATE:



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We have been busy hiring staff over the past few months. Marissa Nieddu joined us in January as the new Marketing and Communications Specialist. We have hired four Summer Naturalists - one returning from last year and three are students from the IE program. We have also hired a

second Education Specialist, Madeleine Wikstrom, who will be starting in late April. She and Julie will jointly run the Nature Center, take care of our Animal Ambassadors, run programs throughout the year and provide Outreach opportunities during the school year. The rehiring of this position will also allow us to focus on adult and youth volunteering and programming.

NOMINATING

Members: Jennie Stowers (Chair), John Mitchener, David Martin, Lindy Harrison, Lisa Armstrong, and Jamie Creola

Term 1 ending in 2025: Tom Holmes, Drew Lanham, Martha Stibbs, Jonnie Swann

Term 2 ending in 2025: Cathy Jones, Melanie Mauldin, Frances Oakley, Vernon Skiles

Please submit nominees to Jamie at jamie@highlandsbiological.org. Nominating policies and procedures attached.

The Nominating Committee will be meeting at the end of April. In the next month or so, the Nominating Committee will meet to review nominees and propose a slate of trustees and officers. **Deadline for submitting nominations is May 19.**

The Nominating Committee will send approved nominees to the Executive Committee for review by May 30. The slate will be sent to the full board by June 11 and voted on at the annual membership meeting on June 25.

The following criteria should be considered when making HBF Trustee nominations:

1. The nominee is supportive of the HBF mission.
2. The nominee is willing to share his/her volunteer time, talents, energy, and resources with HBF.
3. The nominee will demonstrate a fiduciary responsibility to HBF.
4. The nominee will help fill HBF's need for a well-rounded board with balanced talents and professional experience.