

Ashford Board of Education  
Meeting Minutes – January 16, 2014  
7:30 p.m.

*Note: Per C.G.S. §10 – 218, Board of Education meeting minutes are provided in a draft format within 48 hours of the date the meeting was held. With the exception of motions and votes recorded, these minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote of the Board. Should edits be necessary, they will be made at a regularly scheduled meeting, noted in the meeting minutes, and so voted upon.*

**Call To Order**

Board Chair D. Wesson called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

**Board Present**

Present were members D. Wesson, J. Rupert, J. Lippert, K. Rourke, K. Warren and L. Donegan. Also present were Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, Principal T. Hopkins, teachers C. Imhoff, D. Manfre, R. Aubrey and J. Lindsay, students A. McGinley and K. Lindsay, and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. In the audience were First Selectman M. Zambo, K. Samperi, D. Atkinson and G. Leedie and family members of the students present. Unable to attend was board member B. Supina.

**Persons to be Heard**

First Selectman M. Zambo introduced himself and thanked the board members and those present for all that they do in providing and supporting the most important job, the education of Ashford's children.

**Communications**

**a. Officer Resignation**

Chair D. Wesson announced that he had sent notification by e-mail to the Superintendent that he is stepping down as the chairperson, effective immediately.

*Motion made by L. Donegan to accept, with regret, the resignation of Chair Donald Wesson. Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried with one abstention (D. Wesson).* Board members stated their appreciation and thanked Mr. Wesson for serving as chair.

**b. Officer Election**

Vice-Chair K. Rourke opened the floor for nominations for Board Chair. K. Warren nominated K. Rourke, seconded by J. Lippert. Mrs. Rourke respectfully declined the nomination citing that she did not feel she could take on the role of chair due to family and work commitments.

L. Donegan nominated J. Rupert for Board Chair, nomination seconded by D. Wesson. Being there were no further nominations, the floor was closed. J. Rupert was elected Chair by unanimous vote with one abstention (J. Rupert). Members congratulated the new chairperson and offered their support and assistance.

*Motion made by K. Warren to move the Principal's Report (6b) to be heard as the next agenda item.*

*Motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.*

Principal Hopkins introduced teachers Carly Imhoff, Dory Manfre, Rebecca Aubrey and Jennifer Lindsay. The teachers introduced two students, Kate Lindsay and Anna McGinley who presented their report on Caribbean Flowers. These students are representative of many that are benefiting from the enrichment curriculum at Ashford School and in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math), elementary Spanish and independent student study project opportunities. The teachers shared a PowerPoint presentation (attached), and detailed all of the innovative and exciting events occurring at Ashford School, and the goal to add more opportunities to all students. Many students are involved in statewide competitions in the sciences, engineering and social studies. Through grant resources and an organization, "Donor's Choice", a 3-D printer was purchased. A comb, bracelet, nut and bolt that were created in the printer were passed around the room for all to see. Recently, "Take A Part" night was held with over 150 participants, Science Night is coming next month; and PTO cultural arts assemblies are being held monthly.

At the conclusion of the presentation the board thanked the teachers and the students for sharing this information and expressed their continued support in such endeavors.

Mr. Hopkins distributed materials on physical exercise, and spoke of a new program, TRY (Technology, Reading and You) for students in grades 3 and 4, extra enrichment opportunities and, providing challenges and teacher referrals and providing for talented and gifted students.

Before continuing with the agenda, the chair recognized the First Selectman. Mr. Zambo informed the board that there will be a new town wide newspaper, and invited the board, superintendent and school to contribute to the paper. The name will remain "The Ashford Citizen".

### **Approval of Minutes: 12/05/2013**

Motion to approve the meeting minutes of 12/05/2013 made by J. Lippert seconded by K. Rourke and carried with one abstention (K. Warren).

*Motion made by K. Warren to hear the Cafeteria report (6d) as the next agenda item. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.*

The board received a cafeteria statement through December 2013 in their board packets. K. Rourke asked K. Samperi about the “Farm to School” program. Ms. Samperi responded that she receives \$4,500 from the DOD (Dept. of Defense) to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, and that some of what is received are from producers, both locally and within the state. The program will be reviewed. Ms. Samperi was asked to address the condition of equipment in the cafeteria. She reported all was well, but there is need to replace some of the older cafeteria tables. The folding brackets on some have worn to the point they may not be repaired. Generally, the tables are 20 plus years old. J. Lippert suggested a plan to replace all of the tables over time, perhaps 2 per year, until all have been replaced. Costs will be investigated.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **a. Personnel**

The committee met prior to the board’s regular meeting. Items of discussion were seasonal weekend custodial coverage, policy conflict of personnel with a direct family relation to the cafeteria manager, and completion of the superintendent evaluation. The board reiterated its original directive to the Superintendent to resolve the custodial coverage issue within the guidelines prescribed in collective bargaining. The superintendent may alter the work schedule with a two-week notice to the members affected. If a Saturday workday is added, and the custodian does not or cannot work, they will be required to use a benefit day. A regular weekday would need to be taken off during the following week, so as not to exceed the normally scheduled number of work hours creating an overtime situation. Chelsea Samperi had been recommended to fill the vacancy in the cafeteria based on her experience and qualifications for the position. The Superintendent recommends she remain for the balance of the school year in a temporary role, he will oversee any direct supervision of Ms. Samperi’s time and attendance, alleviating the policy conflict. Permanent filling of the vacancy will be reassessed at the conclusion of the school year.

A special meeting will be scheduled on January 23rd to complete the superintendent evaluation in executive session, and final evaluation will be added to a future meeting agenda.

### **Administrative Reports/Summary** (reports may be distributed at meeting)

#### **a. Superintendent**

Dr. Longo’s reported three still pending issues. MBR (Minimum Budget Requirement), 1% non-lapsing carry over authorization and the school security grant. Legal counsel has been contacted concerning the MBR and will advise on resolution. The 1% non-lapsing fund was voted upon at the 12/12 board of finance meeting and awarded in an amount representing less than 1% of the budget. The school security grant award acceptance has been filed with the DEMHS. Invoices to submit for reimbursement are being prepared. There is a 60-day repayment window upon receipt of the fully executed grant. Items that are required for the grant to be considered fully executed are: a copy of the school’s emergency action plan, signatures of specific officials and copies of invoices for consideration of reimbursement.

#### **1. Approval of the 2014-2015 School Calendar**

Dr. Longo presented a draft of the 2014-2015 school calendar. This calendar is based on the EASTCONN region and has the input of all its regional superintendents.

*Motion made by K. Warren to accept the 2014-2015 Ashford School calendar as presented. J. Lippert asked if the days are common with E.O. Smith and Windham Tech. Dr. Longo responded that they were aligned, with Ashford having one additional professional development day per contract. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.*

#### **b. Principal**

Addressed.

#### **c. Director of Pupil Personnel Services**

Mrs. Hartigan’s December report was included with the board packet.

#### **d. Cafeteria**

The cafeteria report was included with the board packet.

## **Old Business**

### **a. Final Reading of Board Bylaws**

*Motion made by K. Rourke to approve second reading of the Board Bylaws, seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.*

## **New Business**

### **a. FY 15 Budget Calendar**

The board will plan to meet each Thursday evening from 1/23 through 2/28 for budget work and other regular business matters.

### **b. Quarterly Budget Transfers**

Per board policy, quarterly budget transfers are to be reviewed by the board.

*D. Wesson motioned to table review of quarterly budget transfers until January 30<sup>th</sup>, motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.*

### **c. Request for Unpaid Leave of Absence**

Middle school teacher Nicole Preston has been on approved maternity leave until March 2014. Mrs. Preston has submitted an electronic request to the Superintendent in order to continue on unpaid leave for the remainder of the school year.

*Motion made by D. Wesson to approve an unpaid leave of absence for Nicole Preston for the remainder of the 2014 school year. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.*

## **Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items**

The board will hold special meetings on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. The January 30<sup>th</sup> meeting agenda will include public budget input, financial reports and budget projections, and superintendent evaluation.

## **Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Tabled my mutual consent, item will be addressed at special meeting January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## **Adjournment**

*Motion to adjourn the meeting (10:39 p.m.) made by L. Donegan, seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Barsaleau  
Recording Secretary