

Ashford Board of Education  
Special Meeting Minutes – January 30, 2014  
6:30 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**

Chairperson J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm. The start of the meeting was delayed while awaiting a quorum.

**Board Present**

Present were members J. Rupert, J. Lippert, K. Warren, K. Rourke (7:30 pm) and D. Wesson (7:32 pm). Also present were Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, recording secretary J. Barsaleau, and business office financial staff members D. Morgan and L. SanDiego. In the audience were residents J. Busse, N. Page, D. Courtois, M. Courtois and C. Rupert (8:22). Unable to attend were board members B. Supina and L. Donegan.

**FY 15 Public Budget Input**

The chairperson opened the floor to public input. M. Courtois addressed the board with concerns in Grade 4. She stated there is conflict and disruption in her child's classroom. Students use inappropriate language, there are behavioral issues and much drama amongst the students in this grade. The teachers are doing all that they can, but learning often must stop to address student behaviors. J. Busse and N. Page, also parents of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students, echoed these concerns, and stated that this group of students are a strong willed group and even though many attempts have been made to address the matter, issues remain. D. Courtois shared that his child was excited to start 4<sup>th</sup> grade, but has since said he does not want to come to school, and tries to avoid situations where these disruptions occur.

Mrs. Courtois also discussed middle school gym classes and distributed a letter written by her son and signed by several middle school students. The students wish to know why gym classes have to be so large, and why they no longer have gym class as often as they used to.

Mrs. Courtois stated that the new athletic conference that Ashford is participating in is great, and she hopes for more afterschool activities. She gave praise to basketball coach Moore and spoke approvingly of his style of coaching.

J. Rupert closed the floor. He and the board members thanked the parents for their input and encouraged their attendance at meetings. The board will take the matters as reported under advisement for discussion and potential budget implications at a future meeting.

**Review of Financial Reports**

**a. Review Statement**

Reports were forwarded by consultant C. Miller and reviewed. L. SanDiego addressed a reconciling item with Ms. Miller prior to the meeting, as a result, the report will be updated and a copy will be forwarded to members for the next meeting.

**b. Review Special Education Projections**

Dr. Longo and D. Hartigan have been in contact concerning special education projections for the remainder of FY 14. The special education outplaced tuition line must be increased in order to fulfill the Board's obligation to provide necessary and appropriate services for our students. These changes will likely result in the need to request appropriation from the Town to provide these special education services. Written notification will be sent to the Board of Finance in February.

**c. FY 14 Budget Update/Quarterly Budget Transfers**

Per Ashford Board policy, second quarter object budget transfers were discussed. The board's finance committee has not had an opportunity to meet to review the reports provided prior to this meeting, and therefore the board would be unable to recommend any formal object transfers at this time.

Motion made by D. Wesson to acknowledge board receipt of the July 2013-December 2013 BMSI expenditure and interim trial balance reports; and to recommend that the board make no object transfers at this time. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Dr. Longo added that he has sent a directive to all teachers to expend funds in their budgets no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>. After March 15<sup>th</sup>, spending will be frozen with the exception of purchases that are deemed necessary by the administration.

**Superintendent Report**

**a. School Security Grant Discussion**

The grant award acceptance has been received. All related invoices paid by the Town and the board have been gathered and are awaiting submission. As was stated in the original grant application, upon

notification of an award, the safety/emergency action plan with required signatures must be sent to DEMHS in order to receive any reimbursement. Dr. Longo reported that he met with the capital expenditure committee and has gathered estimates for items in the December 11<sup>th</sup> list provided to the committee. There are still a couple of vendors that have not yet provided their quotes. A membership with CRCOG (Capitol Region Council of Governments) has been established and we will use their service in creating future bids and RFP's.

**b. Distribution of Superintendent's FY 15 Budget (Initial Working Draft)**

The draft of the FY 15 budget was given to members with an associated object summary document. This budget document is a working draft, and represents a 5.26% increase over the FY 14 budget request. It must be noted that the percentage increase reflects known collective bargaining wage increases, anticipated insurance premium increases; the board's desire to increase budget support for STEM, and forecasted magnet school and special education outplaced tuitions. Firm information on premium increases are anticipated in early February. The local magnet school lottery should be held in March. The line is increased in light of its general practice to accept the siblings of enrolled students. The board requested some format changes to the document. The board will review the information contained in the budget provided materials and give its input at the next meeting.

**Discussion Concerning Confidential Attorney-Client Privileged Written Communication Related to Financial Matters (Executive Session Anticipated as Permitted Per CGS §1-200(6))**

Motion made by K. Warren to enter into executive session (8:44 pm) with the Superintendent present, to review written communication related to financial matters provided by legal counsel. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Present in Executive Session: J. Rupert, J. Lippert, D. Wesson, K. Warren, K. Rourke and J. Longo  
The board and Dr. Longo exited executive session at 8:51 pm.

**Action Regarding Resolution to the Minimum Budget Reporting Requirement**

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the correspondence provided by counsel, as edited by the board, and to authorize hand delivery of said correspondence to the Chairperson of the Board of Finance and a copy of the same to the First Selectman. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously. J. Barsaleau was directed to hand deliver the correspondence to town hall to these individuals the following business day.

D. Wesson left the meeting at 8:55 pm

**Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)**

A special meeting will be held on February 6<sup>th</sup> prior to the regular board meeting for a superintendent evaluation work session. The board will meet with the Superintendent on February 13<sup>th</sup> to present and review the evaluation.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting (10:32 p.m.) made by K. Warren, seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Barsaleau  
Recording Secretary