

**Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – March 19, 2015**

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

Vice Chair K. Rourke called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM. Present were K. Warren, K. Rourke, J. Mozeiko, J. Lippert, L. Donegan and D. Wesson. Also present were Superintendent J. Longo, Principal T. Hopkins (8:40 pm) and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Chair J. Rupert was not present as he was in attendance at the Ashford Board of Finance meeting. There was no audience present.

Persons to Be Heard

None

Communications

J. Rupert left two communications with the recording secretary for distribution. A letter from the auditing firm of Mahony Sabol related to the Board of Education's response to FY 14 internal controls, and a memo from CAGE containing Lobbying Tip Cards for the members of the board. Vice-Chair K. Rourke read the communication from the auditor.

Motion made by K. Warren to amend existing policy and/or regulation as necessary to indicate that a review of purchases initiated by, or for the benefit of the Superintendent, will occur monthly as a part of the board's normal review of accounts payable, expenditure and reconciliation reports received. Motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes: 02/19/2015

Motion made by L. Donegan to approve the regular meeting minutes of 02/19/2015, motion seconded by D. Wesson. It was noted that J. Lippert and K. Warren's name appeared as present at roll call and also absent. The minutes will be corrected to reflect their absence. The motion carried as corrected with two abstentions (J. Lippert and K. Warren).

Motion made by J. Lippert to add item 4.5 to the agenda, approval of the special meeting minutes of 02/26/2015. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the special meeting minutes 02/26/2015, motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried with one abstention (J. Lippert).

Distribution of Administrative Reports

Included in the board packet for this meeting were reports from the Superintendent, Principal and Director of Pupil Personnel. They also received monthly financial reports and a memo from the business office. Dr. Longo reviewed his report with the board and discussed with them a meeting that he had earlier in the day with a business office consultant, W. Garrett Miller, d/b/a GLLC Services. Mr. Miller has extensive experience in public school finance, facility operations and school business management. Mr. Miller is available for engagement for business office oversight as stated in the posting included in this agenda packet.

Motion made by D. Wesson to authorize the Superintendent to expend not more than \$3,000 to engage GLLC Services for business office oversight for the remainder of FY 15. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

The Principal's report was reviewed with the board expressing their excitement of all that is and has been happening at Ashford School.

The Director's report contained information that a new student with significant needs will be moving into the district within the next couple of weeks.

Principal T. Hopkins joined the meeting (8:40 pm)

New Business

a. Staff Resignation

Dr. Longo received a resignation, effective immediately, from custodian Andrew Nichols for personal reasons.

Motion made by J. Lippert to accept the resignation of Andrew Nichols. Motion seconded by J. Mozeiko and carried unanimously.

Dr. Longo reported that this vacancy is to be discussed prior to the April 2nd meeting.

Old Business

a. FY 16 Budget Worksession (if necessary)

As there has been no action to reduce the Board of Education's budget thus far, the board held a general discussion about the FY 16 budget, the process to date, next steps and reviewed the Town budget calendar. The Board of Finance will meet on Thursday March 26th and if any reductions are to be made to the Board of Education budget, it will be at that meeting. With this in mind members agreed to hold be a special meeting of the Board of Education for the same evening. Tentatively, the meeting time will be posted for 8 pm, pending consultation with the chair.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular meeting will be April 2nd.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at (9:22 pm) made by D. Wesson seconded by L. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Ashford Board of Education:



Connecticut Association of Boards of Education, Inc.

81 Wolcott Hill Road, Wethersfield, CT 06109-1242 - (860) 571-7446 - Fax (860) 571-7452 - Email admin@cabe.org

To: CABE Member Board Chairs

From: Patrice A. McCarthy, Deputy Director and General Counsel
Sheila McKay, Sr. Staff Associate for Government Relations

Date: February 16, 2015

Re: Lobbying Tip Cards

CABE asks you to pass these Lobbying Tip Cards along to your fellow board members in hopes that it will facilitate a conversation about the importance of advocacy. We urge you to invite your legislators to one of your board meetings so that they can best advocate for you at the Legislature.

The Education Committee public hearing dates are February 25, March 4, and March 11. When we know what bills will be heard, we will email our Advocacy Highlights. Typically we get only five days notice.

Please mark your calendars for March 25th - CABE's Day on the Hill. Put your advocacy skills into practice!!

To contact your legislators, invite them to your board meeting and also to make your lobbying appointments for March 25th:

Senate Democrats	(860) 240-8600	1-800-842-1420
Senate Republicans	(860) 240-8800	1-800-842-1421
House Democrats	(860) 240-8500	1-800-842-1902
House Republicans	(860) 240-8700	1-800-842-1423

Or use the legislative website to email your legislators at www.cga.ct.gov and click on "representation".

If you need assistance in any way with lobbying your legislators let us know. We work best for you when we work together!

Enclosures

Websites of Interest

www.cabe.org

Connecticut Association of Boards of
Education
check out our advocacy tab!

www.sde.ct.gov

Connecticut State Department of Education

www.cga.ct.gov

Connecticut General Assembly

www.nsba.org

National School Boards Association

www.ctcapitolreport.com

political headlines

www.ctnewsjunkie.com

political news

www.ctmirror.com

political news



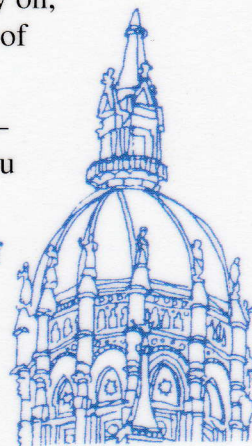
***Mission:** To assist local and regional boards of education in providing high quality education for all Connecticut children*

through effective leadership.

***Vision:** CABE is passionate about strengthening public education through high-performing, transformative local school board/superintendent leadership teams that inspire success for each child.*

Tips for Effective Lobbying

- **Research your members of the Connecticut General Assembly (CGA)** – what committees are they on, were they on their board of education or council
- **Develop Relationships** – establish them **before** you need them
- **Invite your members of the CGA to a board meeting** – they don't all serve on the Education Committee so you are a valuable resource
- **Set your priorities** – just mention a couple of issues
- **Lobby with your real life experiences** – tell them how a state program is being implemented in your district
- **Don't overdo your lobbying** – short and sweet
- **Shore up lobbying allies** – if you know there are other districts, with a similar issue, it can be persuasive
- **Don't forget the media** – when appropriate they can further an issue, but be prepared with facts
- **Always be positive** – the issue may be a problem but the person doesn't have to be
- **Everyone like a pat on the back** – give thanks for support!



March 17, 2015

Ms. Cathryn Silver-Smith, Chairperson
Board of Finance
Town of Ashford
5 Town Hall Road
Ashford, CT 06278

RE: Board of Education Response to Auditor's Fiscal Year
Fiscal Year 2014 Letter on Certain Internal Control Related Matters

Dear Ms. Silver-Smith,

In your position as the Chair of the Board of Finance for the Town of Ashford, you have requested that Mahoney Sabol & Company, LLP provide a letter as to whether or not the response provided by the Acting Superintendent of the Ashford Public Schools in her letter to you dated November 24, 2014 would address our audit finding over the Board of Education's purchasing policies and procedures. This finding was reported in our *Letter on Certain Internal Control Related Matters*, which was issued as part of our audit of the Town's basic financial statements as of and for the year ended June 30, 2014.

The Purchasing Policy that was adopted by the Board of Education on November 7, 2013, incorporates different levels of authorizations based on the dollar value and type of contract. A lack of segregation of duties over purchasing may exist under the Purchasing Policy for any purchases that are both initiated and authorized by the Superintendent. In her letter dated November 24, 2014, the Acting Superintendent's response to our finding regarding the lack of segregation of duties over purchasing stated:

"Although we currently do not have in place a policy requiring an additional level of approval for purchases initiated by the Superintendent, we do however follow communicative best practices which include monthly financial reporting to the Board of Education as well as the Superintendent's monthly report which has included proposed spending plans, purpose of expenses and priorities. The authority of the Board of Education, as well as the district staff, is the additional levels that ensure that any purchases initiated by the Superintendent are within the reasonable educational needs, and are for the benefit of the school community and the families of Ashford".

Segregation of duties is important to designing an effective internal control structure as it reduces the risk of both erroneous and inappropriate actions. In order to achieve adequate segregations of duties over purchasing, the person who requisitions the purchase of goods and services should not be the person who approves the purchase. When these functions cannot or are not separated, a compensating control should be implemented to minimize the increased level of risk. Although the response by the Acting Superintendent discusses supervisory level reviews that are performed, such as monthly financial reporting and the Superintendent's monthly report, these reviews may not be at the level of detail that would compensate for the lack of segregation of duties and, therefore, may not reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

To the extent that segregation of duties cannot be achieved, the Board of Education should consider implementing an independent supervisory review of all or a sample of the transactions (depending on volume of transactions and level of risk) initiated by the Superintendent on a regular basis to identify, investigate and correct potential improper or erroneous transactions, if any. This review could be performed by either a member of the Board of Education or by another member of the Town's management, including the Town Treasurer or First Selectman. In addition, the Board of Education could consider engaging an external firm to perform an agreed-upon procedures engagement over areas deemed to be of greatest risk.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of assistance to Town, and would be happy to discuss the above matter further at your request.

Sincerely,



Michael VanDeventer
Partner

Cc: Mr. James Rupert, Chairman, Ashford Board of Education
Ms. Cheryl Baker, Treasurer, Town of Ashford
Mr. Michael Zambo, First Selectman

William Garrett Miller, Jr.

7 East Hill Road, Canton, CT 06019-2418

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eFax (860) 760-6364

An innovative leader, I seek leadership challenges in the school business consulting arena that will enable student academic excellence and central office efficiency. A career forged in public service drives me to pursue new opportunities to strengthen and broaden my professional career. Always a team player, I strive to create strong collaborative relationships with town hall and school district staff, fellow administrators, and business colleagues.

EDUCATION

- 1970 Dartmouth College, BA Psychology
- 1978 US Naval Postgraduate School, Aviation Safety
- 1980 Golden Gate University, MBA Financial Management
- 1996 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, MS Computer Science

EXPERIENCE

2005 to Present – Consultant and Interim School Business Administrator

- **Columbia Public Schools** – Mar-May 2014 – Financial Forecast and Analysis
- **Eastford School** – Jan-Feb 2013 – Payroll/Accounts Payable – Consulting Services
- **East Granby Public Schools** – 2013 – 2014 – School Construction Project Closeouts
- **Watertown Public Schools** – July 2012 – September 2012 – Interim Business Manager
- **South Windsor Public Schools** – October 2011 – June 2012 – Interim Business Manager
- **Lebanon Public Schools** – April 2011 – Sept 2011 – Interim Business Manager
- **CT Dept of Education** – October 2010 – May 2011 – Windham PS Quality Review Team
- **Preston Public Schools** – July 2009 – Sept 2011 – Interim Business Manager
- **Norwalk Board of Education** – 2009-Present – End of year Financial Reporting (ED001)
- **Borough of Naugatuck** – February 2009 – July 2009 – School Construction Project closeouts
- **Watertown Public Schools** - August 2008 – June 2009 – Interim Business Manager
- **Orange Public Schools** – June 2008 – August 2008 – Interim Business Manager
- **West Haven Public Schools** – July 2007 – July 2008 – Interim Business Manager
- **Regional School District #17** – May 2008 – Sept 2011 – School construction project audit
- **Regional School District #4** – January - June 2007 – Interim Business Manager
- **Winchester Public Schools** – April 2006 – May 2007 – Interim Business Manager
- **Lincoln RI Public Schools** – District admin reorganization and financial systems review
- **Wethersfield Public Schools**
 - July 2005 - May 2006 – Interim Director of Business Services
 - July 2006 – April 2010 - School construction project closeouts
- **Weston Public Schools** – Utility analysis, MUNIS account creation and budget set-up, teacher contract salary analysis, long-range budget forecast
- **East Haddam Public Schools** – Central Office organization and staffing study

1992 to 2005 Business/Facilities Manager, Canton Public Schools

- Administered and performed all school business functions – accounting, budget development and execution, transportation, food service, facilities, contracting, personnel, labor negotiations, and technology. As the senior district administrator during the period of numerous Superintendent

turnovers, I provided invaluable guidance and assistance to both the new and interim Superintendents as well as assuming additional responsibilities.

- Designed and organized a budget document which provided a broad context for the educational programs in the Town of Canton. The document closely followed the ASBO Meritorious Budget Award guidelines.
- Developed a **five-year budget projection model**, which was used in concert with a 10-year model proposed for the Town government.
- Served as Director of Technology through 2001. Wrote the district technology plan and grant application - **awarded \$248,000** for infrastructure wiring/network. Designed the district's Wide Area Network. Coordinated all district level technology procurement and infrastructure support. Instituted a district level technology roundtable. Designed and implemented the district's website and collaborative intranet environment. Continue to provide guidance on technology.
- Managed the Town of Canton **medical self-insurance program**. Created funding mechanism and claims cost tracking tool, which has ensured adequate funding and low renewal rates.
- Shepherded school renovation/addition, school closing, and school alteration projects.

1990 to 1992 Travelers Insurance, Information Systems

- Software maintenance and development for Personal and Commercial Lines

1970 to 1990 United States Navy, Naval Aviator, Lt. Commander

- Aviation Technical Advisor on the staff of the Royal Navy Flight Safety Center, Yeovilton, England. Authored and edited numerous articles for the Royal Navy's quarterly flight safety magazine, Cockpit, regarding aviation safety matters. Made high impact presentations to a wide variety of audiences throughout the United Kingdom on aviation safety and accident prevention practices. Produced two films on aviation safety.
- Budget Officer responsible for a **\$2 billion operating budget** to the Commander, Naval Air Force, US Atlantic Fleet. Oversight of 15 financial managers with responsibilities for 20 Navy/Marine Air Stations, 7 aircraft carriers and over 150 Navy/Marine aircraft squadrons. Achieved a high level of success in forecasting, justifying and obtaining funds by personal attention and contact with funds managers at all levels of the Department of the Navy, including Congressional staff, GAO auditors and other public officials.

PROFESSIONAL/CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS

CT Association of School Business Officials: President 1998-99, Board of Directors – 4 terms

Association of School Business Officials International, ASBO Meritorious Budget Award Reviewer 18yrs

Canton Lions Club, Past-President, Board of Directors

Canton Sam Collins Day, Steering Committee, since 1994

Canton Chamber of Commerce – President 2010-2012

Canton Charter Revision Commission – Vice-Chair – Charter Revision passed Nov 2009

Canton Temporary Committee on Information Technology – Chair – April 2010-March 2012

Farmington Valley Trails Council – Membership Chair, Board of Directors

Rotary Club of Avon-Canton – Webmaster, President-Elect 2015-16

Seniors Job Bank – Canton Town Coordinator

REFERENCES

Available upon request