

Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – January 7, 2016

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 J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:41 pm. Present were members K. Rourke, M. Matthews, J. Lippert, L. Donegan and J. Calarese, Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, Director of Special Education C. Ford, Principal T. Hopkins, Asst. Principal G. Dukette, Business Manager D. Neel and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Also present were S. Schillinger, G. Burnham, J. Lindsay, J. Silverstein, K. Knotts and AEA president E. Turcotte (8:17 pm).

Persons to be Heard

None

Communications

Chair J. Rupert received an email from Board of Finance chairperson C. Silver-Smith confirming a three-board meeting on January 14th to discuss FY 17 budget planning. Other communications received were School Planning and Management magazine, a certificate for achievement of early compliance with state regulations for early childhood, a fundraising flyer to be distributed by the PTO and an order form to place or purchase space in the 8th grade class yearbook. The January 2016 enrollment report and the Ashford Town Budget Calendar were distributed.

a. Business Partnership Program (Mansfield Community Center)

The board reviewed and discussed the information provided.

New Business

a. Staff Appointment

Dr. Longo recommended appointment of Joseph DeCatiff as a school bus/vehicle driver.

Motion made by L. Donegan to appoint Joseph DeCatiff to the position of school bus/vehicle driver effective January 4, 2016. Motion seconded by J. Calarese and carried unanimously.

b. 2016-2017 Ashford School Calendar (draft)

The draft calendar for next year was discussed. Beginning with the next school year, Election Day must be a non-session day for students. Members are asked to review the calendar, it will be revisited at a later date for approval.

Old Business

a. 2016 Bicknell Scholarships

Members had requested more information about the Bicknell Trust at the last meeting. Scholarship Management collects and processes the applications based on the trust's criteria for qualification.

Motion made by J. Calarese to award not more than \$6,000 in total for 2016 Bicknell Trust Scholarships, and each scholarship shall not exceed \$1,000 per recipient. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

Board Roundtable

a. Prioritize Capital Improvement Plan

There was extensive discussion concerning items for consideration in the five-year capital plan. Items discussed included but were not limited to repurposing of the former tech education space, the need for professional guidance in evaluating that space, storage concerns, drop ceilings in the media center and classrooms, replacement of windows in the primary wing, school bus and van purchases, plumbing and heating upgrades, roof, regrading of the front parking lot, addition of a covered portico, air balancing improvements and outdoor playscape and team building equipment.

Currently, the priorities are as follows: Immediate need for professional architect to evaluate the former tech education space and begin renovation in the summer if possible.

Year 1: Repurposing of the tech ed. space, replacement of windows in the primary wing and purchase of school bus and one van.

Year 2: Addition of drop ceilings in three classrooms and the media center, air balancing system upgrade and purchase of school bus and one van.

Year 3: Upgrading of plumbing and heating in primary wing and purchase of school bus.

Year 4: Regrading of front parking lot, portico and purchase of school bus.

Year 5: Addition of large outdoor storage unit or garage type building, outdoor playscape, indoor and outdoor climbing walls and purchase of a school bus.

Each year, the condition of the school roof is evaluated and must be inclusive and a consideration in each year going forward. Cost information for all items discussed will be revisited.

b. Budget Worksession

As directed by the Board at its last meeting, the Superintendent was charged with providing them a draft budget that is responsive to declining enrollment, maintains current programs, curricular goals and objectives and is fiscally sound. The Superintendent's budget draft in the amount of \$7,513,889 represents a 1.2% increase over the current fiscal year. Members reviewed and discussed the draft's abbreviated narrative text, the Superintendent's summary document, object and detailed budget worksheets. After much discussion concerning impact of this budget on students, programs and their integrity, discussion turned to a detailed review of system wide staffing ratios, after school program, sharing of services, excess cost, salaries, benefits and professional development.

Motion made by J. Calarese to approve the FY 17 budget increase of 1.2% or \$7,513,889. Motion seconded by M. Matthews and carried unanimously.

The documents presented at this meeting were in a working draft form. Following the three-board meeting on January 14th, the Superintendent will begin crafting of the detailed budget narrative.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular board meeting will be 1/21/16.

Motion made by L. Donegan to adjourn the meeting (10:12 pm). Motion seconded by M. Matthews and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau
Recording Secretary

Approved by the Ashford Board of Education: January 21, 2016