

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – April 29, 2020
7:00 pm
Meeting Held Via Zoom

Note: Per CGS 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 exceptions of motions and votes recorded, the minutes are unofficial until they have been read and approved by a majority vote by 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

Chair John Lippert called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM. Present were Jane Urban, Shannon Gamache, Tess Grous, Al Maccarone and Tina Fradette. Also present were Superintendent Dr. James Longo, Interim Business Manager Karen Munroe, Principal Troy Hopinks, Director of Pupil Personnel Cindy Ford, Interim Acting Asst. Principal Polly Borysevicz and recording secretary Jen Barsaleau.

Approximately 135 members of the public were signed in during the course of the meeting.

Board Secretary Tess Grous shared information from CABA attorney Rebecca Adams concerning electronic meeting hosting and public attendance. As the Board's current Zoom subscription limits participation to 100, the meeting was suspended while the Zoom account was accessed and the subscription level increased. Atty. Adams noted that neither members of the BOE or the Superintendent should be hosting the electronic meeting, rather someone with an information technology background should be that person. With that, Dr. Longo turned the hosting duties to Scott Waddell, technology coordinator for Ashford School.

Participants were instructed to sign out of the meeting to allow time to expand the Zoom subscription and rejoin at 8:00pm.

Upon successful upgrade of the Zoom participant level, the meeting resumed at 8:09 pm.

Chair John Lippert noted that several members of the public had provided written communications concerning the school budget and any others wishing to speak would be given the opportunity during the FY 21 budget worksession. Listeners were cautioned that their time to speak may be limited to 3 minutes given the task at hand for the board this evening.

FY 21 Budget Worksession

- Speakers included Rebecca Haeger, Kim Kouatly, Rob Trotta, Cari Renn, Tim Rhodes, Lisa Centola, Carolyn Trotta and Jennifer Lindsay. All spoke against any budget reduction and the loss of teachers. Several spoke of the importance of Spanish, afterschool programs, field trips and athletics while others felt those programs could be reduced and/or eliminated or some creative solutions applied to save them, some said to consider not filling the assistant principal vacancy.
- Board members took turns reading the letters aloud of all who had submitted written communication unless they had been heard during the previous voice session.

The board and the Superintendent commenced a very spirited and lengthy discussion about finding a way to achieve the required \$156,871 in additional reductions to the budget without having severe and direct impact on students, to the employment of staff and to continuity of a quality and comprehensive education which is the board's legal responsibility through the district and school administration. Everyone agreed it was not going to be possible to make reductions that were not detrimental to our school. Topics of discussion included, but were not limited to were elimination the of staff and programs, instituting pay to play sports, transportation, the effect that the loss of Spanish might mean for students going into high school; class size increases if teacher layoffs are necessary, increases in unemployment compensation costs, reducing substitute teacher costs, cutting field trips, utilities, supplies and wage freezes. After much discussion the following items were identified and put into two categories. The first grouping would be the least impactful to students, the second group has a direct impact on students, staff and programs.

Least impactful reductions made to the Ashford School budget, equaling \$49,732

Account Number	Title	Reduction	Remaining
01-2320-100-10000 01-1000-220-10000	Superintendent Salary SS/Medicare	2,146 <u>164</u> 2,310	79,834
01-2400-100-10001 01-1000-220-10000 01-2400-230-10000	Assistant Principal Salary SS/Medicare Certified Ret./Other Reg. Ed	5,000 72 <u>250</u> 5,322	85,000
01-2790-110-10000 01-1000-220-10000	Class Trip Transportation (Field Trips) SS/Medicare	5,000 <u>382</u> 5,382	7,832
01-1200-561-20001	Extended School Year/summer School	2,000	33,000
01-1000-340-10000	Legal Expense Reg. Ed.	6,391	6,609
01-2320-330-10000	Professional Development Admin.	1,500	1,000
01-2410-600-10001	Principal's Discretionary Fund	600	450
01-2530-610-10000	Copier Paper	2,300	5,000
01-1000-730-10000	Elementary Equipment	2,000	0
01-1000-730-10001	Music/Band Equipment	1,457	0
01-1000-730-10003	Copier Equipment Lease	6,000	15,497
01-1200-730-20001	Adaptive Equipment	5,000	0
01-1200-730-20003	SpEd Technology Equipment	970	0
01-1001-730-10001	Middle School Equipment	2,000	0
01-2230-730-10001	Middle School Tech. Equip	1,900	0
01-2600-730-10000	Non. Inst. Equip./Furniture	3,000	0
01-2900-730-10000	PE/Athletic Equipment	1,600	0

More impactful reductions made to the Ashford School budget, equaling \$107,139

Account Number	Title	Reduction	Remaining
01-1000-111-10003 Plus several accounts. All impacted by this reduction	World Language Certified Staff Includes Unemployment and benefits	36,719	
01-2600-110-10000 Plus several accounts. All impacted by this reduction	Custodians Includes Unemployment and benefits	18,661	
01-1000-113-10000 01-1000-220-10000	Sub Teachers/Paras Reg Ed SS/Medicare	16,995 <u>1,300</u> 18,295	
Cut Athletic Program 01-2790-110-10001 01-2290-151-10001 01-2900-151-10000 01-2900-340-10000 01-1000-220-10000	This elimination of the Athletic Program will result in a Pay-to-Participate option. Extracurricular Transp. Prog Dir.: Athletic Coordinator Coaches Athletic Officials SS/Medicare	 2,640 2,500 22,600 5,126 <u>598</u> 33,464	 0 5,047 0 0
		Total Two Clusters: \$156,871	

Adopt FY 21 Budget for Presentation at Public Hearing

Motion made by Jane Urban to approve the FY 21 Ashford School budget as revised, motion seconded by Tina Fradette and carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The next regular meeting date is May 7th. Agenda items include approval of minutes, COVID-19 update, executive session for Superintendent Evaluation.

Adjournment

Motion made by Shannon Gamache to adjourn the meeting (12:03am). Motion seconded by Tina Fradette and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:
Jennifer Barsaleau, Recording Secretary