

Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – June 4, 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 7:19 PM. Present were Jane Urban, Shannon Gamache, Tess Grous, Marian Matthews, Tina Fradette and Al Maccarone. Also present were Superintendent Dr. James Longo, Principal Troy Hopkins, Director of Pupil Personnel Cindy Ford, Interim Acting Asst. Principal Polly Borysevicz, Technology Coordinator Scott Waddell (Zoom meeting host), and recording secretary Jen Barsaleau.

Approximately 28 members of the public signed in during the course of the meeting.

Communications

Member Jane Urban shared an email sent to the Board from parent Jamie Beers asking that consideration be given to holding an in-person graduation event for 8th grade students in July per the guidelines of the Governor.

Opportunity for Public Comment

- Tim Grady noted there are a lot of parents who are feeling that there could be other options, he further stated that he felt that “something better” could be done for the 8th grade students.
- Jamie Beers spoke about the isolation the kids have been through this year and all that they have missed out on. They have had limited opportunity to socialize these past 3 months. Many of the current 8th grade students have been together for several years and some will not be going on to E.O. Smith and this may be their last time together as a class.
- Rebecca Haeger strongly agreed with Ms. Beers and Mr. Grady. She said that what the class advisors have done to date is wonderful. (The remainder of Mrs. Haeger’s comments were inaudible due to audio issues)
- Kim Kouatly stated her appreciation for all that Mrs. Moore and Ms. Bernardi have done in creating the students virtual graduation events, she agreed it would be nice to do something bigger in July or August, in addition to what has already been planned.
- Kim Johnston read parts of an email that she had sent to members just prior to the board meeting. She echoed the same sentiments as the other parents.

Dr. Longo asked that the email from Ms. Beers be forwarded and suggested that a committee be formed to discuss options for a future, in-person event, but the current plans should move forward. Current guidelines restrict such activities until at least July 6th.

Member Shannon Gamache stated that she thought it would be better for parents to address an in-person event as there would be less restrictions on such an event than if it were held at the school. Mr. Hopkins agreed that the students deserve an in-person event, however it could not be held without further guidelines, which we do not yet have.

Tim Grady asked Dr. Longo what the guidelines are? Dr. Longo responded that social gatherings are still restricted until July 6th at the earliest. There will be further communication from the Governor’s office this coming week.

Approval of Minutes: 05/21/2020

Motion made by Jane Urban to approve the minutes of 05/21/2020 with the following amendments. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

- Town of Ashford Youth Services - strike the second to last word
- Admin Reports
 - First bullet
 - Replace “that teacher” with “the foreign exchange teacher”
 - For the first mention of ESY, write it as “Extended School Year (ESY)”

- 3rd bullet – cut the word “noted” from the sentence that starts “John Lippert...”
- New Business, part C. Website Ownership
 - cut the word “is” from the second sentence
 - In the third sentence, move “over the summer” to just after “education website”
- Opportunity for Public Comment – in the last sentence, add “a” between “indeed” and “wonderful”

Administrative Reports

Mr. Hopkins report to the board consisted of an overview and explanation of accountability factors related to Smarter Balance Assessment (SBAC) testing and a comparison of composite ratings given to schools in the sending towns of Regional District #19. The report also spelled out the measures taken by the district in the 18-19 and 19-20 school years to strengthen areas that the test results identified as needing attention. Discussion followed which included posting such information on our website for people who may be seeking such data, math intervention and resources, professional development and instructional strategies. There was further discussion about this topic being discussed at a recent Board of Finance meeting. The board chair will communicate with the Board of Finance regarding test scores. Due to the pandemic SBAC testing was cancelled for this spring so there will be no data available from the current school year.

Dr. Longo asked that the board think about a date for the annual Strategic Planning Meeting which is generally in August.

Old Business

a. Second Reading of Policies

There were several policies sent to members for second reading. Members questioned what exactly had been changed in the policies. A change summary will be re-sent to board members that was provided by Shipman & Goodwin and the policies will be added to a future agenda for final approval.

b. COVID-19 Update

Discussion was held concerning responses to the King and King audit, whether or not future meetings being held via Zoom or in-person. For the time being, Zoom meetings will continue and in person meeting will be re-evaluated at a future date. There are several advantages to continuing in the Zoom format, even when the time is right for meetings to be held at Ashford School again.

New Business

a. Staff Appointment

Dr. Longo recommended the appointment of the Assistant Principal. He explained the process of posting the position internally and there were two excellent internal applicants that were interviewed. Following those interviews, the committee recommended the appointment of Polly Borysevicz. Discussion followed, the board asked Mrs. Borysevicz to update them on the status of her administrative coursework, her educational background as a teacher and her time spent as the interim acting assistant principal, as well her role and vision for Ashford School.

Motion made by Jane Urban to appoint Polly Borysevicz to the position of Assistant Principal. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

b. Staff Resignation

Based on the board’s appointment of Polly Borysevicz to the position of Assistant Principal, Mrs. Borysevicz notices her resignation as a Special Education teacher effective 6/30/2020.

Motion made by Jane Urban to accept the resignation of Special Education teacher Polly Borysevicz. Motion seconded by Shannon Gamache and carried unanimously.

c. Graduation of the Class of 2020

Commencement will be June 15th at 7pm, graduation awards were briefly discussed.

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Second reading of policies, special meeting (exit interview), schedule August Strategic Planning Meeting.

Adjournment

Motion made by Shannon Gamache to adjourn the meeting (9:07pm). Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau, Recording Secretary

