

Ashford Board of Education  
**Meeting Minutes – June 3, 2021**  
**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 7:02 p.m.
- Present were members Kim Kouatly, Marian Matthews, and Tina Fradette. Jane Urban joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m., and Al Maccarone joined the meeting at approximately 7:10 p.m. Tess Grous was absent.
- Also present were Superintendent Dr. James Longo, Principal Troy Hopkins, Asst. Principal Polly Borysevicz, Director of Pupil Personnel Cindy Ford, Interim Business Manager Kelee Calkins, and Zoom meeting host Scott Waddell, as well as approximately 15 other members of the school staff and the public.

***MOTION made by Marian Matthews to add item 1.5 Student Presentation and item 6e Memorandum of Understanding for the AEA Contract to the agenda. Motion seconded by Tina Fradette and carried unanimously.***

Jane Urban and Al Maccarone joined the meeting.

**Student Presentation – Kindergarten Video**

**Communications – None.**

**Opportunity for Public Comment**

- Al Maccarone said Wooden Spoon will not be available for tentative 07/15/2021 luncheon date.
- Jane Urban thanked John Lippert for his speech at commencement.
- John Lippert and Jane Urban thanked Troy Hopkins for his speech. He set a nice tone and had a lot of familiarity with the students and families.
- John Lippert thanked Lynn Fontaine for her role in organizing the commencement.

**Approval of Minutes**

- ***MOTION made by Jane Urban to approve minutes from 06/03/2021. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.***

**Old Business**

**a. Bicknell Scholarship Awards – Committee Report**

- The committee examined the applications and chose four recipients: Faith Carabino, Haley Ignatowicz, Emma Schillinger, and Max Smith.

**b. Capital Improvements Update**

- Dr. Longo said they are trying to incorporate capital improvements into general budget this year. They unfroze the budget about a week ago and are beginning to purchase things that were on hold pending an analysis of year-end status.

**c. Revisit Future BOE Meeting Plans**

- **Strategic Planning Meeting (Date, Place, Time)**
- **Regular Meeting (In-Person, Zoom, Both)**
  - There is a regular meeting scheduled for 08/19/2021. Strategic planning meeting could take place on that date at 3:00 p.m. Discussion will include board evaluation and consent agenda (would require changing a bylaw). Board members can consider other topics to include and bring ideas to 07/15/2021 meeting. In person versus Zoom discussed. Board would like to have hybrid meetings, with the board meeting in person and giving the public opportunity to join via Zoom. Scott Waddell said we have the equipment necessary to facilitate hybrid meetings. They will be using the room just down from the nurse's office as a multipurpose room, and the board can use it for meetings.

### **New Business**

#### **a. Ratification of Local 506, Municipal Employees Union Independent Successor Agreement**

- *MOTION made by Tina Fradette to ratify Local 506, Municipal Employees Union Independent Successor Agreement. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.*

#### **b. Staff Appointment**

- *MOTION made by Jane Urban to approve the appointment of Deana Chrzan as Business Manager. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.*
  - Deana was sought after by three other districts. Kelee Calkins was thanked for filling in as Interim Business Manager.
- *MOTION made by Marian Matthews to approve the appointment of Alyssa Gwinnell as Interventionist. Motion seconded by Tina Fradette and carried unanimously.*
  - Alyssa is certified in 4-8 math and reading intervention and willing to do both. She is working on her doctorate currently.

#### **c. Approval of FY 22 Non-Union Employee Salary Agreements**

- *MOTION made by Jane Urban to approve 2.5% wage increases for FY 22 for the following positions: School Nurse; Technology Coordinator; Business Office Associates; Administrative Assistants to Supt/BOE, Principal/Asst. Supt. and Special Education Director; and the Office Assistant for Ashford School. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.*
- *MOTION made by Jane Urban to approve a three-year contract of employment for Assistant Principal Polly Borysevicz for the term of July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2024, as negotiated. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.*

#### **d. FY 21 Year-End Budget Status**

- After making some purchases that were delayed, we will still be in good shape to apply 1-2% to the non-lapsing fund. It might be possible to take care of some capital items including heat exchanger, sprinkler repair, and fire alarm repair.

#### **e. Memorandum of Understanding for the AEA Contract**

- Dr. Longo has been in contact with Amy Capozziello, who asked for 6-month leave of absence. The first three months would be FMLA. The last three months would be unpaid leave. In the past, we have carried the medical benefits for staff members when they had unpaid parenting leave for up to three months. It is only available to tenured people. The current contract does not reflect what we have been doing for the last several years. Jane Urban asked if the employee would be required to return after the leave. They will add that language in.
- *MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to, as discussed in our meeting, authorize the Superintendent to finalize a memorandum of understanding with the AEA to address the issue of health insurance. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.*

### **Opportunity for Public Comment**

- Jennifer Lindsay mentioned the end of the school year and all the thank yous given out. We need to say thank you to the kids.
- Troy Hopkins thanked Jennifer Lindsay for really stepping up this year.
- Dr. Longo said thank you to the Board of Education and thank you to the staff and administration for a fun 12 years. The pandemic was a test under fire, and the school community really came together.
- Al Maccarone thanked Dr. Longo for the changes he has made at Ashford School, comparing his son's experience with his grandson's experience.

### **Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items**

- Next meeting date 07/15/2021
- Administrative Reports, to include information on staffing and changes in school curriculum
- Reports from Transportation and Cafeteria
- Round table discussion with Superintendent
- Group read to be discussed at the August meeting

### **Discussion of Strategy with Respect to Potential Litigation (Possible Executive Session)**

- *MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to enter executive session for discussion of strategy with respect to potential litigation, inviting Dr. Longo and Troy Hopkins. Motion seconded by Jane Urban and carried unanimously.*

- The board, Dr. Longo, and Troy Hopkins entered executive session at 8:46 p.m. They exited executive session at 8:57 p.m. No action was taken.

### **Adjournment**

- *MOTION made by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.*

Sara Wilson  
Recording Secretary