

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – March 17, 2022
7:00 pm
Meeting Held Electronically 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 Jane Urban called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.
- Present were members Marian Matthews, Jennifer Leszczynski, and Jon Laughlin. Jane Urban was present via Zoom. Tess Grous joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m. Kim Kouatly joined the meeting at 7:06 p.m. Al Maccarone joined the meeting at 7:08 p.m.
- Also present were Superintendent Craig Creller, Business Manager Deana Chrzan, and Zoom meeting host Scott Waddell. There were approximately 27 members of the school staff and the public present via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

Tess Grous joined the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

BOE Chair Remarks (Jane Urban)

- Good news – Craig Creller and Deana Chrzan did an excellent job presenting the budget to the Board of Finance. The Board of Finance recommended a reduction of 1% from our original request.
- Bad news – Principal Troy Hopkins has submitted his resignation, and we are sad to see him go.

Vice Chair Marian Matthews conducted the meeting beginning at 7:05 p.m.

Kim Kouatly joined the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

Awards and Recognition (Superintendent)

- Connecticut Association of Schools Arts Awards were received by Ava Rufrano and Alma van Heiningen.
- The VEX IQ World Championship robotics competition will be in Dallas, Texas in May, and we are sending two students, Ben Buch and Nicholas Caye. Thank you to Dr. Carly Imhoff and our new science teacher, Sean Vanzant, who has been observing robotics classes and supporting students.
- We are sending nine students to the State Invention Convention: Cara Buch, Amena Perry, Thomas Caye, Delaney Dimmock, Ava Rufrano, Alma van Heiningen, Anthony Dancosse-Sabbag, Robby Davis, and Henry Burnham.

Al Maccarone joined the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

Communications (Secretary) - None

Opportunity for Public Comment

- Jennifer Leszczynski (Krapf Rd.): All the robotics teams qualified for state, and it was an amazing day. Thank you to Dr. Imhoff! Is the WINGS event happening for 8th graders?
- Marian Matthews: Is the Oceanography field trip happening? Superintendent Craig Creller said it is.

Approval of Minutes

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the minutes from 01/20/2022. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone. Al Maccarone stated he was late but present for the meeting. In the last sentence of the third bullet point under Awards and Recognition, it should be two outplacements instead of two opt outs. Motion carried unanimously with one abstention (J. Laughlin).

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the minutes from 02/03/2022. Motion seconded by Jon Laughlin and carried unanimously.

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the minutes from the 02/10/2022 special meeting. Motion seconded by Jon Laughlin and carried unanimously with one abstention (M. Matthews).

MOTION made by Jon Laughlin to approve the minutes from the 02/23/2022 special meeting. Motion seconded by Jennifer Leszczynski. The third bullet of Call to Order should state that there were 87 members of the school staff and the public present via Zoom. ***Motion carried unanimously.***

Consent Agenda Items

- a. Staff Appointments – Luke Croxton – Physical Education and Health; Jennifer Turner – Special Education
- b. Staff Resignations – Troy Hopkins – Principal/Assistant Superintendent
- c. January/February 2022 Financial Statement

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the consent agenda items. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

Old Business

- a. FY 23 Budget
 - We presented to the Board of Finance 03/10/2022, asking for a 5.21% increase. They approved a 4.21% increase. The good news is that it comes with a \$50,000 fuel contingency fund. We will schedule a special meeting for 03/31/2022 at 7:00 p.m. to discuss how to adjust the estimated budget request.
- b. Review of Current Budget and Line Item Transfer Policy (Series 3000)
 - We are required to report on our budget four times a year. We are doing it every month.
 - Transfers are required as needed.

New Business

- a. 2022-2023 Ashford School Calendar
 - This is a draft. Vacation days and professional development days are very well aligned with surrounding towns and Region 19. Unions and staff will be given an opportunity to provide input.
- b. 2022-2023 Healthy Foods Certification
 - ***MOTION made by Kim Kouatly that pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education or governing authority certifies that all food items offered for sale to students in the schools under its jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards during the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. This certification shall include all food offered for sale to students separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, culinary programs, and any fundraising activities on school premises sponsored by the school or non-school organizations and groups. Motion seconded by Jane Urban and carried unanimously.***
 - ***MOTION made by Kim Kouatly that the board of education or governing authority will allow the sale to students of food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards and beverages not listed in Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes provided that the following conditions are met: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the food and beverage items are not sold from a vending machine or school store. An "event" is an occurrence that involves more than just a regularly scheduled practice, meeting, or extracurricular activity. For example, soccer games, school plays, and interscholastic debates are events but soccer practices, play rehearsals, and debate team meetings are not. The "regular school day" is the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. "Location" means where the event is being held and must be the same place as the food and beverage sales. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.***
 - Discussion about adding a salad bar option. Discussion about ideas to include in future including farm to table and doing more cooking rather than using prepared foods.
- c. Principal Search Committee
 - Superintendent Craig Creller plans to create a committee in March/April including a board member, parents, and teachers. He would like to have them create the qualifications/job posting. They can survey parents and

staff to get their feedback. Proposed timeline discussed: Post job in early to mid-April, interview in May, and appoint in June.

- Discussion about timing of job posting, potentially posting prior to forming committee and creating job description.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

- Next meeting will be special meeting on 03/31/2022 to discuss the budget. There will be opportunity for public comment. Chair Jane Urban asked Superintendent Craig Celler to prepare suggestions and give board members an opportunity to review them before the meeting.
- Regular meeting for 04/07/2022 to include curriculum workshop and subcommittees.

Opportunity for Public Comment

- Superintendent Craig Celler gave a COVID update. We have had zero cases since going mask optional.

Adjournment

MOTION made by Jane Urban to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 p.m. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.

Sara Wilson
Recording Secretary