

## Ashford Board of Education Ashford, Connecticut

*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.*

### Special Meeting Minutes – April 1, 2014 Ashford School Library Media Center

#### **Call to Order**

Chair J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm. Present were members J. Lippert, K. Warren, J. Rupert, K. Rourke, and D. Wesson. Also present were Dr. J. Longo, Superintendent, T. Hopkins, Principal; and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. There were approximately 20 persons in the audience.

#### **Board Response to Public Budget Comment (limited to 20 minutes per board policy)**

J. Rupert welcomed everyone and opened the floor for comment.

*Dee Dreslough* asked if handouts given to the board at the time of order would be on the website. Dr. Longo responded they would be posted. The items distributed to the board were a revised Superintendent Budget Analysis, 2002-2013 Enrollment and Budget Review Resource Material.

#### **Final Review of 2014-2015 Budget**

The board and Dr. Longo reviewed the Budget Review Resource Material packet and cross-referenced the page entitled “Proposed Reductions” with notes of the board members from last week’s meeting concerning specific objects and line items. The document addressed coaches, audit, plant utilities, equipment maintenance, plant supplies, transportation supplies, diesel, gasoline and special education evaluations outsourced and special education supplies. The board asked to revisit substitutes, workers’ compensation, certified retirement healthcare, speech outsourced and other lines within special education. The board stated that without Mrs. Hartigan’s presence, it is difficult to discuss her numbers without knowing the reasoning for them. Dr. Longo explained that Mrs. Hartigan is recovering from surgery and cannot be present, but he and Mrs. Hartigan spoke at great length and reviewed the areas that the board requested last Thursday. She stated to Dr. Longo that the reductions she provided to the business office would ensure that Ashford complies with the MOE (maintenance of effort) requirement for state and federal grant funding.

The total reductions to the budget identified by this review totaled \$54,384. This number is inclusive of the \$25,384 stated on the “Proposed Reductions” document.

The board identified the substitute line as historically underfunded, and discussed adding funds to this line in addition to a possible addition to the certified retirement healthcare line.

**Motion** made by D. Wesson to add \$15,000 to the substitute line and \$8,885 to the certified retirement healthcare line and to allocate the remaining amount of funds identified to art. D. Wesson then amended this motion to allocate the remaining funds to certified teachers.

K. Warren seconded the motion. Discussion followed concerning the motion on the floor.

D. Wesson amended his motion to reduce the FY 15 budget by a total \$54,384 as follows:

Coaches by \$2,464, Audit by \$2,000, Plant Utilities by \$7,000, Object 323 equipment maintenance by \$100, transportation supplies by \$50, diesel by \$11,270, gasoline by \$3,000, the special education object by \$10,500, worker’s compensation by \$8,000 and unemployment compensation by \$10,000. He further moved to add \$15,000 to the substitute line and \$8,885 to the certified retirement healthcare line, leaving \$30,499 available to allocate to the certified staff object as a placeholder.

Motion seconded by J. Lippert. Discussion followed concerning the motion on the floor. D. Wesson withdrew his motion. K. Warren withdrew her second to the motion.

Motion made by K. Warren to reduce the FY 15 budget by \$54,384 as follows:

\$ 2,464 Coaches (01-1112-111-01012)  
\$ 2,000 Audit (01-2200-319-02220)  
\$ 7,000 Plant Utilities (01-2540-321-00254)  
\$ 100 Equipment Maintenance (Object 323)  
\$ 50 Transportation Supplies (01-2550-410-02254 through 01-2550-410-04254)  
\$11,270 Diesel (01-2550-412-01255)  
\$ 3,000 Gasoline (01-2550-412-02255)  
\$10,500 Special Education, overall (Director will designate)  
\$ 8,000 Worker's Compensation Insurance (01-2200-200-02220)  
\$10,000 Unemployment Compensation (01-2200-205-03220)

Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

Motion made by D. Wesson to add \$15,000 to Substitutes (01-2220-112-04220) and \$8,885 to Certified Retirement Healthcare (01-2220-205-04220). Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

Dr. Longo was asked to display the salary impact of the .2 FTE reductions in the proposed budget. While Dr. Longo was searching for that information, Mr. Hopkins was asked by the board chair to provide comment, as the educational leader of the school, as to what he might do if the board were able to find the necessary funds to restore positions. Mr. Hopkins stated he could answer that question, but did not see how that was going to improve already low morale and frankly, was not comfortable in responding. J. Lippert asked him to explain what the proposed reduction to each affected position would mean... would there be less time with students? Mr. Hopkins referred to the draft schedule that he had distributed at an earlier meeting. He reminded everyone that the instructional hours in that draft were listed and were noted in bold type and that the document includes more hours in PE and health in response to concerns raised in the past and can be changed in a number of ways.

The discussion returned to the dollars associated with the .2 FTE reductions. It was stated once again that after the close of the open enrollment period, the board would have a better overall picture of their financial ability to reinstate. Should additional monies be found following the open enrollment, it would be reallocated to this area of the budget. The board chair reiterated that he and the board are committed to reinstatement, if it is possible, after this occurs, but the board needs a solid number to work with.

The Board of Finance chair was allowed to comment, and said that the board needed to share this message and its commitment at the Public Hearing.

**Budget Action (if necessary)**

J. Rupert stated that he was not comfortable with reinstating any of the proposed reductions unless all five could be done. K. Warren agreed.

D. Wesson suggested that restoration be approached differently, not to restore to the status quo, but with new ideas for instruction in these areas. He asked if the preference would be to make a decision on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, or pick two positions to reinstate based on the funds available now.

Following considerable discussion, J. Lippert motioned to table budget action to Thursday's regular meeting, to allow board members time to think about their action. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

Motion made by K. Warren to allocate \$30,499 toward the restoration of the .2 FTE certified staff reductions. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:44 pm) made by D. Wesson, seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau  
Recording Secretary