

Ashford Board of Education  
Regular Meeting Minutes – June 5, 2014  
7:30 p.m.

*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.*

**Call To Order**

Board chair J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm. Present were J. Rupert, K. Warren, D. Wesson, J. Lippert and K. Rourke. Also present were Superintendent J. Longo, business office staff member L. San Diego, D. Morgan (8:05 pm) and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Unable to attend were board members B. Supina and L. Donegan. There were several persons in attendance in the audience: D. Atkinson, S. Fletcher, J. Bowley, G. Leedie, M. Hardisty, A. Porri, R. Fletcher, C. Baker-Bowen, C. Silver-Smith, J. Lindsay, M. Casey, C. Knowlton, N. Page, S. Eastwood, C. Funk, C. Pfalzgraf, M. Simpson, D. Backhaus, J. Belair, M. Phelps, N. Rice, T. Rice, C. Rupert and S. Morytko.

**CL&P Incentive Program**

Frank Truglia addressed the board concerning an offer by “Energize CT” in association with CL&P Small Business Energy Advantage program, to provide retrofit and replacement of various lights and lighting fixtures for the school that will result in an estimated savings of 28,010 kilowatt hours per year. The project reduces greenhouse gas emissions and would serve to correct some safety issues related to lighting in the building. The project value is \$29,087.41 including materials, labor and one year of unlimited service calls. Chair J. Rupert stated that planning and zoning would need to be consulted and a permit obtained for this work. Mr. Truglia explained that upon approval of the plan, a project manager would be assigned to the project and be the person to contact necessary town departments. The project would be financed at 0% over 48 months and in response to the question of member D. Wesson, the district through the assigned project manager may make fixture choices. (Proposal attached).

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the CL&P “Energize CT” proposal as presented. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

**Persons to be Heard**

AEA co-president J. Lindsay asked if she might speak to item 9d “Administrative Regulation: Promotion and Retention” later in the meeting. The chair responded that she could, but would encourage the AEA to submit any questions or concerns about the draft regulation prior to the next regular BOE meeting. C. Silver-Smith stated she would be looking for information this evening concerning the outcome of open enrollment for insurance. She went on to state that concerning the “Superintendent of Schools Contract” item on the agenda, that she would ask that the board not renew the contract of the Superintendent. She spoke for some time highlighting specific issues, including but not limited to: Minimum Budget Requirement, reconciliations with the treasurer, she felt there was an attempt to “hold the town hostage”, the superintendent did not properly execute safety contracts with vendors, he misunderstood the grant and treated it like a “personal checkbook”, he is “aggressive”, did not provide year to date actuals during the budget process, she does not find him to be “a credible resource” and he has “alienated people”. R. Fletcher agreed with Ms. Silver-Smith. He stated that while he could not speak to Dr. Longo’s educational leadership skills, Dr. Longo had stated during the interview process while being considered for this position, that he had considerable experiences in finance. He further stated that the bid process for cameras and safety projects was “illegal”, that the board of selectman had to step in and create a special resolution in order to keep the projects on track and so the vendors would be paid. Treasurer C. Bowen agreed with Mr. Fletcher. BOF member G. Zaicek commented that in her short time on the board of finance that her board is discussing BOE matters “constantly” and miscommunications are also “constant”. C. Pfalzgraf stated that over the years much work has been done in the past in improving BOE credibility and he would “hate to see credibility lost.” M. Simpson agreed with Ms. Silver-Smith and Mr. Fletcher and stated that he was “thoroughly disgusted” by the safety work and how it was handled. J. Bowley stated that she has held numerous offices in politics and remarked that she is seeing different names of people she does not know concerning reconciliation and wanted that explained. S. Eastwood echoed the statement made by Mr. Pfalzgraf and wants to see things “move forward”. N.Rice stated “we would do very well to have a new person in this position. N. Page stated a need for “new leadership.”

## **Communications**

The board chair announced receipt of the following communications:

A thank you letter was received from Charlotte Kelleher, a 2014 Bicknell Scholarship recipient.

A letter from Deb Bubela, physical therapy consultant, thanking the board for the creation of the Physical Education Enhancement Program (PEEP) at Ashford School.

A communication from town clerk Sherri Mutch inviting participation in submitting news and information to the Ashford Citizen.

## **Approval of Minutes: 05/15/2014**

Motion to approve the minutes of 05/15/2014 made by K. Warren. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried with one abstention (J. Lippert).

## **Committee Reports**

No reports.

## **Administrative Reports**

### **a. Superintendent**

Dr. Longo reviewed his report (attached) which includes detailed curricular and financial information as requested by the board in order to adequately consider position restorations as discussed at the last board meeting. A one-page report was distributed showing the outcome of open enrollment. Many staff members changed or waived participation in the plan, this coupled with retirements and hiring of new staff members resulted in an insurance savings of \$115,654.47 from the original amount budgeted. With regard to comments made earlier in the meeting, Dr. Longo acknowledged that he does miscommunicate at times, and he can be aggressive. In this report, Dr. Longo suggested that the board consider the restoration of a library media center paraprofessional that has been covered by existing staff members this year, and adding a full-time custodial position – the previous half time position was not included in this year's budget. Dr. Longo and Mr. Hopkins have had discussions about the need for a middle school counselor. Currently, middle school staff and the school psychologist have been helping the middle school students with transition to high school and student success planning. This must also be a consideration as we implement the Common Core standards.

Member K. Rourke stated that she was not comfortable with reallocating any funds to any new positions, but would support restoration of reduced positions.

### **1. School Security and All Hazards Meeting Update**

Dr. Longo reported that the all hazards safety group had their first meeting June 4<sup>th</sup>. There is much to be done, and he will be meeting with independently with Selectman Zambo, Chief Fletcher and Mike Gardner. The group will meet over the summer to assign specific tasks. This plan will not be available to the public.

### **2. Review of Mobile Cafeteria Table Bids**

Six bids were received for 19 cafeteria tables. Dr. Longo and Mr. Hopkins will review each bids specifications to be sure they comply with the desired product. The bid will not be awarded until this has occurred.

### **3. Year End Budget Meeting**

Dr. Longo requested that the board set a meeting date for the purpose of a year-end budget review and to identify possible areas of transfer. The board will meet June 12<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM for this purpose.

D. Morgan reported that she is in process of closing accounts.

## **Old Business**

### **a. Revisit FY 15 Certified Staff Reductions**

#### **1. Comprehensive Report: Curricular and Fiscal Planning of Restoration**

#### **b. Library Coverage Follow Up**

All items under old business were addressed simultaneously as they were covered in the report of the Superintendent.

Motion by D. Wesson to restore to full time the art, music, health/PE, PE with a health pilot, two reading positions in the FY 15 budget, and to delay the appointment of a .2 data coach until it is revisited at a later date. Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

Brief discussion followed to clarify the definition and duties of the data coach. Dr. Longo stated he would meet with the union to discuss this as a stipend position. Also mentioned was that if the custodial position is discussed in the future that the hours include Saturday coverage. Dr. Longo will gather more information and bring back more information. The library paraprofessional discussion will be added to the June 19<sup>th</sup> agenda.

## **New Business**

K. Rourke motioned to add item 9h, executive session to the agenda for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter related to the Superintendent. Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

### **a. 2015 Healthy Foods Certification**

As required by the CSDE, the board must annually address this item before July 1<sup>st</sup> and file a Healthy Food Certification Statement.

Motion made by K. Warren to adopt the following Healthy Foods Certification Statement.

The Ashford Board of Education, pursuant to section 10-215F of the Connecticut General Statutes, hereby certify that all food items offered for sale to students in the school under our jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education will meet said standards during the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Such 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, and any fundraising activities on school premises, whether or not school sponsored.

Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

### **b. Authorization to Participate in National School Lunch Program**

Annually, the board is required to authorize participation to ensure that Ashford is eligible to receive free and reduced lunch reimbursements during the school year.

Motion made by D. Wesson to authorize participation in the National School lunch program for the 2014-2015 school year. Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

### **c. First Reading: School Safety and Security Policy**

The policy was provided by legal counsel and was read aloud by J. Rupert. The policy will be added for final approval at the July meeting of the board.

### **d. Administrative Regulations Concerning Promotion and Retention**

The draft of this regulation was read aloud by J. Rupert. There was brief discussion. The chair reiterated that comments might be made in writing. K. Rourke asked for clarification on the training of teachers with regard to the section of the regulation concerning teacher portal use of PowerSchool.

### **e. Discussion of Board of Education Committees**

K. Warren shared her thoughts on the committee structure, particularly with the finance committee of the board. Her preference would be for the whole board to meet, rather than subcommittees who then report to the board. She feels there is not enough information for the entire board with this method. The board will revisit this at the June 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.

### **f. Staff Resignations**

Letters of resignation have been received from Michael Young, grade 6 teacher, Jan Jacobsen, kindergarten paraprofessional and Dianna Belliveau, grade 5 teacher.

Motion made by K. Warren to accept, with regret, the resignations of Michael Young, Jan Jacobsen and Dianna Belliveau. Motion seconded by D. Wesson. All will be greatly missed.

### **g. Staff Appointments**

Dr. Longo reviewed the process that was involved in selection of the candidates for teacher appointment. He has discussed each candidate with Mr. Hopkins and recommends the appointment of the following classroom teacher candidates: Paul Hills, Kellie Marshall and Kathryn Schneider. Also recommended was the appointment of Scott Hollister to the position of PE/Health teacher, and JoAnna Silverstein to the position of music teacher.

Motion by K. Rourke to accept the recommendation and appoint each of named candidates to the staff of Ashford School. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

K. Warren asked that there be a 5 minute recess (10:02 pm)

The board exited the library to move to the conference room for the executive session.

### **h. Personnel Matter – Superintendent (Executive Session)**

Motion made by K. Rourke to enter into executive session (10:12 pm) for the purpose of discussion of a personnel matter concerning the Superintendent and to invite J. Barsaleau, D. Morgan and L. SanDiego to attend the beginning of the session, and to invite Dr. Longo in separately. Present in the session were J. Rupert, K. Warren, J. Lippert, K. Rourke, D. Wesson, J. Barsaleau, L. San Diego and D. Morgan.

J. Barsaleau, L. San Diego and D. Morgan left the session at 10:30 pm. Dr. Longo entered the session at 11:35 pm.

The board exited the executive session at 12:25 am and returned to the regular meeting in the library at 12:27 am. No action was taken on item 9h. The item will be added to the special meeting agenda of June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items**

The next regular meeting date is June 19<sup>th</sup>. Agenda items to include discussion of board committees and cafeteria report. A special meeting will be held June 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Superintendent of Schools Contract**

Motion by J. Lippert to table this item and add it to the special meeting agenda on June 12<sup>th</sup>. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at (12:33 am) made by D. Wesson, seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau  
Recording Secretary