

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – November 16, 2017
7:00 p.m.
District Office Conference Room

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

Superintendent of Schools Dr. J. Longo called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm. Present were board members J. Calarese, J. Urban, K. Warren, J. Lippert, M. Matthews and S. Gamache. Also present was Director of Special Education C. Ford and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Present in the audience were AEA co-president J. Horn, R. Haeger, B. Duffy and R. Duffy. Unable to attend was board member L. Donegan.

Board Reorganization

a. Election of Officers

Dr. Longo welcomed new members Shannon Gamache and Jane Urban to the Board. Dr. Longo explained briefly the process of election of officers and then opened the floor for nominations for Chairperson of the Board.

K. Warren nominated John Lippert for Board of Education Chair. J. Calarese seconded the nomination.

Dr. Longo asked if there were any discussion or other nominations. Being none, he called for a vote on the nomination on the floor. The nomination carried with one abstention (J. Lippert).

Dr. Longo then turned the meeting over to Board Chair, J. Lippert. Mr. Lippert said he was pleased to take on the role of board chair. He spoke very highly of the leadership of past members and officers Jim Rupert and Kim Rourke. Both had served eight years and will be missed.

He then opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairperson.

M. Matthews nominated Lisa Donegan for Board of Education Vice-Chair. The nomination was withdrawn, as Mrs. Donegan was not present to indicate she would accept if nominated.

J. Calarese nominated Marian Matthews for Vice-Chairperson. Nomination seconded by K. Warren.

Brief discussion followed. M. Matthews was concerned that she had not had enough board experience. Being there were no other nominations or discussions, the Chair called for a vote on the nomination on the floor. The nomination carried with one abstention (M. Matthews),

The Board Chair opened the floor for nominations for Secretary.

J. Calarese nominated Kay Warren for Secretary. Nomination seconded by J. Urban.

There being no other nominations or discussion, the Chair called for a vote on the nomination on the floor. The nomination carried with one abstention (K. Warren)

b. Establishment of Regular Meeting Date/Place/Time

A draft calendar of meetings for 2018 was included in the board members' packets for review.

Discussion followed concerning meeting dates in the spring.

Motion by M. Matthews to approve the meeting schedule as presented, with regular meetings being held on first and third Thursdays at 7 pm in District Office Conference Room 14. Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

c. Committee Appointments

Chair J. Lippert opened discussion of committee assignments. Members volunteered to serve on the following committees:

J. Calarese: Building & Grounds, Transportation and Long -Term Planning (alt.)
L. Donegan: Building & Grounds, Personnel
S. Gamache: Transportation, Cafeteria
J. Lippert: Finance, Long-Term Planning
M. Matthews: Cafeteria, Building & Grounds, Long-Term Planning
J. Urban: Personnel, Finance
K. Warren: Personnel, Finance and Transportation

Persons to be Heard

J. Lippert requested that this agenda item be renamed to “Opportunity for Public Comment” on future agendas to better match the latter public opportunity on regular meeting agendas.

R. Haeger expressed gratitude to Jim Rupert and Kim Rourke for all they have done while serving on the board, thanking the administration, Dr. Longo and the board members for their hard work and effort during this difficult budget time. Mrs. Haeger welcomed new board members, noting she would be interested in hearing from them why they wished to serve on the board. J. Lippert then asked the new members if they would introduce themselves and share their motivation for seeking membership on the board of education. Ms. Gamache responded that she is the parent of 3 children that she is presently home schooling and a member of the republican town committee. She likes to “know how things work and likes to be involved in her community” and felt that the board of education was a great place to serve. Mrs. Urban has 3 children in Ashford School and stated she has seen “fantastic change in this school”, and that “she loves the school”.

Communications

J. Lippert acknowledged an email was sent to past and current board members from a former employee. Dr. Longo and other members of the board stated the nature and content make this communication a confidential personnel matter.

Motion made by K. Warren to add to the agenda between items 9 and 10, executive session for the purpose of discussing confidential personnel matter. Motion seconded by M. Matthews and carried unanimously.

A notice was received from the Northeast District Probate court that the Bicknell Trust financial report filed in October was accepted and has been filed.

Approval of Minutes: 11/02/2017

Motion by M. Matthews to approve the regular meeting minutes of 11/02/2017.

Minor grammatical notations were made changing the “was” to “were” in referencing who was in attendance at the BOE Subcommittee worksessions.

Motion with the corrections stated seconded by J. Calarese and carried with two abstentions (J. Urban, S. Gamache)

New Business

a. FY 19 Budget Planning

J. Lippert requested that a status quo budget be brought to the board to use as a starting point in developing the FY 19 budget. It should include negotiated wage increases and any known increases. Dr. Longo reminded the board that the current collective bargaining agreement with the non-certified staff union, MEUI, expires June 30, 2018. Dr. Longo met with Ovation Benefits earlier this week and they recommended a placeholder increase of 6-7% over the current year. More accurate information will be known in January. A BOE budget calendar will be developed.

Motion made by J. Lippert to add to the agenda as item 6b, “Authorization to Submit Title IV Grant Application”. Motion seconded by M. Matthews.

Dr. Longo reported eligibility for a new grant, Student Support and Academic Enrichment. Ashford would receive \$10,000 to supplement enrichment. The grant requires detailed information on how the use of the grant is determined and what outcomes are expected from its use.

Motion made by M. Matthews to authorize the administration to submit the Title IV grant application. Motion seconded by S. Gamache and carried unanimously.

Old Business

a. FY 18 Budget

Dr. Longo, L. Dyer, J. Calarese and J. Lippert attended the Board of Finance meeting on 11/14. The BOE has received no budget increase over FY 17. Dr. Longo thanked those who attended the meeting and spoke on behalf of the BOE budget. He reiterated his statements from that meeting that should zero increase budgets become the norm, the outcome will affect students directly in terms of reductions to programs, services and staff. A zero budget document was distributed. Discussion followed concerning reductions in supplies and equipment. K. Warren requested more detail be provided in the notes section concerning reductions.

Dr. Longo reminded the board that during FY 18 budget development, wage increases for non-union, non-certified members of the support staff were negotiated and agreed to. He asked that the board consider release of those negotiated increases upon passage of the FY 18 budget.

Motion made by J. Calarese to authorize the 2.75% wage increase for non-union, non-certified support staff and increases for two secretaries, as was previously negotiated, retroactive to July 1, 2017.

Motion seconded by M. Matthews and carried unanimously.

This increase is not applicable until the FY 18 budget is approved.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

The Building & Grounds committee will meet on 12/7 at 6 pm.

The next regular meeting date is 12/7 and will be preceded by a special meeting for FY 19 Public Budget Input. Regular meeting agenda items: FY 18 budget, FY 19 budget, 2nd reading of policies, and finance and cafeteria subcommittee worksessions.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Personnel Matter (Executive Session)

Motion made by M. Matthews to enter into executive session (8:33 pm) for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter, inviting Dr. Longo to attend. Motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

Present: J. Lippert, K. Warren, S. Gamache, J. Calarese, M. Matthews, J. Urban and Dr. J. Longo

All parties left the executive session at 8:48 pm. There was no action taken.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (8:48 pm) made by M. Matthews, seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau, Recording Secretary



Conducting a Board of Education Organizational Meeting

Local town Charter and Board of Education Bylaws should be reviewed to identify specific provisions that pertain to the Board of Education Organizational Meeting and Election of Officers.

Oath of office for board of education members

Following their election, board of education members take the oath of office on the date prescribed by their town charter. The oath of office is generally administered by the Town Clerk. The oath is prescribed in Section 1-25 of the Connecticut General Statutes as follows: “You solemnly swear that you will faithfully discharge, according to law, your duties as member, ___ Board of Education to the best of your ability so help you God.”

Election of board officers:

Section 10-218 of the Connecticut General Statutes requires that a board organizational meeting be held within one month after the date on which newly elected board of education members take office. Board of education officers are selected at that time. The statute requires election of a chairperson and secretary. Additional officers may be provided in board Bylaws. A second is not required under Roberts Rules for the nomination of officers. The statute requires that votes for the board chairman be “reduced to writing” and made available to the public within 48 hours (excluding Saturday, Sunday and legal holidays), and recorded in the minutes. If the officers are not chosen in one month, the town council or board of selectmen choose the officers. While the statute previously required a written ballot, it is clear that the votes of each individual board member must be recorded. Paper ballots can still be utilized, but the meeting minutes must reflect the candidate for which each board of education member voted.

Role of the Superintendent

The practice of many boards of education is to ask the superintendent to conduct the election for board chairman, and then turn the meeting over to the newly elected chairman.

Incompatible Positions

Board of education members may not be employed by the board of education on which they serve. If a board member is employed in violation of this provision, his or her seat on the board becomes vacant (§ 10-232 Connecticut General Statutes)

Length of Term and Number of Members

Boards of education are typically subject to town control as to their number, election and other procedural matters. Individual towns have the responsibility to create their school boards and are left with the discretion to establish the number of board of education members. By ordinance, towns may establish boards of education with three, five, six, seven, eight, nine or

twelve members. Conn. Gen. Stat. §§9-203; 9-205. The statutes set out detailed provisions for terms of office and how those terms are staggered. Conn. Gen. Stat. §§9-203 through 9-206. In addition, by charter, towns may establish boards of education of any number ranging from three to twelve members for terms of two, three, four or six years. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-206a. Regional boards of education must have at least five members. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-46. Currently, membership on boards of education in Connecticut ranges from five to twelve, with nine being the most common number. Minority representation is provided for in Section 9-167a of the General Statutes.

Regional Boards of Education

In the month following the last election of board members, the regional board of education must hold an organizational meeting, at which the board members elect a chairperson, a secretary, a treasurer and any other officer established by the board. In cases of a tie vote for any officer, ties are broken by lot. Conn. Gen. Stat. § 10-46(d).

Ashford School
Board of Education - 2018 Meeting Schedule

*Unless otherwise posted, all meetings will be held in District Office conference room 14.
The board reserves the right to schedule one or more subcommittee meetings that will on the agenda for the first Thursday meeting of the month. The regular meeting schedule is as follows:*

January

January 4, 2018
January 18, 2018

February

February 1, 2018
February 15, 2018

March

March 1, 2018
March 15, 2018
March 29, 2018 (optional)

April

April 5, 2018
April 19, 2018 (school vacation week)

May

May 3, 2018
May 17, 2018
May 31, 2018 (optional)

June

June 7, 2018
June 21, 2018

July

July 19, 2018*

August

August 16, 2018*

September

September 6, 2018
September 20, 2018

October

October 4, 2018
October 18, 2018

November

November 1, 2018
November 15, 2018

December

December 6, 2018
December 20, 2018

*During the months of July and August, meetings may be canceled or postponed at the discretion of the board chair.

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – November 2, 2017
7:00 p.m.
District Office Conference Room

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Call To Order

Board Chair J. Rupert called the meeting to order at 7:17 pm. Present were members J. Lippert, L. Donegan (7:21 pm), K. Warren, J. Calarese (7:18 pm), K. Rourke and M. Matthews. Also present were Superintendent Dr. J. Longo, Principal T. Hopkins and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Present in the audience were AEA Co-President J. Horn, J. Celotti, S. Lyman, S. Schillinger, E.O. Smith students K. Johnson and E. Schillinger.

Communications

J. Rupert opened and read aloud a note from outgoing board member Kim Rourke thanking everyone for their collaboration and friendship over the past 8 years.

Also received was an email communication from the town treasurer concerning timeliness of benefits related payments. L. Dyer also received this communication and is currently out of town and will respond upon her return. Mr. Rupert also received communication from the Northeast District Probate court that the hearing for the filing of the interim financial report is scheduled for 11/8/17.

Communication from Friar & Associates was received today concerning the board's inquiry related to compilation of a Master Plan and comprehensive course of action. An RFP would need to be developed. The November 1st enrollment report and the Building and Grounds committee minutes of 10/19/17 were distributed.

Mr. Rupert acknowledged that this was the last board meeting night for Kim Rourke and his appreciation for having served along side him as the vice-chair of the board. He spoke of the time, dedication and budget advocacy she has given to the board and school. He presented Mrs. Rourke with a framed certificate of appreciation for the eight years she has served public education and the Ashford community.

Approval of Minutes: 10/19/2017

Motion by J. Lippert to approve the special meeting minutes of 10/19/2017, motion seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

New Business

a. Policy Recommendations Summary - Student Series 5000

A memo from legal counsel was provided to members concerning recommended changes to the existing board policies, "Attendance and Truancy", "Restrain and Seclusion" and "Student Discipline". All were revised by counsel to reflect Public Acts or legislative changes effective July 1, 2017 and will be considered the board's first reading of these policies.

Old Business

a. Friar & Associates Follow Up

This item was discussed under communications.

b. "CORR" Area Space Renovations

J. Rupert revisited the issues faced with the insufficient work completed by the construction company working on the space renovations. This issue has been discussed several times and based on these discussions, Dr. Longo met with the contractor and successfully negotiated a \$10,000 discount from the original invoice. J. Rupert acknowledged Dr. Longo's efforts in the negotiation and with this in mind, the previous request sent to the Town requesting release of unexpended educational funds for heating system reconnection can be withdrawn. It will be absorbed by the negotiated discount.

BOE Subcommittee Worksessions (7:30 pm – 8:15 pm)

a. Transportation (J. Rupert, K. Warren, J. Calarese – Conference Room)

b. Finance (K. Rourke and J. Lippert – Superintendent of Schools Office)

The committees went to the respective locations to meet at 7:38 pm. Attending the Transportation Subcommittee meeting was Dr. Longo, J. Celotti, S. Lyman and L. Donegan. Attending the Finance Subcommittee meeting was T. Hopkins, S. Schillinger, E. Schillinger, K. Johnson and Dr. Longo.

Subcommittee Worksession Summary to Board

The Transportation Subcommittee reported they had a good meeting. They reviewed driver staffing, the number of routes run and number of busses and vans used daily. Mrs. Celotti and S. Lyman stressed that there is critical need for a mid-bus. There was some discussion of field trips; at least one teacher will be seated near the driver to assist with driving directions.

The Finance Subcommittee discussed education cost sharing (ECS), grants, the status of FY 18 and FY 19 budgets given that the state budget has passed.

Personnel Matter (Executive Session Anticipated, Action Anticipated)

Motion made by K. Warren to enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter, inviting Dr. Longo and Mr. Hopkins to attend. Motion seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Present: J. Rupert, K. Warren, K. Rourke, J. Calarese, J. Lippert, M. Matthews, L. Donegan, Dr. J. Longo and T. Hopkins

All parties left the executive session at 9:13 pm. There were no motions. By consensus, the board authorized the Superintendent to take whatever action he deems appropriate regarding the personnel matter.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:14 pm) made by K. Warren, seconded by J. Lippert and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau, Recording Secretary

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
COURT OF PROBATE

COURT OF PROBATE, Northeast Probate Court

DISTRICT NO. PD26

ESTATE OF:

Maurice B. & Mildred C. Bicknell Trust (06-133)
FBO Ashford Education

FIDUCIARY:

James Rupert, Chairman, Ashford BOE

For Accountings:

Type	Dated	Received
Periodic	October 11, 2017	October 16, 2017

TYPE:

TRUSTEE

COVERING THE PERIOD COMMENCING: January 01, 2014

ENDING: December 31, 2016

PRESIDING JUDGE: Hon. Leah P. Schad

At the time and place set by order of this court, together with any continuances thereof, as on file more fully appears, for a hearing on the allowance and approval of the above-designated Financial Report, the court, after due hearing had, FINDS THAT:

Notice of hearing was given in accordance with the order(s) of notice previously given.

All persons known to be interested in said proceeding have received notice of their right to request a hearing in this matter. No hearing was requested.

The fiduciary has sent a copy of the Financial Report to all parties and attorneys of record.

After having examined said Financial Report, together with all supporting documents, the court FURTHER FINDS THAT:

Said Financial Report is true and correct, and, accordingly, the same is approved and shall be recorded and filed. The fiduciary is released from liability with respect to all items shown in the Financial Report.

Dated at: Putnam, Connecticut, on November 9, 2017.

CERTIFIED TO BE A TRUE COPY


Clerk


Judge Leah P. Schad

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that a copy of the above decree was mailed on 11/09/17 to each party and attorney of record as follows:

Name and Address

Public Charities Unit, Office of the Attorney General, 55 Elm Street, 4th Floor, PO Box 120, Hartford, CT 06106-1773
James Rupert, Chairman, Ashford BOE, 233 Westford Road, Ashford, CT 06278
Dr. James T. Longo, Superintendent, Ashford School, 440 Westford Rd., Ashford, CT 06278


Heather Crecco, Clerk