

Ashford Board of Education
Meeting Minutes – May 6, 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 7:04 p.m.

- Present were members Jane Urban, Kim Kouatly, Tess Grous, Al Maccarone, and Marian Matthews. Tina Fradette was absent.
- Also present were Superintendent Dr. James Longo, Principal Troy Hopkins, Asst. Principal Polly Borysevicz, 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.

Communications – None

Opportunity for Public Comment

- A teacher mentioned to Kim Kouatly that a fourth grade field trip needed board approval.
- ***MOTION by Kim Kouatly to add item 6d to the agenda, Fourth Grade Field Trip Approval. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.***

Approval of Minutes

- ***MOTION by Jane Urban to approve minutes from 04/15/2021. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly.*** Items listed under Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items were not necessarily for the next meeting. ***Motion carried unanimously with one abstention (M. Matthews).***

Old Business

a. FY22 Budget

- No major concerns were brought up in the public hearing. The Board of Finance approved our budget to go to the town meeting on 05/11/2021 and referendum on 05/25/2021.
- Kelee Calkins will have FY21 projections for the next meeting.

b. Superintendent Search Update

- Five candidates were selected for the first round of interviews. One candidate dropped out. They have three candidates to schedule for a second interview.

c. Review and Approval of 5-Year Capital Plan

- The 5-year capital plan will be discussed during strategic planning/retreat in August.
- Transportation component of 5-year plan will be discussed at the next board meeting with committee breakout time, inviting Transportation Coordinator Joan Celotti and Bus Mechanic Seth Lyman to participate and provide insight. Marian Matthews will work on getting some numbers together to compare electric versus diesel bus purchase.

New Business

a. Staff Resignation

- ***MOTION by Jane Urban to accept Barbara Horn's resignation and wish her the best in her retirement. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.***

b. 2021-2022 Healthy Foods Certification

- ***MOTION by Jane Urban that, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-215f, the board of education 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, 2021, through June 30, 2022. 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 Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.***

- **MOTION by Jane Urban that the board of education 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 a 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. The “location” means where the event is being held. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.**

c. BOE Planning Re: Goals, Calendar, Roles & Responsibilities

- Date for August strategic planning/retreat will be scheduled at next meeting.
- Goals can be discussed during strategic planning/retreat. Discussion to include adding a separate goal about sustainability to match up with 5-year plan.
- Marian Matthews would like to do a board evaluation during June meetings, and she volunteered to head that up.
- Jen Truax has gathered information that will be helpful in developing the calendar.
- Dr. Longo suggested an early July meeting with just the board and the new superintendent. That would give the new superintendent time to think before the strategic planning/retreat in August. Al Maccarone would like that meeting to be in a relaxed, round table format.
- Roles and responsibilities can be addressed incrementally throughout the year.

d. Fourth Grade Field Trip Approval

- Troy Hopkins said the field trip was denied about a month ago.
- Jane Urban thanked administration for being consistent with these hard decisions regarding field trips.

Opportunity for Public Comment

- John Lippert noticed Mrs. Capozziello on the Zoom call. The small ensemble concert was wonderful. There is a link on the school website.
- Jane Urban asked about Bicknell Scholarship. John Lippert said information will be coming from Jen Truax soon. Kelee Calkins said there are six applicants. The recipients are generally announced at E. O. Smith's end-of-year assembly.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

- Administrative Reports
- Eighth grade graduation – which board member will speak?
- Al Maccarone will share his discrimination policy research.

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

Non-Union and MEUI Personnel Negotiations (Executive Session)

- **MOTION by Al Maccarone to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to potential litigation and non-union and MEUI personnel negotiations and invite Dr. Longo and Troy Hopkins. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.**

Board members entered executive session at 8:03 p.m.

Tess Grous left the meeting at 8:35 p.m.

Board members exited executive session at 8:50 p.m. No action was taken.

MOTION by Kim Kouatly to approve the MEUI contract negotiation with two items that were adjusted in executive session. Motion seconded by Jane Urban and carried unanimously.

MOTION by Al Maccarone to accept Dr. Longo's recommendation of the contract for non-union personnel. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.

Adjournment

- *MOTION by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m. Motion seconded by Al Maccarone and carried unanimously.*

Sara Wilson
Recording Secretary