

Ashford Board of Education  
Meeting Minutes – May 5, 2011  
7:00 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**

Chair J. Sterling-Folker called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

**Board Present**

J. Sterling-Folker, D. Wesson, K. Warren, K. Rourke, J. Rupert. Others present: Superintendent J. Longo, Principal N. Johndrow; T. Clements of Robert Half & Associates, and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Unable to attend were board members J. Lipker and J. Lippert. Audience: K. Bryce, AEA Representative, D. Atkinson, S. Fletcher and G. Leedie, MEUI Representatives, teacher R. Rossi and resident L. Gagne.

**Persons to be Heard**

Linda Gagne commended the BOE on its budget deliberation process, and on the quality of the report presented at the last meeting of the school activity fund. She urged the BOE to keep control of finances and stated the BOE “is on the right track”. She spoke of her concern about school library inventory, care and control in light of budget reductions made for next year.

**Staff Presentations**

**a. Data Report – Middle School CMT Writing (Mr. Rossi)**

Mr. Rossi shared a power point presentation of his analysis of CMT writing scores of students who enroll in Ashford School after Grade 5. This direct comparison shows significantly lower writing scores (12%) for this group of students versus those of students who have been enrolled in Ashford since preschool or kindergarten. He commented that this is a concern and strategies for intervention for this group of students is needed.

A motion was made by K. Warren to bring agenda item 8a “Pending Budget and Finance Matters” forward as the next order of business. Motion seconded by J. Rupert and carried unanimously.

**Pending Budget and Finance Matters**

Tracey Clements of Robert Half & Associates distributed a report “Financial Update” to the members. Mrs. Clements reviewed the items in the report and addressed questions from the board. Progress has been made, but the work is ongoing. Mrs. Clements is aware of the board’s need for actual numbers, and the goal is to provide the board with this information by May 31 and complete reconciliations with the Town by mid June. She also reported that New Alliance bank had merged with First Niagra and asks that the board add approval of resolutions naming the authorized signers of the board’s checking accounts and the cafeteria checking account.

Motion made by D. Wesson to add to the agenda approval of Municipal Deposit Resolutions of First Niagra Bank (attached). Motion seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously.

Motion to approve the resolutions as presented and the authorize signers listed on the resolution document made by D. Wesson, seconded by K. Rourke and carried unanimously. The documents were executed and signed by the Board of Education Secretary.

**Communications**

J. Sterling-Folker reported that the budget had passed at referendum. A letter was received from CABA concerning student leadership awards. The Ashford recipients will be invited to attend a board meeting to receive the award. A copy of School Planning & Management magazine was received.

Dr. Longo spoke about the letter received from the CSDE included in the BOE mailing concerning the 2009-2010 audit and that he had prepared and sent the response by certified mail. K. Rourke asked Dr. Longo if communication of staff reductions will be made forthcoming now that the budget has passed. He responded that the union representatives will be contacted to meet, but it is possible no action may be taken until August.

**Approval of Minutes: 04/07/2011**

Motion to approve the minutes of 04/07/2011 made by K. Warren, seconded by D. Wesson with the following corrections: strike the word “to” in line 6 of “Staff Presentations”; change the word “letter” to “paragraph” in “Old Business”; correct the time of the return of J. Lippert to the meeting. Motion carried with one abstention (J. Rupert).

### **Committee Reports**

None. Negotiations are scheduled for May 11. J. Sterling-Folker has been contacted by the selectman's office concerning formation of a joint committee (BOS, BOF and BOE) to examine the creation of a composite position that would replace the Town Treasurer position and the School Business Manager position. This prompted many questions from the board and members expressed the need for further information. The chair will forward the information she has received thus far to BOE for comments and questions. J. Sterling-Folker, K. Warren and K. Rourke will represent the board on this committee.

### **Administrative Report/Summary**

#### **a. Superintendent Report**

Dr. Longo's report was included in the board mailing. He reported that he had a meeting at 9 AM on May 6<sup>th</sup> scheduled to look over school parking lot lighting and paving with the first selectman and the highway supervisor in preparation for a project going out to bid. The board directs Dr. Longo to contact Earthlight Technologies to ask about energy saving fixtures that may be available, and to research grant funding opportunities. Septic follow-up is still needed concerning a system near the primary playground. Copies of the audit response letter mentioned earlier in the meeting will be given to Selectman Fletcher and BOF chair Cathryn Silver-Smith.

### **Old Business**

#### **a. Pending Budget and Finance Matters**

Item addressed earlier on the agenda.

### **New Business**

#### **a. Authorization to Submit FY 11-12 Grant Applications**

Motion by J. Rupert to authorize submission of the IDEA, Primary Mental Health and School Readiness Grant applications, the motion was seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

#### **b. 2009-2010 Strategic School Profile**

Members commented on some segments of the report, including per pupil cost, special education expenditures and enrollment. The report data is captured from data of the year prior to its publication.

### **Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items**

Next Meeting: May 19, 2011

- Executive Session (Non-Certified, Non-Union Staff Negotiations)
- Parking Lot, Building & Grounds Update
- Writing Program Presentation (J. Lussier)
- 11-12 Budget Follow Up

J. Sterling-Folker asked that the board recognize and congratulate Mrs. Hardisty upon receipt of the Mahatma Gandhi Martin Luther King Peace Award. Members said they had read of this accomplishment in the Ashford Citizen and expressed their congratulations and admiration to Mrs. Hardisty's on this achievement.

### **Non-Certified and Non-Union Staff Negotiations (Executive Session Anticipated)**

Motion to enter into executive session (9:08 pm) for the purpose of discussing non-certified and non-union staff negotiations made by D. Wesson, seconded by J. Rupert and carried unanimously. Motion carried unanimously.

Present in executive session: J. Rupert, K. Rourke, K. Warren, J. Sterling-Folker, D. Wesson and Dr. J. Longo.

The board exited executive session at 9:45 pm.

There was no action taken.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:45 pm) made by D. Wesson, seconded by K. Warren and carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Barsaleau

