

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – February 19, 2015
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 7:37 PM. Present were J. Rupert, K. Warren, K. Rourke, J. Lippert and D. Wesson. Also present were Superintendent J. Longo, Principal T. Hopkins, Asst. Principal and Acting Director of Special Education C. Ford, Business Office staff members D. Morgan and L. SanDiego; and recording secretary J. Barsaleau. Present in the audience was Technology Coordinator S. Waddell, MEUI member D. Molnar, S. Morytko, AEA members C. Imhoff and K. Bryce, and Chronicle reporter A. McElveen. Board members J. Lippert and K. Warren were unable to attend.

Persons to Be Heard

a. FY 16 Board of Education Public Budget Input

S. Morytko addressed technology matters including but not limited to, basic classroom technology needs versus needs for newer initiatives such as STEAM. He has inquired as to how money is allocated for technology in current and in past budgets; he shared his concern that classroom technology upgrades may have been deferred for the purchase of SmartBoards, and creation of the Robotics lab. He stated there is a significant surplus in the current budget and he hoped that the board would see there is an opportunity for a possible solution to current technology needs in the classroom. He urged the board to not maintain status quo in technology purchasing, and to provide details for purchasing and stick to them in order to ensure there are funds to allocate in this area. He also commented that the narrative being discussed here is lacking audited actuals and projected actual expenditures. Dr. Longo acknowledged that current budget vs. actual information was not available when meeting materials were sent out. This information was handed out at the start of the meeting. He further spoke to that some current technology issues that Mr. Morytko spoke of are being addressed now. Upon review of the current budget and though successful efficiencies within it, funds that had been previously frozen can now be released to allow for the purchase of classroom computers in the primary classroom wing of the school.

Communications

The chair acknowledged communications included in the board's agenda packet: 8th Grade Yearbook Form, Health Room Report, communication to the Board of Selectmen from the Connecticut Coalition for Justice in Education Funding (CCJEF), and the Board of Selectmen's response to CCJEF. November financial reconciliations with the Town were enclosed for review, as was the Winter 2015 newsletter from board counsel, Shipman & Goodwin.

Approval of Minutes: 02/05/2015

Motion made by K. Rourke to approve the special and regular meeting minutes of 02/05/2015, motion seconded by D. Wesson. Discussion followed. Member J. Lippert had sent the following corrections to the recording secretary via email prior to the meeting: strike the word "is" in line 9 of the *Health and Dental Insurance Information Update*; and strike "New Business and a. Approval of 2015-2016 Calendar and the first two sentences that follow on page 2. Also, J. Mozeiko was not reported in the roll, however, she was present. There being no further edits, the motion was called for vote and carried with the stated corrections. There was one abstention (L. Donegan).

Board Worksession - FY 16 Budget

a. Review and Discussion of Budget Proposal Dated 2/19/15

Dr. Longo provided an overview of the 2/19/15 proposal provided to the Board. It is representative of a 2.96% increase over the 2014-2015 budget and reflects the 7.7% health insurance renewal, a proposed after school program, and the administrative personnel structure. All were discussed at the last meeting. Dr. Longo reported that new information had been received from Ovation Benefits earlier in the day. As staff applied that new information to this proposal, it results in further reductions to the proposal on the table. L. SanDiego distributed the explanation of this information. The application of this information results in a lower, 2.45% increase over the current year's budget. Discussion followed. The 2.45% increase would allow adequate funding of health insurance to accommodate life status change for two employees. In lieu of keeping additional funds in the line for this purpose, the board directs that \$50,000 be transferred to the elementary and middle school technology; and that the amount transferred to technology would not be spent until such time the district office has confirmed that there is sufficient funding for employee health insurance payments through the end of the fiscal year.

Board members continued review of the document page by page. Further review occurred, suggestions and edits were offered and noted by district office staff. Noted changes will be incorporated into the narrative and sent to members for review prior to the February 26th special meeting. Dr. Longo briefly touched upon business office oversight. He will prepare a specific listing of the expectations for oversight, including the number of hours needed. He will then put together a committee, similar to past searches for a business manager, schedule interviews, and go from there. The current staff has demonstrated that it is very competent, and they enjoy a good working relationship with the Town's financial staff.

b. Review of Non Union Staff Wage Increases

Motion made by J. Rupert to authorize a 2.75% wage increase non-union employees for 2015-2016. Motion seconded by L. Donegan. After discussion of average wage increases for other school employee groups and town employees, the motion was called for a vote and carried unanimously.

Dr. Longo requested the board consider a \$2,000 wage increase for a business office staff member who has earned a Bachelor's Degree. K. Rourke motioned to authorize an additional \$2,000 wage increase for Lalaine SanDiego, effective 7/1/15. Motion seconded by D. Wesson and carried unanimously.

Second Opportunity for FY 16 Budget Input

S. Mortyko sought confirmation that technology needs in the primary wing are to be addressed now. He felt that this was still a "status quo" approach and urged for more workstations, tablets and a technology plan update. The chair stated that he felt Dr. Longo had addressed this earlier in the meeting, computer purchases are being made now, and the board has directed that funding be transferred within the proposed budget for technology. They also stated there has been significant and positive change made over the past 5 years at Ashford School.

New Business

a. Request for Family and Medical Leave

There was no request received.

Old Business

a. Follow Up: MEUI Sick Bank Proposal

Dr. Longo prepared a draft Memorandum of Understanding outlining the parameters of the proposed sick bank. Members may make a voluntary donation of up to 3 days from their own personal sick bank to that of a member of the bargaining unit who is ill and has exhausted their sick bank. The bank will not exceed 30 days in total; members who make donations may not seek to have any unused days that may be remaining as of June 30, 2015, returned to them. This memorandum does not set precedent.

Motion to authorize the establishment of an MEUI sick bank with the terms as stated. Motion seconded by J. Mozeiko and carried unanimously.

b. Future Planning: MEUI Negotiations and CABE Worksession

Dr. Longo and representative McMullen of MEUI have spoken and they will be seeking to begin negotiations after March 12th. The CABE worksession is tentatively rescheduled for March 19th. Board members are asked to complete their self-evaluation forms and submit them prior to the meeting.

c. Approval of the 2015-2016 Ashford School Calendar

Motion made by D. Wesson to approve the 2015-2016 Ashford School Calendar, motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

A special meeting for a FY 16 budget worksession will be posted for Thursday, February 26th. The meeting will begin at 7 PM.

Superintendent Evaluation (Executive Session Anticipated)

Motion made by D. Wesson to enter into executive session for the purpose of Superintendent Evaluation (10:45 pm) and to call Dr. Longo into the session. Motion seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously. Present: J. Mozeiko, D. Wesson, J. Rupert, L. Donegan, K. Rourke and Dr. J. Longo.

The board exited the session at 10:51 pm.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at (10:52 pm) made by D. Wesson seconded by L. Donegan and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Unapproved