

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – December 6, 2018
7:00 pm
Ashford School District Office Conference Room

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 7:10 pm. Present were members Shannon Gamache, Kay Warren, Marian Matthews and Lisa Donegan (7:35pm). Also in attendance was Superintendent Longo, Business Manager Lisa Dyer, Director of Pupil Personnel Cindy Ford, Asst. Principal Garrett Dukette and recording secretary Jen Barsaleau. Present in the audience was Rebecca Haeger. Unable to attend were board members Jane Urban and John Calarese.

Approve Annual Board Meeting Schedule – Date, Place and Time

Members reviewed and discussed the draft schedule in their packet. Edits were made to the header paragraph. The board agreed that January 31st will be a regular meeting date; May 30th and October 31st were stricken as optional meeting dates, asterisks were stricken following the July and August meeting dates as was the associated language at the bottom of the calendar. Regular meetings will be held on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 7:00pm in District Office Conference Room 14.

Motion made by Kay Warren to approve the 2019 Ashford BOE Annual Meeting Schedule as edited. Motion seconded by Shannon Gamache and carried unanimously.

Communications

- John Lippert read a letter to Dr. Longo from the American Council of Teachers of Foreign Language (ACTFL) naming of Rebecca Aubrey as the National World Language of the Year. Dr. Longo noted what a prestigious honor this is for Ms. Aubrey and the school. A staff luncheon will be scheduled in January to honor Ms. Aubrey, the board and others will be invited to attend.
- A letter was emailed to member John Calarese from an Ashford veteran sharing his appreciation of Ashford School's Veteran's Day activities. The board expressed its thanks to the Ashford School Veteran's Day committee for this very well received and much appreciated event.
- A memo was received from district office employee Lalaine SanDiego requesting the board's consideration of a contractual wage increase upon the attainment of an advanced degree.

Motion made by John Lippert to add to the agenda under New Business, item 9e, consider request for contractual salary increase. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

- The board chair acknowledged receipt of an email from a parent expressing concern about a PTO fundraising event. Brief discussion amongst the members followed.
- Instructions for accessing dedicated Board of Education email address accounts were distributed to the members present. Members are directed to use these addresses as of January 1, 2019.

Opportunity for Public Comment

Rebecca Haeger asked that consideration be given to reinstatement of middle school reading, writing and math specialist positions during budget deliberations to increase current staff flexibility, bolster student support and improve student learning.

Approval of Minutes: 11/01/2018

Motion made by John Lippert to approve the minutes of 11/01/2018.

Discussion followed. Under District Administrative Reports, first line – remove the 's after "Longo" and add a comma to Second Opportunity for Comment, first line, after the word "stated." ***Motion by Lisa Donegan to approve the minutes of 11/01/2018 as amended, seconded by Shannon Gamache and carried with one abstention (Kay Warren).***

Distribution of Administrative Reports

Dr. Longo stated that all of the administrators addressed the faculty at its meeting earlier in the day. Each of the administrators addressed a specific topic.

- Dr. Longo - STEAM
- Mr. Hopkins -Project Based Learning
- Mr. Dukette- Habits of Mind

- Mrs. Ford -Data Driven Instruction

The staff held small group discussions relative to these topics and took part in a related anonymous survey. All Ashford administrators will be presenting to the Region 19 Superintendents and administrators on January 10th. They will be sharing their approach to instruction and the success of our school. Of note in the combined report was the purchase of one book per child at the PTO Scholastic Book Fair incentivizing positive student behavior and literacy. This purchase was authorized by Dr. Longo and made possible using grant resources.

Committee Break Out Sessions (Transportation, Personnel, Long-Range Capital Planning)

Committee Reports to the Board

By mutual consent and the absence of committee members, items are tabled until a future meeting.

New Business

a. FY 19 Audit

Item should have read FY 18 audit on the agenda. The presentation to the Board of Finance was included in the BOE agenda packet. Lisa Dyer noted that after discussion with the auditors, it was agreed that the \$701,348 decrease noted on page 8, “Other Post Employment Benefits” should not be listed. Mrs. Dyer would like to see a new financial system discussed at a three-board meeting. She also noted that district financial policies and procedures are under review by the auditors.

b. First Reading of Policies (Series 1000: Visitors)

Counsel has provided a new version of the Series 1000 Visitors Policy. Due to legislative/state dept. of education changes, the policy is renamed “Visitors and Observations in Schools.” A strikeout version was presented to the board as a first reading of this policy.

c. Staff Resignation

Dr. Longo received both letter of resignation from custodian Jason Link, effective December 14. Mr. Link will be entering the Army at the end of December.

Motion made by Kay Warren to accept the resignation of Jason Link. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

d. Request Approval of Leaves of Absence

Dr. Longo reported requests for two leaves of absence. Teacher Allison Welz has requested maternity leave beginning on or about April 12 for the remainder of the school year.

Motion made by Marian Matthews to approve the maternity leave request of Allison Welz as presented. Motion seconded by Lisa Donegan and carried unanimously.

Para educator Beata Metsack has requested Family and Medical Leave to care for an ill family member effective 12/5/18. Shannon Gamache inquired as to the length of such a leave. Eligible employees are entitled to 12 weeks of FMLA leave.

Motion made by K. Warren to approve the FMLA request of Beata Metsack effective 12/5/18. Motion seconded by Lisa Donegan and carried unanimously.

Dr. Longo informed the Board that middle school social studies teacher Stephen Caldwell has received orders of military deployment and will be departing in January for approximately one year. Mr. Dukette reported that interviews for a long-term substitute have concluded and the position has been offered to a candidate.

e. Request for Approval of Pro-Rata Contractual Wage Increase

Lalaine SanDiego has recently completed her Master’s Degree in Accounting. Her employment contract states that she may request a wage increase upon receipt of a Master’s Degree.

Motion made by Kay Warren to approve a \$2,000 salary increase for Lalaine SanDiego retroactive to November 3, 2018. Increase is equivalent to \$250 per month for the remainder of the fiscal year.

Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Old Business

a. Prioritize Capital Projects/Energy Audit Lists

Dr. Longo will reach out to Friar & Associates for an update. Members asked that electric buses or alternative fuel vehicles be considered in addition to standard buses. A recent inspection reveals that the school needs to address the fire sprinkler system immediately. Dr. Longo will discuss this with the first selectman.

b. FY 20 Budget Planning Follow Up

Lisa Dyer distributed a summary of the major increases to the initial FY 20 budget. Discussion followed about increasing substitute per diem pay, reasons for adding additional teaching positions. Members will review the document and forward any questions, concerns, suggestions to Mrs. Dyer or Dr. Longo.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Next meeting date is Dec. 20. Agenda items to include, 2nd reading of policies, sprinkler systems update, FY 20 budget, executive session for non-union staff negotiations, Friar & Associates update.

Second Opportunity for Public Comment

Mrs. Haeger reminded the board that they had been looking into bus transportation options. She commended the giving of books to our students and that it should be stated that the funds were not taken from the budget to pay for these books. She also noted that the PTO gives children a free book every year through their “Birthday Books” program.

Motion to adjourn the meeting (9:22pm) made by Kay Warren, seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Recorded by:

Jennifer Barsaleau
Recording Secretary