

Ashford Board of Education
Special Meeting Minutes – August 4, 2022
7:00 pm

Meeting Held In Person and Electronically 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 Jane Urban called the meeting to order at 7:09 p.m.
- Present were members Tess Grous, Kim Kouatly, Marian Matthews and Jennifer Leszczynski.
- Also present was Director of Pupil Personnel/Acting Superintendent Cindy Ford, Principal Polly Borysevicz, Meghan Smith and Kelly Fransen (via Zoom).

Pledge of Allegiance

Board Chair Comments

Chair Jane Urban commented that the board had met earlier in the day for its annual planning work session. The board had an amazing meal provided by the staff of Ashford School, it was fantastic and the board thanks everyone.

Communications

Secretary Kim Kouatly noted there had been a few communications to the board concerning student registration, they were forwarded to the school office staff. An email communication from math specialist Shawn Dimmock was read aloud. Mrs. Dimmock expressed her thanks to the Board for its support and in the purchase of a new math curriculum for Ashford School. Letters were received from Meghan Smith and Kelly Fransen expressing interest in filling the current vacancy on the board of education. Members of the public were invited to speak by raising their hand, comment is limited to 3 minutes per person and a total of 20 minutes. There were none.

Approval of Minutes 07/21/2022; 07/28/2022

MOTION made Jennifer Leszczynski to approve the minutes of 07/21/2022. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews.

Jane Urban noted a correction in the *Call to Order*, Kim Kouatly was not in attendance on 7/21. There being no other discussion, the motion to approve the minutes of 7/21/2022 was called to vote and carried with one abstention (Kim Kouatly).

MOTION made by Jennifer Leszczynski to approve the minutes of 07/28/2022. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly. The motion was carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda Items:

a. Staff Resignation - Kelly Knotts, Grade 6

The board expressed sadness in receiving the resignation of Kelly Knotts. Members wished her well, stating she will be missed and her new school is lucky to have her.

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the consent agenda item, seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Old Business

a. UST Removal Update

Acting Superintendent Cindy Ford stated she has started the process of applying for a grant for removal and replacement of the underground storage tank. There are several documents that have been collected and need to be uploaded at the time of application. The tank has just been inspected this week and a report is forthcoming. Vendors are being contacted for quotes for this project. Mrs. Ford noted that we are working to secure insurance on the tank until the project can be completed, which due to supply chain issues, will likely be next year. She spoke of related safety concerns during tank removal as it is housed under a playground and there are three classrooms next to that area.

New Business

a. Staff Appointments – Katie Crane, Molly Hickey, Marcella Mosier, Kathryn Neeland, Katherine Roque, Alec Calabrese

The board is excited to welcome new staff members. Polly Borysevicz noted the grade assignment and subject for each teacher. Molly Hickey, Marcella Mosier and Katie Neeland are classroom teachers, Katherine Roque will teach music and Alec Calabrese will be teaching German.

Cindy Ford noted that Katie Crane will be filling a paraeducator position that became vacant during last school year that had gone unfilled. Jane Urban inquired about the status of the Social Worker posting. Cindy noted that it is posted and interviews have been conducted.

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to approve the staff appointments of Katie Crane, Molly Hickey, Marcella Mosier, Kathryn Neeland, Katherine Roque and Alec Calabrese, motion seconded by Tess Grous and carried unanimously.

Board of Education Vacancy

a. Candidate Interviews (per CGS § 10-219 and Board Bylaw Series 9000 “Filling Vacancies on the Board”)

Candidate Meghan Smith was present, candidate Kelly Fransen was present via Zoom. The candidates were interviewed by members who each asked a question of them. Their responses were heard on an alternating basis. Questions by the board included superintendent search, curriculum, school improvement, budget, diversity/social emotional learning and finally, what could they bring to the board’s table?

b. Executive Session (Discussion of Candidates)

MOTION made by Marian Matthews (7:55pm) to enter into executive session to discuss the candidates for the board of education vacancy, motion seconded by Tess Grous and carried unanimously.

Present in executive session: Tess Grous, Jennifer Leszczynski, Kim Kouatly, Marian Matthews and Jane Urban.

The board exited executive session at 8:35pm and took a brief recess, reconvening at 8:38pm

c. Vote (in Public session) to Seat Member on Board of Education

MOTION made by Kim Kouatly to appoint Meghan Smith to the board of education. Motion seconded by Tess Grous. The motion carried 3-2 with the following vote: Yay (Jane Urban, Tess Grous, Kim Kouatly) Nay: (Marian Matthews, Jennifer Leszczynski)

Members thanked the candidates for applying to be board members and for their time and efforts in this process.

Committee Meetings

None

Opportunity for Public Comment

Kim Kouatly reminded the public to raise their hand, state their name and address. Time limit is 3 mins per speaker.

Kelly Fransen, 87 Southworth Drive thanked the board for their time and consideration of her candidacy for the board.

Marian Matthews thanked Mrs. Fransen for her time, and answers to the questions from the board.

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Next regular meeting date is 9/1/2022. There will be a special zoom meeting with the BOF on Monday 8/8/2022 to discuss upcoming negotiations with the Ashford Education Association. Items for the next agenda:

- School Year Opening, Board Self Evaluation, Board Goals, Superintendent Goals, AEA Negotiations, COVID Protocols for the new school year.

Adjournment

MOTION made by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m. Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.

Recorded by: Jennifer Truax

Zoom Recording:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/e3WG5Hmxhx73xCBHY_8rS-2mC6WgzMwpeyA0-Im698yI_L-4efjpK6dWnQJ_2472.aLqNOWMFawTjnCeI?startTime=1659654250000

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