

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – November 17, 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 7:02 pm. Present were members Jennifer Leszczynski, Meghan Smith and Tess Grous. Unable to attend were members Marian Matthews, Al Maccarone and Kim Kouatly. Also present was Interim Superintendent Cynthia Ford, Principal Polly Borysevich and AEA representative Joshua Carpentier. There were two staff members signed in via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge.

Superintendent Report (Veteran’s Day)

Mrs. Ford shared a visual presentation with Ashford students sharing their thanks and respect to Veteran’s for their service, sharing some facts about the armed forces , showing Veteran’s Day artwork around the school, and singing patriotic songs. Mrs. Ford noted the event was well attended and just an amazing day! The Veterans who attended were so pleased to be here and to be recognized. Mrs. Ford also noted that some of our students and two teachers are currently in Germany, and there is a blog available for people to follow their activities.

Board Chair Comments

Jane Urban thanked everyone who organized, worked at and participated in the Veteran’s Day event. So many prepared and donated food and it was such a great community event. She also commented that the blog of our students in Germany looks fabulous and the students are doing many fun and exciting things with their German peers. A kick off meeting to discuss the FY 24 budget format was held on the 11th. Attendees were Jane Urban, Cindy Ford, Bill Falletti, Judi Austin, John Kopec and Deana Chrzan; all agreed on a budget presentation format.

Mrs. Urban noted there are now 6 members of the school community signed into Zoom

Communications (Secretary)

A staff resignation was emailed to members of the board and will be added to the next meeting agenda.

Academic Presentation to the Board (BOE goes to Kindergarten Classrooms)

At 7:19 pm, those present went to visit the three kindergarten classrooms and returned at 7:27 pm. Tess Grous stated she was very impressed with the organization, cleanliness and amount of classroom materials for the students. She referred to the teachers and classroom paraeducators as “superstars.”

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes: 10/20/2022; 11/03/2022

b. Request Approval of Leave of Absence

c. 1st Reading: Approval of Bylaw Revision – Meeting Date, Place, Time

d. Approval of 2023 Ashford BOE Meeting Schedule

Motion made by Jennifer Leszczynski to approve the items on the consent agenda. Motion seconded by Meghan Smith.

Jane Urban noted an edit to the minutes of 11/03: they should read that there were 2 members of the community were present in the room, not via zoom. Also, business manager Deana Chrzan was omitted from the call to order at the meeting.

A maternity leave of absence was requested by Josie Lamarre beginning in April of 2023.

The bylaw language revision reflects the board’s actual meeting schedule, and will be added to the next business agenda for 2nd reading and approval.

Brief discussion was held concerning the BOE proposed meeting schedule in comparison to that of the Board of Finance.

There being no further discussion, Jane Urban called for a vote on the motion to approve the consent agenda. The motion to approve the consent agenda carried unanimously.

Old Business

a. FY 23 Budget Planning Update

A budget input session was held on Saturday 11/12. Jane Urban, Cindy Ford, Jennifer Leszczynski and Deana Chrzan were present, no one from the public attended. Considerable discussion followed which included but was not limited to the FY 24 presentation dates to the Board, the Board of Finance and Town Meeting; a state required Reading Program for students in Grades K-3; the superintendent and business manager are in the process of creating the first draft of the budget which will include all known expenses to date (such as negotiated salaries) and anticipated costs of other areas of the budget.

b. Facilities Update

Mrs. Ford updated the board on the status of the UST replacement. The first selectman has reached out to vendors for a quote on the direct purchase of the 20,000-gallon tank which would result in a significant savings. The town awarded the contract for tank replacement to Service Station Equipment. The roof project is moving forward, the next board to review the project is Planning and Zoning. No decision has been made concerning how the roof project approval would be acted upon; by town meeting or by referendum.

c. Approval of BOE Mission and Vision

Members of the board reviewed a second draft of mission, vision and goals. This item will be voted upon at a future meeting when all members are present.

New Business

None

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Items for the next agenda: Mid-Year Evaluation of the Superintendent (executive session); budget; subcommittee break out sessions; curriculum presentation; BOE mission, vision and goals, facility update.

Motion made by Jane Urban to add to the agenda item 12b, Teacher of the Year. Motion seconded by Tess Grous and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Borysevicz attended the CT Teacher of the Year ceremony at the Bushnell in Hartford to honor Ashford's teacher of the year, Christine Marinelli. Mrs. Ford noted it was an awesome celebration with Mrs. Marinelli's family and friends in attendance.

Adjournment

Motion made by Meghan Smith to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 p.m. Motion seconded by Jennifer Leszczynski and carried unanimously.

Recorded by: Jennifer Truax

Zoom Recording Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/nvoFoFcD8Leok_-wHGZOWfPx5C1739FdE7QAkkX7FoukxMzVbTGFgV03wHa7D22c.py2qo_dzFT_DxUJB?startTime=1668728858000
Passcode: J3J*64v@

Josie Lamarre
41 Busse Rd.
Willington, CT 06279

November 1, 2022

To: Ashford School Superintendent
440 Westford Rd.
Ashford, CT 06278

Dear Superintendent Ford,

This letter is to notify you that I am pregnant and wish to take maternity leave during the 2022-2023 school year. I anticipate beginning maternity leave on April 4, 2023, but this can be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. My anticipated return date is the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Josie Lamarre". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Josie Lamarre

Series 9000
Bylaws

TIME, PLACE AND NOTICE OF MEETINGS

1. Regular Meetings
 - A. The Ashford Board of Education (the “Board”) shall set a calendar of regular meetings for the ensuing year at the first regular meeting in November.
 - B. In compliance with the Connecticut General Statutes, the Chairperson shall file this calendar with the Town Clerk, and post this calendar on the Board’s Internet web site, if available, by December 31.
 - C. Normally, the Board shall schedule regular meetings on the first and third Thursday of each month of the year except July and August, when the Board shall schedule one regular meeting. The scheduled July and/or August meetings may be cancelled at the discretion of the board chair.
 - D. If at any point in the meeting the Board should not maintain a quorum, then the Chairperson of the Board will adjourn the meeting and declare the time and place of the resumption of the meeting, which shall be reflected in a written order of adjournment. A copy of the written order of adjournment will be posted on or near the door of the place where the meeting was held within twenty-four hours after the time of adjournment.

If, in accordance with applicable law, the Board conducts a regular meeting by means of electronic equipment, the Board shall provide, at least forty-eight (48) hours before the meeting, direct notification in writing or by electronic transmission to each member of the Board and post a notice that the Board intends to conduct the meeting solely or in part by means of electronic equipment in the Administrative Offices of the Board, in the office of the Town Clerk, and on the Board’s Internet web site. Such notice shall include instructions for the public to attend and provide comment or otherwise participate in the meeting, by means of electronic equipment or in person, as applicable and permitted by law.

2. Special Meetings
 - A. Special meetings may be held when determined by the Board, when so called by the Chairperson, or within fourteen (14) days upon written request of three members of the Board.

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- B. No special meeting shall be held unless a notice stating the time, place and purpose of the meeting has been given to each member and to the Town Clerk, and has been posted on the Board's Internet web site, if available, twenty-four (24) hours before the time stated for the meeting to convene.
 - 1. If, in accordance with applicable law, the Board holds a special meeting conducted solely or in part by means of electronic equipment, notice of such meeting shall include whether the meeting will be conducted solely or in part by means of electronic equipment. If such meeting is to be conducted by means of electronic equipment, such notice shall include instructions for the public, by means of electronic equipment or in person, to attend and provide comment or otherwise participate in the meeting, as applicable and permitted by law.
 - C. When a majority of the members agree that an emergency exists which has made a regular notice impossible, such a meeting may be called at a time or place which may be most convenient. In case of such emergency meeting, a copy of the minutes setting forth the nature of the emergency and the proceedings occurring at such meeting shall be filed with the Town Clerk no later than seventy-two (72) hours following the holding of such a meeting.
3. Meeting Time and Place
- A. All regular meetings of the Board shall begin at 7:00 pm or as soon thereafter as a quorum is present and shall adjourn no later than 7:30 pm unless extended to a time certain by a two-thirds vote of the Board members present. All regular meetings of the Board shall be held in Ashford School, unless otherwise ordered by the Board.
 - B. Special Meetings (non-emergency) of the Board shall be held at a time and place to be determined and announced in advance of meeting.

Legal References:
Connecticut General Statutes

Public Act 22-3, "An Act Concerning Remote Meetings Under the Freedom of Information Act."

- 1-225 Meetings of government agencies to be public. Recording of votes. Schedule and agenda of certain meetings to be filed and posted on web sites. Notice of special meetings. Executive sessions
- 1-228 Adjournment of meetings. Notice
- 1-229 Continued hearings. Notice

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- 1-230 Regular meetings to be held pursuant to regulation,
ordinance or resolution
- 7-3 Warning of town and other meetings
- 7-4 Record of warning
- 10-218 Officers. Meetings

Approved by the Ashford Board of Education:

Ashford School District
Ashford Board of Education - 2023 Meeting Schedule

Unless otherwise posted, all meetings will be held via Zoom and/or in person in District Conference Room 16 at Ashford School. Meetings will commence at 7:00 pm. The board reserves the right to schedule subcommittee meetings as a part of their regular meeting agendas. The regular meeting schedule is as follows:

January

January 5, 2023
January 19, 2023

February

February 2, 2023
February 16, 2023

March

March 2, 2023
March 16, 2023
*March 30, 2023** (optional, 5th Thursday)

April

April 6, 2023
April 20, 2023

May

May 4, 2023
May 18, 2023

June

June 1, 2023
June 15, 2023

July

July 20, 2023

August

August 17, 2023

September

September 7, 2023
September 21, 2023

October

October 5, 2023
October 19, 2023

November

November 2, 2023
November 16, 2023

December

December 7, 2023
December 21, 2023



BOE Areas of Focus

Main areas of focus:

Curriculum: Engage and challenge.

- a. New Reading program for 4-6 \$30,000.
- b. New State mandate for k-3 reading programs \$30,000.

Finance: Enhance students experiences while being fiscally responsible.

- a. People: keep class sizes down especially in early grades.
 - i. Appropriate supports to meet the students needs.
- b. Health Insurance currently 20% increase. This number may come down as the budget season progresses based on past experience.
- c. Other insurance increases will not exceed 3%-5%: auto, workers comp, liability etc.
- d. Cybersecurity is possibly going from \$30,000 to \$45,000 BUT that is a worst case scenario.
- e. Contractual obligations for both Unions and 12 Non-affiliated employees.

Continued funding in areas of:

Culture: Continue to foster an environment of physical and emotional health and wellness for all and provides diverse opportunities that enhance teaching and learning.

Facilities: Continue to follow the maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school's useful life, and demonstrate environmental responsibility.

Important note for facilities:

- Roof is targeted for possible summer of 2024 not 2023. Secured funding for underground fuel tank project through capital improvement projects and state grant program.



DRAFT FOR BOE
USE ONLY

Discussed 11-17-22

BOE VISION, MISSION & GOALS
NOVEMBER 2022

BOE VISION (words in bold are from the Ashford School vision statement or goals):

*The Ashford Board of Education supports Ashford School in providing high quality educational opportunities that **empower learners to strive for positive change** and in fostering an environment in which **creativity, critical thinking, cultural competency, and innovative problem solving** are central to learning.*

BOE MISSION (words in bold are from Ashford School mission statement):

*The Ashford Board of Education, in partnership with Ashford School and the community, is committed to providing a safe and positive environment that empowers students to succeed in their continued educational endeavors, **discover their passions, strive for excellence, encourage life-long learning, connect with their community and the world, and contribute in positive and meaningful ways.***

BOE GOALS (with suggested changes shown in red):

CURRICULUM: *Support **an exceptional pre-school program and** ensure a kindergarten to 8th grade curriculum that **engages and** challenges students to use methods of inquiry to solve problems, think critically, and to express themselves creatively and effectively.*

FINANCIAL: *Develop **and monitor** a budget that ensures the best possible education while being fiscally responsible to taxpayers.*

CULTURE: *Foster an environment of physical and emotional health and wellness for all. Support a community that recognizes professional expertise and provides diverse opportunities that enhance teaching and learning.*

COMMUNITY RELATIONS: *Provide enriching opportunities for community engagement, meaningful collaboration, and partnership with all stakeholders.*

FACILITIES: *Serve as a leader for Ashford in enhancing energy efficiency **and sustainability,** developing a maintenance and restoration plan that extends the school's useful life, and in demonstrating environmental responsibility.*