

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – December 15, 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 7:10 pm. Present were members Jennifer Leszczynski, Al Maccarone and Marian Matthews. Tess Grous and Meghan Smith were present via Zoom. Member Kim Kouatly was unable to attend. Also present was Interim Superintendent Cynthia Ford, Business Manager Deana Chrzan (7:25pm) and Principal Polly Borysevicz. One member of the school community and one member of the public were in attendance via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge.

Academic Presentation: BOE Field Trip to Grade 5

Mrs. Ford, Mrs. Borysevicz and the board members present left the meeting room at 7:12 pm to tour the Grade 5 classrooms. All returned to the meeting room and resumed the meeting at 7:22 pm.

Members noted they were excited to see what students are learning, noting some fancy artwork and science projects, and they appreciated all of the wonderful books available in the classroom.

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

FY 24 Budget Work session

Members of the board engaged in an extensive and comprehensive review of the initial FY 24 budget dated 12/15/22. This budget is a very early estimate and is representative of several meetings held by the interim superintendent, the administration and business manager. All teachers and departments were asked for their input and needs for next school year's budget. A page-by-page review of the document occurred. It was stated several times during the review that the FY 24 budget being created in the current financial program has resulted in format and line distribution changes when compared to past budgets. Budget items discussed included staffing, estimated health insurance costs, liability/auto/property insurance, dues and fees, software programs, cyber security, heating oil, diesel fuel, electric costs, supplies, equipment needs, outplaced and magnet school tuition.

There will be a new telephone system (hardware and software) installed which is to be funded in the current fiscal year utilizing ESSER funds; maintenance of that system and savings that are anticipated to be achieved in FY 24 were addressed.

Meghan Smith joined the meeting in person (7:39 pm).

Further topics discussed were timeline for presentation to the Board of Finance; board of education dues and fees, the legal expense line, world language instruction, special services staffing (OT, PT, school psychological testing) and library media personnel.

After consideration of this discussion, the board asked Mrs. Ford to add a full-time world language teacher and a half time library media specialist to the initial budget and bring it to the next meeting on January 5th.

New Business

a. Non-Certified Staff Resignation (Tracey Campbell, Cafeteria)

Mrs. Campbell sent an email to the board and staff noting the need to resign due to relocation.

Motion made by Meghan Smith to accept the resignation of Tracey Campbell. Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.

Mrs. Urban noted the resignation is accepted with regret, and wished Mrs. Campbell well,

b. Non-Certified Staff Appointment (Gelaine Strozeski, Cafeteria)

Ms. Strozeski has been working in the cafeteria as a substitute and applied for the position after the close of the internal posting.

Motion made by Al Maccarone to approve the appointment of Gelaine Strozeski. Motion seconded by Meghan Smith and carried unanimously.

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Next meeting date is 01/05/2023. Items for discussion: Facility Update, FY 24 Budget Work session, classroom visit, financial and grant reports, capital improvement plan review/revision and items that were set aside to allow for the initial budget work session this evening.

Appointment of Superintendent (Executive Session, Action Anticipated)

Motion made by Marian Matthews to enter into executive session (8:41 pm) to discuss appointment of superintendent and to invite Cindy Ford into session if necessary. Motion seconded by Meghan Smith and carried unanimously.

Present in Executive Session: Jane Urban, Jennifer Leszczynski, Marian Matthews, Al Maccarone, Meghan Smith and Tess Grous (via Zoom).

Invited into Session: Cindy Ford and Polly Borysevicz (9:01 pm)

The board members, Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Borysevicz exited executive session (9:06 pm).

Motion made by Marian Matthews to appoint Cindy Ford as superintendent of schools and to allow the board chair to negotiate a contract with the superintendent. Motion seconded by Tess Grous and carried unanimously.

Adjournment

Motion made by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 9:08 p.m. Motion seconded by Jennifer Leszczynski and carried unanimously.

Recorded by: Jennifer Truax

Zoom Recording Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/IDVBFTr63yBIpd7ttZSbCQ3bkSLg7C2n4zwGyrwQgqI0vEVTcRlx-OGnAH2O1vme.ACNPilpnZDceuCZj>

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