

Ashford Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes – January 5, 2023
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, Kim Kouatly, Meghan Smith and Marian Matthews. Al Maccarone was present via Zoom. Member Tess Grous was unable to attend. Also present was Superintendent Cynthia Ford, Business Manager Deana Chrzan, Principal Polly Borysevicz and AEA representative Joshua Carpentier. Three members of the school staff or community were in attendance via Zoom.

Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge.

Opportunity for Public Comment

There were no comments from the public. Kim Kouatly noted receipt of a request to advertise in the Class of 2023 Yearbook.

Consent Agenda:

a. Approval of Minutes: 11/17/2022;12/01/2022;12/15/2022

b. District Office Reports

1. Superintendent

Mrs. Ford's report was included in the agenda packet provided prior to the meeting. Discussion began concerning facility related items. Mrs. Ford also distributed a draft of a Five-Year Capital plan (attached) for review.

- Marian Matthews inquired about the status of the roof project and shared concerns about the loss of solar credits the longer it takes to get the roof underway.
- The Board of Selectman have moved to purchase a replacement underground storage tank outright which will result in some savings to the Town. Amy Maguire of Service Station Equipment has been working closely with the First Selectman on this project.
- On 12/23, the generator at Ashford School failed. The Board expressed its thanks to Mr. Mellady for working with the vendor to get a replacement as quickly as possible, and for taking the initiative to check in on the school on Christmas Eve day and finding a burst pipe in the boiler room and getting that repaired. The Board is very appreciative to everyone for going the extra mile, it is what makes Ashford special. An insurance claim has been filed for the generator which was reported to be unfixable. Parts are coming and an attempt to repair will be made and perform a load test. If successful, it would save money on a temporary generator lease, but it still needs to be replaced.

2. Business Manager

a. Approval of Financial Reports: 11/2022 (revised); 12/2022

b. Approval of Grants Report (Quarter 2)

Mrs. Chrzan reviewed the monthly reports and the quarterly grant report. She noted that the current budget is on track and the administrative team will work together on grant budgeting to best utilize available funding and resources. Jane Urban inquired about the waiver for implementation of reading curriculum from CABE. This waiver will not be necessary for Ashford, ESSER funds will be directed toward the mandated curriculum.

Motion made by Kim Kouatly to accept the consent agenda items, with the exception of "Review/Revise FY 24 Capital Improvements List". Motion seconded by Meghan Smith and carried unanimously.

Motion made by Jane Urban to add as a separate agenda item "Review/Revise FY 24 Capital Improvements List." Motion seconded by Kim Kouatly and carried unanimously.

Review/Revise FY 24 Capital Improvements List

The list provided by Mrs. Ford was reviewed and compared to past capital lists.

- Marian Matthews asked about purchasing electric buses. There is a compliance mandate for the year 2030 for electric buses, however, Mrs. Ford noted that information is coming out with some concerns about charging the buses and having them hold a charge. We would also need appropriate charging stations.
- Jennifer Leszczynski noted that the need for a new generator has been on the capital list since 2020, clearly it is a problem.
- Jane Urban recalled that the roof, solar and new windows were supposed to be one project that would be bonded. Windows must be replaced prior to a mandatory HVAC update. Mrs. Ford will follow up on this.
- A new fire panel has also been noted for several years and is a priority on Mrs. Ford's list.
- The Town has purchased radios to improve communications with first responders and DPW that ties into a state bandwidth providing more coverage. There are discussions underway to have these in our transportation vehicles.
- Mini-splits are efficient and would help offset fossil fuel cost.
- Locker room updates were discussed and are much needed. The school is used to provide hot showers in the event of a town wide emergency.

***Motion made by Kim Kouatly to accept the 5 Year Capital Plan with changes as noted during open discussion.
Motion seconded by Marian Matthews and carried unanimously.***

FY 24 Budget Work Session

The version included in the agenda packet reflects the addition of world language and library media certified staff as requested at the last meeting. Review and discussion of the function budget followed. The FY 24 budget calendar is as follows:

- January 13 - Submit FY 24 Estimated Itemized Expenses to the Board of Finance
- February 16 - BOE Meeting, Submit Approved FY 24 Presentation Budget to Board of Finance
- March 2 - Presentation of FY 24 Budget to Board of Finance

New Business

None

Opportunity for Public Comment

None

Next Meeting Date/Agenda Items

Next meeting date is 01/19/2023. Items for discussion: Facility Update, FY 24 budget, curriculum/classroom visit, 2nd reading of meeting bylaw; first draft of 2023-2024 Ashford School calendar, committees

Adjournment

Motion made by Marian Matthews to adjourn the meeting at 8:14 p.m. Motion seconded by Kin Kouatly and carried unanimously.

Recorded by: Jennifer Truax

Zoom Recording Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/1MrTBow7XucA8QUtr96hy3gWJFFGhcPtoZBA7isTEOADx8jXsLwjw2NcFh5v9IkT.eaxci32piUAABGHk>

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