

Ashford, Connecticut
ASHFORD BOARD OF FINANCE
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Thursday July 13, 2023

Hybrid Meeting / Zoom / In-Person - Ashford Town Hall, lower-level room 104

1. Call to Order was at 6:57 p.m. by Chairman Judith Austin. Members present were: Jesse Burnham, Christina Davis, Angela DeSanto, and Mr. William Falletti, 1st Selectman, Ex-Officio Member.

2. Roll Call and Seating of Alternates: The roll call was taken; Ms. Davis was seated for Mr. Bean.

3.. Communications:

Chairman Judith Austin has notified members via email that she will be resigning her position as Chairman on July 27th. for personal reasons.

4. Public Comments: none

5. Approval of Minutes, Regular Meeting Thursday, June 22, 2023

MS. DAVIS MOVED AND MS. AUSTIN SECONDED A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOF MEETING JUNE 22, 2023 AS CORRECTED. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

correction under 6. New Business, 3d paragraph line 1, Colleen Depercio

6. New Business:

a. Selectman's Update: Mr. Falletti noted new DPW Dir. Mr. Casey McCue will begin July 1st as Mr. Joseph Kalinowski will retire effective July 10th. The Transfer Station has a new self-contained guard station where stickers will be checked; new transfer station stickers will be issued by August. Any NIPS grant funds must be used at the Transfer Station that operates under the leadership of the DPW Director.

The BOS hopes to have ARPA final designations made by October 1st.; suggestions can still be made to the Selectmen.

The School oil tank has been removed, but the required permit is needed in order for complete removal from the property. The new tank should arrive in mid-July. It will be a 20,000 gal. tank and has come in slightly under budget.

Mr. David Roston, Chairman of the Ashford Recreation Commission arrived at the meeting.

The School roof is to be constructed in the summer of 2024. The project's 5-million-dollar bond has been approved. Up front funds may still be needed. The BOS, the BOE and Superintendent have had a good working relationship throughout this process.

Mr. Falletti then described the work to prepare for the Ashford After-School Program. The program is expected to begin September 1st. The planning has been done in coordination with the Ashford Finance Dept. From 20-50 students are anticipated, and the statutory guidelines were consulted by Mr. Roston. An application form and criteria are to be prepared with anticipated hiring of a supervisor, assistant supervisor and one other assistant. The project will be self-supporting. The project is very serious as in addition to needed policies, forms and supplies, emergency preparedness and adequate networking between the town, the School and other towns is needed to be successful.

The BOS is also now working on union negotiations with town employees.

Activity Accounts per Ms. Soucy, Ashford Treasurer

The Ashford Recreation Dir. Sheryl York and Senior Center Dir. Kit Eves spoke about their programs' self-funded activities and how the income and costs are documented. Ms. Eves explained example activities and her methods of accounting for the self-funded activities within her budget, while Ms. York described her method as similar to that recommended by Ms. Soucy, separate Activity Accounts. By having a separate line account just for self-funded activities it would be much easier to see and account for numbers of registrants, their payments vs. the costs of the activity. The cost would be carried by the fees of the participants. This method also allows for more flexibility as donations for specific activities can be placed in the account. Ms. Davis understood correctly that the activity accounts would be only for self-funded activities.

Ms. York also explained that for each activity (self-funded or not) she writes a final report with all the details including an evaluation of the activity. Ms. Austin noted that both departments ought to be handling these self-funded projects in the same way.

Ms. Kit Eves, Dir. Ashford Senior Center, described her typical work day that often includes: creating a calendar of Center events for each month, making plans for trips and other activities, writing fliers to promote the activities, answering phone calls and in-person questions, providing information on social/governmental services, home service agencies and business, being aware of shut-ins and their needs especially during storms, and looking after the building itself, its cleaning, repairs, etc. Preparing a budget and annual report is also required. She was thanked by the Chairman for all she does for the town.

Ashford After-School Program was mentioned again; it was recommended by Ms. Soucy that it be set up as a separate line item in the town's budget. Payment should be one month in advance, or one week in advance if billed weekly. It is possible that for a family in economic need the "Care for Kids" might be a help. Forms would need to be filled out by an interested family, to apply. However, since our program is for just after school and not a day care coverage might not apply. Ms. Davis asked about the interest in the program. Eighty children are in need of after school care and 15-20 emails have expressed interest.

Ms. Sherri Soucy, Ashford Treasurer provided a brief description of her many responsibilities. She handles the payroll for all town departments, investments, human resource information, the handling of all different funds, prepares budgets, works with auditors and Workers Compensation audit, prepares reports as required for the state of Connecticut and works with the Business Manager at the Ashford School. She noted that her assistant, Laura Andert, is invaluable. She was thanked by the Chairman for her appreciated work for the town.

6.b. Annual Report:

Mr. Burnham reported that of 26 departments only 17 reports have been received. Missing reports are: Office of Selectmen, Board of Assessment Appeals, Conservation Comm., Transfer Station, Economic Development Comm., Dept. of Public Works, Fire Marshall, Volunteer Fire Dept., and Animal Control.

8. Agenda Items for the Next Meeting:

- Ashford After-School Program update
- Annual Report
- Assessor asked to speak about her position

9. Remarks for the Good of the Board:

The chairman thanked all.

10. Adjournment:

MS. DESANTO MOVED AND MR. BURNHAM SECONDED A MOTION TO ADJOURN. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY AT 8:25 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted by,
Valerie B. Oliver, Recording Secretary, 7/13/2023*