ASHLAND SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HEFFERNAN MEDIA CENTER
ASHLAND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, ASHLAND
December 1, 2015

MEMBERS PRESENT Dr. Davis, Mr. Dion, Mr. Lyford, Ms. Ulricson

MEMBERS ABSENT Ms. Liebert, with notice

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT Ms. Ormond, Ms. Temperino, Mr. DiCecca, Ms. Bartlett

ADMINISTRATORS ABSENT None

OTHERS PRESENT David Ruell, Media
Sandra Coleman, School District Moderator
Norm DeWolfe, Selectman
12 Citizens, AES Students and Staff Members

CALL TO ORDER At 6:30 p.m., Chairman Dion called the meeting to order. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

PRESENTATION Four eighth grade students presented to the Board, plans for the Class of 2016 trip to Lake George, New York. Fundraisers were noted, those held and upcoming ones. The students responded to questions raised by Board members including the number of overnights on the trip (one); how many students will be going (17); and the cost per student ($275). For those students needing financial help, many students “over fund raise” and the excess will go to those students in need. Some discussion ensued regarding the upcoming silent auction. The students were thanked for their presentation.

BUDGET WORK SESSION REVIEW Taken up later in the meeting.

MINUTES A. Regular Meeting, November 3, 2015 Ms. Ulricson moved, Mr. Lyford seconded, to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 3, 2015, as printed and distributed. The vote was unanimously in favor.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR #1 None.

COMMUNICATIONS A. Superintendent of Schools Mr. Ormond stated that she received a communication today that will be placed on next month’s agenda.

B. Board Secretary None.

C. Board Members None.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS A. Enrollment Ms. Bartlett reported that the enrollment currently stands at 145 students. Another new student enrolled just today.
ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS (cont’d.)

B. Principal’s Report

Ms. Bartlett reviewed the calendar of events, as included in the archive agenda, including the annual wreath making event, the school’s upcoming holiday dinner, Christmas in Ashland fundraiser, the basketball schedule, SAU dance, Ryan’s Story presentation, holiday parties, cancer awareness week, and the school’s winter recreation program. Mrs. Bartlett also distributed copies of newspaper articles on school activities which appeared this past month.

Ms. Bartlett provided school wide updates, and announced staff-members-of-the-month Jennifer Lyford and Kent Chapman. She thanked them for their contributions to the school including doing whatever needs to be done in calm, kind ways.

Ms. Bartlett announced that Mary Lambert recently received the Citgo Teacher Award which included $1,000 worth of classroom supplies.

Congratulations were also offered to the Student Council that applied for, and was awarded $10,000 from Meredith Village Savings Bank for playground equipment. Mrs. Bartlett stated that she would like to have the students come to a future Board meeting to make a presentation about their efforts.

BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

None.

BUSINESS OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

A. General Operating Expenses

Ms. Ulricson moved, Dr. Davis seconded, that the Board approve the payment of bills, as presented, including manifests #2013 (checks #23976 through #23978 in the amount of $3,436.43) and #2014 (checks #24006 through #24061 in the amount of $61,913.69).

Ms. Ulricson requested clarification on a few payments to which Ms. Temperino replied.

The vote on the motion to approve the payment of the bills was unanimously in favor.


Ms. Temperino referred to the financial reports which were included with the agenda, and spoke to them. She noted a $200 increase in Medicaid reimbursement since last month. The general fund also increased due to a student in an out-of-district placement who moved; and a premium holiday of $32,304 received. Ms. Temperino reported that $3,650 was distributed to current employees, and over $1,000 was distributed to retired employees.

Ms. Temperino reported that the food service account is currently showing a “break even” status, which is good. They are serving 134 meals per day on average.

The administration is currently “keeping an eye on” electricity usage which is showing an increase. Mr. Dion suggested asking the electric company to test the meter to ensure it is operating correctly.
B. Financial Report, FY 2015-2016 (cont’d.)

Also included with the financial reports was an analysis of the 2015 tax rate.

C. Acceptance of Donation

Mr. Lyford moved, Ms. Ulricson seconded, that the Board accept a donation of a mobile science cart from DonorsChoose.org, valued at $700.00.

The Board thanked Ms. Avery for her efforts in obtaining the grant. Ms. Avery was present to explain the process for applying for the grant, and noted what they received for science equipment.

The vote on the motion was unanimously in favor.

POLICIES – THIRD AND FINAL READINGS

A. Policy #3160, Transfer of Appropriations

Dr. Davis moved, Ms. Ulricson seconded, to approve a third and final reading of policy #3160, Transfer of Appropriations, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

B. Policy #3541.31, Transportation of Students To and From School

Ms. Ulricson moved, Dr. Davis seconded, to approve a third and final reading of policy #3541.31, Transfer of Students To and From School, as revised. The vote was unanimously in favor.

C. Policy #3543, School Bus Safety Program

Mr. Lyford moved, Ms. Ulricson seconded, to approve a third and final reading of policy #3543, School Bus Safety Program, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

D. Policy #5121, Progress Reporting and Marking

Dr. Davis moved, Ms. Ulricson seconded, to approve a third and final reading of policy #5121, Progress Reporting and Marking, as revised. The vote was unanimously in favor.

POLICIES – FIRST READING

A. Policy #3545, Slip, Trip and Fall

Ms. Ulricson moved, Dr. Davis seconded, to approve a first reading of policy #3545, Slip, Trip and Fall, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Ms. Ormond noted that some of these policies are required by the Department of Labor.

B. Policy #3720, Accident Reporting Requirements and Record Keeping

Ms. Ulricson moved, Dr. Davis seconded, to approve a first reading of policy #3720, Accident Reporting Requirements and Record Keeping, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

C. Policy #3725, Emergency Care and First Aid

Dr. Davis moved, Ms. Ulricson seconded, to approve a first reading of policy #3725, Emergency Care and First Aid, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

D. Policy #3726, Indoor Air Quality

Ms. Ulricson moved, Dr. Davis seconded, to approve a first reading of policy #3726, Indoor Air Quality, as presented. The vote was unanimously in favor.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR #2

Mr. Ruell noted that the Ashland Budget Committee has two meetings scheduled, December 15 and 17, and asked on which date the school board would like to present its budget. It was decided that the school board would present its budget on Tuesday, December 15. Mr. Ruell stated that the meeting starts at 6:30 p.m.
ANNOUNCEMENTS
A. SAU #2 School Board – Public Hearing and Meeting
   Wednesday, December 9, 2015, 6:00 p.m.
   Humiston Building Conference Room
   *Immediately following the Public Hearing, Ashland Board Members will remain to vote on Ashland’s budget.*


C. Ashland School Board Meeting
   Tuesday, January 5, 2016, 6:30 p.m.
   (Policy Review Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m.)
   Heffernan Media Center, Ashland Elementary School

D. Last day to submit petition articles for school district warrant: Tuesday, January 12, 2016

E. Ashland Budget Committee – Hearing on the Proposed 2016-2017 Ashland School District Budget
   Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 7:00 p.m.
   Ashland Elementary School Cafeteria

F. Filing dates for school district officers:
   Wednesday, January 20, through Friday, January 29, 2016

BUDGET WORK SESSION REVIEW

Ms. Temperino noted that she distributed updated budget information at the beginning of the meeting. The administration responded to questions raised at the last budget review session, including:

- The proposed reduction of one teacher will cost $94,637, resulting in a 2.8 percent reduction in the total budget amount.
- With regard to a reduction in shop supplies, Ms. Bartlett stated that she is hoping to recruit area people talented in this area to come to the school to work with students.
- The cost of electronic Science Discovery textbooks is a subscription fee that covers five years and averages $3.00 per student. Ms. Bartlett explained that SAU 48 has implemented this mobile application as a resource which reinforces what is being done in the classroom. Ashland is in the process of reviewing the one-month free subscription it has obtained. The social studies department is also discussing purchasing it as well. This is being done in an effort to be greater aligned with SAU 48. The science program is for grades 4 and 5; grade 3 will continue to use the Foss Kits. Ms. Ormond also endorsed more alignment to SAU 48 for the students who will be going to Plymouth Regional High School.
- With regard to the need for additional iPads for the middle school, Ms. Bartlett noted that the current iPads are now four years old and not compatible with new applications. She spoke to the plan of continuing to use the older iPads by putting them on mobile carts. Ms. Ormond also commented on the compatibility problems. Ms. Bartlett also explained that money was placed in the new equipment account to replace those iPads that are purchased by students.
BUDGET WORK  
SESSION REVIEW (cont’d.

Mr. Dion suggested moving that money to the replacement equipment line.

- The replacement of two soccer goals vs. one is to save on shipping costs.

- With regard to technology, a question was raised as to why the school is using Chromebooks vs. iPads. Ms. Bartlett stated that all students have Google accounts and are using it more. The school’s laptops are slower due to their age. Ms. Ormond also noted that it is more cost effective to purchase Chromebooks. They want students to be able to transfer their knowledge to whatever device they use. It was noted that the Smartboards are starting to “die”; they are having a harder time keeping them working. The current three-year computer leasing program ends in 2017. There will be an attempt to stagger replacements with the next program.

- With regard to questions raised around the increase from $2,000 this year to $8,000 next year in professional development, Ms. Ormond stated that she had asked the principal to increase that account. They have relied a lot on in-house professional development. Ms. Ormond would like to see increased time for professional activities and to bring in outside resources. This would also include summer programs.

- Ms. Bartlett was asked about the amount proposed in the office of the principal for professional development. She stated that she intends to use the money for coursework toward her doctorate at Plymouth State University. She noted that she has not used any staff development money in the past.

- The snowplowing agreement will be ending in 2015-2016, and will be going out to bid again. The amount budgeted for next year is based on a three-year average.

- Ms. Bartlett spoke to the cost of co-curricular transportation (field trips). It was noted that, last year, the money for field experiences was cut out by the administration. Mr. Dion expressed concern about the increase, which doubled. Ms. Bartlett noted the middle tier field trips which are generated by the interest of teachers in taking students to places such as the Boston Museum of Science and the Capitol Center for the Arts. The money in this account also covers the cost of admission fees. In response to Mr. Lyford’s question, Ms. Ormond noted that the students raised money for their projects, and some money was transferred from various school accounts to assist. Ms. Temperino noted that she had previously provided a breakdown of costs to the Board regarding the project costs.

- With regard to the $1,000 donation for field care, Ms. Bartlett stated that she believes there is a verbal agreement with the Town of Ashland for them to maintain the field. Mr. Dion suggested that the money budgeted for goal posts be removed, and use the $1,000 donation for the posts.
BUDGET WORK
SESSION REVIEW (cont’d.)

- Mr. Lyford moved, Dr. Davis seconded, to remove $1,000 budgeted for field care. The vote was unanimously in favor. Ms. Bartlett will contact the parks and recreation department to inform them of the Board’s decision.

At this time, Ms. Bartlett spoke to the Board’s decision not to replace a teacher who is retiring at the end of this year. She spoke to the value of “people” vs. “stuff”. An opportunity to get new people in the school has a huge impact as they bring new, fresh, and different ideas. She wanted the Board to know that she feels the staff in the school have the most important impact on the students.

Dr. Davis noted that she did not vote for the reduction. Ms. Temperino noted the cost of replacing a teacher. Dr. Davis and Mr. Lyford supported looking at this issue again. Mr. Dion and Ms. Ulricson did not. The tie “vote” failed.

Dr. Davis asked why the other Board members do not support looking to replace the teacher. Mr. Dion spoke to declining enrollments, but increased staff numbers. He noted a national trend of school populations dwindling. If students are not here, tough decisions have to be made. Also, $85,000 in state funding will be lost, which has to be made up by the district. He is representing voters and taxpayers.

Dr. Davis asked the Board to reconsider if enrollments increase. Ms. Bartlett noted that ancillary positions have been reduced. Further discussion ensued. Ms. Ormond noted that the total enrollment reduction is not in a single grade. Ms. Temperino also noted that Title I grants, which have been used to fund staff, have also decreased. Further discussion ensued regarding reductions in state funding.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION

Not necessary.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, at 7:49 p.m., upon a motion made by Ms. Ulricson, seconded by Dr. Davis, the meeting was adjourned by a unanimous vote in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jodi Lamoureux
Recording Secretary