

ASHLAND SCHOOL BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Ashland Elementary School – Heffernan Media Center
Tuesday, January 7, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m.
Policy Review Committee – 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

- I. CALL TO ORDER
Mr. Heath called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
- III. RECORD ROLL
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| Members Present:
Mr. Stephen Heath, Chair
Mrs. Sandra Coleman, Vice-Chair
Mr. Stephen Felton | Administrators Present:
Mrs. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent
Mrs. Ashley Dolloff, Business Administrator
Mr. Guy Donnelly, AES Principal |
| Members Absent:
Mr. Jesse Farris (with notice)
Mrs. Jennifer Foote (with notice) | Others Present:
Mr. David Ruell, Press |
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – *Opened at 6:01 p.m.*
- V. MINUTES
- A. Regular Meeting of December 3, 2024**
Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Mrs. Coleman, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of December 3, 2024.

The motion carried 3-0.
- B. Special Meeting of December 10, 2024**
Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton, to approve the minutes of the Special Meeting of December 10, 2024.

The motion carried 3-0.
- VI. CURRENT BILLS PAYABLE
- A. General Operating Expenses**
Mrs. Donnelly presented the manifest to the Board for discussion.

Mrs. Coleman asked whether the cost of physical therapy services has increased over the past few years. Mrs. Moriarty explained that this cost will fluctuate, depending on specific student needs. Physical therapy services are only provided to students for whom it is a part of an IEP or a 504 plan.

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Mrs. Coleman, to approve the payment of bills, manifest #2007.

The motion carried 3-0.

VII. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**A. Enrollment/Principal's Report**

Mr. Donnelly shared with the Board that enrollment has gone up by one student since last month, and that one more student will be transferring at the end of the week, bringing enrollment to 159 students. Winter recreation begins this Thursday, January 9th, including tubing and snowshoeing this year, depending on the weather. NWEA testing will take place over the next two weeks. Mrs. Merrifield in the drama department is working on auditions for a play which will be held in March called Big Bad. AES ended their last day of school before the holiday break with something different this year: the whole school divided into six groups and rotated through the school, participating in activities including dance, karaoke rotation, arts and crafts, and a reading of How the Grinch Stole Christmas with Mr. Donnelly. The 8th graders are starting next week receiving information from Plymouth High School counselors about the transition to high school and CTE opportunities. Finally, AES had four students who were selected for the Lakes Region Junior High Music Festival this year, which takes place in March at Prospect Mountain High School.

B. Year-to-Date Financial Report

Mrs. Dolloff shared an updated year-to-date financial report with the Board, including a list of potential expenses. She then opened the floor to the Board for questions.

There were no questions.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS**A. Default Budget**

Mrs. Dolloff presented the Default Budget to the Board. Mrs. Moriarty commended Mrs. Dolloff for her extensive work in calculating the Default Budget. Mrs. Dolloff opened the floor to the Board for questions.

There were no questions.

Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Heath, to approve the Default Budget in the amount of \$4,733,184 as presented.

The motion carried 3-0.

B. Warrant Articles

Mrs. Dolloff presented the Warrant Articles for discussion. Discussion ensued. The Board reached consensus to remove Draft Articles #6, #7 and #8 from the Warrant Articles.

Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton, to recommend Article #2 with the following amendments: amend Moderator salary from \$50 to \$100; amend District Clerk salary from \$12/hour to \$20/hour; amend District Treasurer salary from \$800 to \$1,000.

The motion carried 3-0.

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Mrs. Coleman, to approve Article #3 as presented.

The motion carried 3-0.

Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton, to approve Article #4 as presented.

The motion carried 3-0.

Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton to approve Article #5 with the following amendments: replace TBA with \$4,733,184.

The motion carried 3-0.

C. Donation

Mr. Donnelly and Mrs. Moriarty shared that Ashland Elementary School is anticipating a generous anonymous \$14,000 donation to help support outdoor experiences, including winter recreation and field experiences. The check should arrive in mid-January. The Board reached consensus to vote on accepting this donation at the next meeting after funds have been received.

Mrs. Moriarty noted that the donations policy for the school district is due for an update, due to a legislative update that changed the threshold from \$5,000 to \$20,000 for requiring a public hearing to accept a donation. Therefore, if the Board approves the amended policy at the next Board meeting prior to accepting the donation, no public hearing will be required. This policy will be included in the next Board meeting agenda.

Mrs. Moriarty thanked Mr. Donnelly for advocating for this need and noted her appreciation for the anonymous donor's generosity.

D. Abutter Notification

Mrs. Moriarty shared an abutter notification with the Board for informational purposes, related to the Dollar General's sign. Mr. Heath said he does not believe this will impact the school and therefore does not see any need for action.

E. Feasibility Study for Preschool Needs

Mrs. Moriarty shared that the district has an opportunity to conduct a feasibility study for preschool. This could lead to some additional funding down the road to support preschool needs. Mrs. Moriarty commended special education teachers Rachel Soney and Elisabeth Coleman, as well as Lisa Holiday, Director of Student Services, and Mr. Donnelly for helping pursue this opportunity. The study will be performed at no cost. The Board will be provided with an update when the study is completed.

IX. PUBLIC COMMENT – *Closed at 6:46 p.m.*

X. NONPUBLIC SESSION

A. Nonpublic Session

R.S.A. 91-A:3 II(c): This includes matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this Board, unless such a person requests an open meeting.

Mrs. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Felton, to enter Non-Public Session at 6:47 p.m. Mr. Heath called the roll.

YES: Mrs. Coleman, Mr. Felton, Mr. Heath

NO: --

The motion passed unanimously. The Board entered Non-Public Session at 6:47 p.m.

B. Public Session

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Mrs. Coleman, to re-enter Public Session at 6:56 p.m. Mr. Heath called the roll.

YES: Mrs. Coleman, Mr. Felton, Mr. Heath

NO: --

The motion passed unanimously. The Board re-entered Public Session at 6:56 p.m.

XI. ANNOUNCEMENTS**A. Thursday, January 9, 2025**

Ashland Budget Committee @ Ashland Elementary School – Heffernan Media Center

- Budget Committee Meeting with Ashland School Board – **6:00 p.m.**

B. Thursday, January 16, 2025

Ashland Budget Committee @ Ashland Elementary School – *Cafeteria*

- Ashland Budget Committee Public Hearing – **6:00 p.m.**
- Notes: School budget will be presented first, followed by town budget.

C. Monday, February 3rd, 2025

Ashland School Board @ Ashland Elementary School – Heffernan Media Center

- First Deliberative Session – **6:00 p.m.**
- Ashland School Board Regular Meeting – *immediately following Deliberative Session*

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Mrs. Coleman, to adjourn meeting at 6:57 p.m.

The motion carried 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Heather Bullimore, Recording Secretary*