

EASTFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING

Eastford Elementary School
12 Westford Road
Eastford, CT 06242
February 10, 2022

This meeting was held via Zoom conferencing

Present: Lauren Barlow, Stephen Bowen, Terry Cote, Robert Ellsworth, Adam Minor, Jessica Perry
Also Present: Dr. Donna Leake, Superintendent; Carole McCombe, Principal; Mary Jo Chretien, Pupil Services Director

I. Call to Order

Chair Bowen called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Bowen led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. Citizen Participation

None.

IV. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: (Cote/Minor) That the Board of Education Special Meeting Minutes of January 27, 2022 be approved. Motion passed unanimously.

V. Correspondence, Communications

- Town Roof Committee minutes from January 25, 2022
- Scholarship Information from the Community Foundation of Eastern Connecticut
- Information from the Northeast District Department of Health and State Department of Education Commissioner Charlene Russell-Tucker regarding mask mandating

VI. Committee Reports

- A. Executive/Personnel— None.
- B. Fiscal— The Board received the minutes of the meetings held on January 27, 2022 and February 3, 2022.
- C. Policy— None.
- D. Woodstock Academy – None.
- E. EastConn— None.
- F. Long Range Facilities—The Board received the minutes of the meeting held on January 25, 2022.
- G. Transportation—None.
- H. Curriculum– None.
- I. Scholarship Steering Committee – None.
- J. School Safety Committee – None.

VII. Superintendent Report

Provided the BOE with updates including:

- Highlight of the Month – The ‘sound of music’ coming from the music classroom

- Educational Leadership – Meetings attended, the Strategic Plan, continued COVID-19 guidance, grant funding and updated job descriptions
- Facilities – Maintaining contact with EMCOR regarding heating system, the Town Roof Replacement Project, the updated capital plan and the approved school safety and security plan
- Collaboration and Communication – Regular communication with the First Selectman
- Finance – Updated BOE budget for 2022-23 and increase in certified teacher sub pay
- Comments on the Agenda
- Updated Director of Pupil Services job description

VIII. Principal Report

Received the Principal's report which discussed and/or provided the following information:

- Field Trips/ Virtual Field Trips
- Readiness Program/ Council Update
- Data on Student Progress
- Curriculum Updates
- Professional Development
- Middle School Sports
- Community and Other Events

IX. Director of Pupil Services Report

The Board received the February report, which shows changes from the January report.

X. Unfinished Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action: Capital Plan

MOTION: (Ellsworth/Perry) To accept the revisions to the capital improvement plan as recommended by the Facilities Committee. Motion passed unanimously.

B. Discussion and Possible Action: Budget 2022-2023

MOTION: (Ellsworth/Barlow) To accept the 2022-2023 budget of \$4,212,627, which represents a .28% increase, and send it to the Board of Selectmen. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. New Business

A. Discussion and Possible Action: Non-resident Tuition

Dr. Leake suggested that the Non-Resident Policy, #5118, be sent to the Policy Committee for review and recommendations.

Mrs. Barlow was in favor of offering staff a discounted tuition, as was Ms. Cote. Mr.

Bowen suggested that the staff member should be a full time employee and that the student should be either a child or grandchild of the staff member. Mr. Ellsworth agreed with Mr. Bowen and also agreed that it should go to the Policy Committee.

After discussion, the Board chose to send the Non-resident Policy to the Policy Committee.

B. Discussion and Possible Action: Woodstock Academy Contract

The Board received a copy of the proposed contract.

Mr. Ellsworth noted that another sending school was able to lock in to a 5 year contract with fixed tuition, and the Board indicated they would like to see if that can be done for Eastford. Dr. Leake will present this to Head of School Chris Sandford.

C. EES Five Year Plan

The Board received and discussed the five year budget plan requested by the Selectmen.

XII. Additional Agenda Items

Appointment of New BOE Member and Mask Discussion

MOTION: (Bowen/Cote) To amend the agenda to include New Business, D. Appointment of New BOE Member, and E. Mask Discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

XI. New Business, cont.

D. Appointment of New BOE Member

MOTION: (Cote/Perry) To appoint Michael Bilica as a Board of Education member to fill the current vacancy. Motion passed unanimously.

E. Mask Discussion

Dr. Leake reviewed current information regarding the mask mandate. Mr. Ellsworth stated that he would like to see the mandate end, that it should be parental choice, though he understands if it would still be required in closed settings such as on school buses. Mrs. Perry agreed with Mr. Ellsworth, as did Mrs. Barlow, who added that those who may choose to continue wearing masks should not be ostracized for doing so. Mr. Ellsworth did commend the administration and teachers for all they have done thus far regarding masking and keeping the students safe.

XIII. Financial Reports

A. January 2022 Disbursements—sent to BOE via email

B. Monthly Financial Summary, January 2022
The Board received and reviewed the monthly report.

C. Budget Transfers
None.

XIV. Citizen Participation

Teacher and resident Michelle Bibeault spoke on behalf of the teachers and staff. The staff was informally polled as to when they would be comfortable with the mask mandate ending, whether it be February 28, at the end of March, after the April vacation or at the end of the school year. Most responses thus far were that it should end after April vacation.

XV. Adjournment

MOTION: (Ellsworth/Cote) Motion to adjourn the Board of Education meeting at 7:02 PM.
Motion passed unanimously,

Respectfully submitted,

Kymerli A. Gaylor, Clerk