

ASHLAND SCHOOL BOARD SPECIAL MEETING

Remote Access only via Google Meet

<https://meet.google.com/ahd-sfdn-iyp>

Phone: 1 563-447-1886 PIN: 647 372 715#

January 7, 2021

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Heath called the meeting to order at 12:21 p.m. Mr. Heath requested that Superintendent Moriarty oversee the roll call for votes on motions during this meeting; as all members were participating remotely via phone.

II. REMOTE MEETING INFORMATION / ANNOUNCEMENT

Mrs. Moriarty read the following statement regarding electronic meetings of the Board:

As Superintendent of the Ashland School District I will announce that due to Covid-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, the Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note there no physical location for the meeting for the public. Additionally, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) *Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;*

We are utilizing the Google Meet platform for this electronic meeting. All School Board Members have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Google Meet platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen/participate to this meeting by contacting Marilyn Martell at 279-7947 for details

b) *Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;*

We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting through notice on the Ashland School District website.

c) *Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;*

If anybody has a problem, please call Marilyn Martell at 279-7947.

d) *Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.*

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by a Roll Call vote.

III. RECORD ROLL

Members Present:

Mr. Stephen Heath, Chair*
Ms. Sandra Coleman, Vice-Chair *
Mr. Stephen Felton*
Ms. Leigh Sharps*

Members Absent:

Ms. Jennifer Foote (*with notice*)

**Remote attendance*

Administrators Present:

Mrs. Mary Moriarty, Superintendent*
Mr. Steve Guyer, Interim Principal*

Others Present:

Atty. Barbara Loughman*
Ms. Marilyn Martell, Admin Assistant*
Mr. David Ruell*

IV. BUSINESS OF THE BOARD

A. Budget Hearing, Deliberative Session – Procedures and Options During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Mrs. Moriarty discussed process, protocol, and legal requirements; Atty. Loughman also shared information for conducting public meetings. Mrs. Moriarty shared that the Ashland Budget Committee is the Governing Body and responsible for deciding how the public hearing should be conducted, however, to assist the School Board in a decision regarding facility use, Mrs. Moriarty described three options available to the Budget Committee:

- Virtual/Remote Only
- School Board and Budget Committee members physically in person, with option to participate remotely; public access remote only
- All physically in-person, with option for remote. This would provide the option to the public to attend in person or remotely.

Lengthy discussion ensued regarding the options presented, public notification, and the importance to ensure the wearing of masks and social distancing by anyone participating physically in-person.

Atty. Loughman reviewed there is an order by the Governor that masks must be worn. She explained that in the event someone is unable to comply with the mask requirement, either by choice or health related issues, establishing a separate room with remote access to the meeting with an appointed Assistant Moderator for those people who chose not to wear a mask. Atty. Loughman explained by establishing an alternate location for non-mask wearers will avoid the hazard of being around people who chose to wear a mask, and will allow full participation.

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Ms. Sharps, to approve the requests for use of the school gymnasium by the Town of Ashland Budget Committee for the upcoming Budget Public Hearing; with those in attendance required to wear a mask and maintain social distancing.

Superintendent Moriarty called the roll call vote as follows:

YES: Mr. Heath, Ms. Sharps, Mr. Felton

NO: Ms. Coleman

The motion carries 3-1

B. School District First Deliberative Session – February 2, 2021

Atty. Loughman discussed the difference between the School District Deliberative Session and the Town Deliberative Session; details and requirements set forth in House Bill 1129 were reviewed in regards to holding Virtual Deliberative Sessions. Changes to Senate Bill 2 was also reviewed; SB2 currently allows towns and school districts to postpone meetings to as late as July. The School District could hold their own session under HB 1129, and the town could postpone; reminding that the school and town are separately responsible for conducting these sessions.

Alternate site meeting options were discussed for those individuals choosing not to wear a mask. Mrs. Moriarty suggested, with School Board support to offer the locker room(s) in the gymnasium as the alternate site for non-mask wearers, with remote access to the meeting.

Brief discussion was had regarding the posting of public meetings utilizing school facilities before any Board Action. Mr. Ruell responded that the Budget Committee, in order to meet posting deadline, posted the meeting to be held in the gymnasium understanding that if the School Board denied the request they would cancel the meeting. Mrs. Moriarty stated that there is a process in place for use of school facilities by the town and/or outside organizations; during the pandemic the process is different. The School Opening Plan does not allow use of school facilities by any outside organization without School Board approval; which is why the request for Town meetings has been brought forward.

Mr. Felton moved, seconded by Ms. Sharps, to approve the School District First Deliberative Session to be held in the gymnasium with those in attendance wearing a mask and socially distancing, providing remote access for those who chose that option; and should there be exceptions as defined by the Governors Order space in the locker room will be provided with remote access.

Superintendent Moriarty called the roll call vote as follows:

YES: Mr. Heath, Ms. Coleman, Ms. Sharps, Mr. Felton

NO: None

The motion carries 4-0

Mrs. Moriarty indicated a need to purchase additional technology to ensure a better remote experience and indicated that funds from the CARES Act may be utilized to support these costs. Board members gave verbal support to move forward.

V. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Heath moved, second by Ms. Sharps, to adjourn the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

Superintendent Moriarty called the roll call vote as follows:

YES: Mr. Heath, Mr. Felton, Ms. Coleman, Ms. Sharps

NO: None

The motion carries 4-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Marilyn G. Martell
Recording Secretary

Amended February 2, 2021