

# BETHANY BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Regular Meeting Minutes

### July 14, 2021

**Present**

Angelo Amato  
 John Paul Garcia  
 Angel Irigoyen  
 Amy Lestinsky  
 EJ Maher via phone, departed at 6:15 pm  
 Chris Pittenger  
 Shawn Uscilla  
 Lynette White  
 Namita Wijesekera via phone at 6:10 pm,  
 arrived in-person at 6:45 pm

**Administration**

Colleen Murray

**Absent**

**Call to Order**

Dr. Pittenger called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

**Election of Board Officers**

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Garcia to move to the election of Board officers then return to the regular agenda. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Wijesekera).*

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by White to accept nominations for the position of Chairperson. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Wijesekera).*

Garcia nominated Christopher Pittenger, seconded by White. Christopher Pittenger accepted the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

**Motion** by Murray, seconded by Lestinsky that the nominations for Chairperson be closed. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Wijesekera).*

**Motion** by Amato, seconded by White to open balloting for the position of Chairperson. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Wijesekera).*

Written ballots were distributed and collected. Results are:

<b>Teller's Report for Board Chair</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Number of Votes Cast	9
Necessary for Election (majority)	5
Chris Pittenger Received	9
1. Angelo Amato	
2. John Paul Garcia	
3. Angel Irigoyen	
4. Amy Lestinsky	
5. EJ Maher (verbal via phone)	
6. Christopher Pittenger	
7. Shawn Uscilla	
8. Lynette White	
9. Namita Wijesekera (verbal via phone)	

Christopher Pittenger is elected as the Bethany Board of Education Chairperson.

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Amato to accept nominations for the position of Vice-Chairperson. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

White nominated Amy Lestinsky, seconded by Irigoyen. Amy Lestinsky accepted the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

**Motion** by Angelo, seconded by Irigoyen that the nominations for Chairperson be closed. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Lestinsky to open balloting for the position of Chairperson. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

Written ballots were distributed and collected. Results are:

<b>Teller's Report for Board Chair</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Number of Votes Cast	9
Necessary for Election (majority)	5
Amy Lestinsky Received	8
1. Angelo Amato	
2. John Paul Garcia	
3. Angel Irigoyen	
4. Amy Lestinsky	
5. Christopher Pittenger	
6. Shawn Uscilla	
7. Lynette White	
8. Namita Wijesekera (verbal via phone)	

Amy Lestinsky is elected as the Bethany Board of Education Vice-Chairperson.

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Lestinsky to accept nominations for the position of Secretary. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

Irigoyen nominated Lynette White, seconded by Lestinsky. Lynette White accepted the nomination.

There were no other nominations.

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Amato that the nominations for Secretary be closed. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Lestinsky to open balloting for the position of Secretary. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

Written ballots were distributed and collected. Results are:

<b>Teller's Report for Board Chair</b>	<b>Votes</b>
Number of Votes Cast	9
Necessary for Election (majority)	5
Lynette White Received	8
1. Angelo Amato	
2. John Paul Garcia	
3. Angel Irigoyen	
4. Amy Lestinsky	
5. Christopher Pittenger	
6. Shawn Uscilla	
7. Lynette White	
8. Namita Wijesekera (verbal via phone)	

Lynette White is elected as the Bethany Board of Education Secretary.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Executive Session**

**Motion** by Pittenger, seconded by Garcia that the Board of Education enters into Executive Session to discuss the Superintendent's Contract and that Superintendent Colleen Murray and Susan Carpenter, Human Resources Coordinator and BOE Executive Assistant be invited to attend. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

**Attendance**

**Present**

Angelo Amato  
John Paul Garcia  
Angel Irigoyen  
Amy Lestinsky  
Chris Pittenger  
Shawn Uscilla  
Lynette White  
Namita Wijesekera

**Administration**

Colleen Murray  
Susan Carpenter

**Absent**

EJ Maher

**Reconvene**

Moved from Executive Session and the regular meeting reconvened at 6:47 p.m.

**Minutes**

**Motion** by Garcia, seconded by Wijesekera to accept the June 9, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes as presented. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

**Unfinished Business**

None.

**New Business**

**Motion** by Wijesekera, seconded by Uscilla to approve the adoption of the Connecticut State Department of Education Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plan Flexibilities for the 2021-2022 school year. *The motion carries 8 yes, 1 absent (Maher).*

**Superintendent Report**

Mrs. Murray reported that on June 11, 2021, PK-6 enrollment was 375 students.

Mrs. Murray reported that as of July 14, 2021, PK-6 enrollment for 2021-2022 is 398 students. The Board discussed Kindergarten enrollment which Mrs. Murray will watch closely to determine if instructional aides would need to be hired.

Mrs. Murray provided an update on summer maintenance, cleaning, and painting at the school. She also welcomed BOE members to the new BOE office and thanked them for their support of the project.

Mrs. Murray mentioned the 5-Year Facility Plan should be drafted by September.

Mrs. Murray provided an update on staff that have been hired, candidates that are in the interview process, and jobs that have been posted. The job opening for a Spanish teacher has been difficult to fill. Discussion ensued regarding options if the District is unable to fill the Spanish position.

Mrs. Murray provided an update on the status of the 2020-2021 budget. There is an anticipated surplus of approximately \$157,000. Approximately \$143,000 will be allocated to the 2% non-lapsing account with approximately \$14,000 returned to the Town.

Mrs. Murray discussed the Safe Return to Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan and is awaiting future guidance from the state. Discussion ensued regarding masks, desk shields, and cohorting. The District will try to align with BOWA following recommendations from the District Medical Advisor and local health departments.

Mrs. Murray and Mrs. Byrd are working on the American Rescue Plan/ ESSER III grant application and are awaiting project estimates. She also discussed grant funds would be used to offset additional staff and programs.

**Chairman Report**

Dr. Pittenger asked if the Board would like to meet for their regularly scheduled meeting on August 11, 2021. At this time, the meeting will be held pending further guidance from the state regarding the Safe Return Plan.

**Communications**

None.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Professional Development**

Dr. Pittenger, Mrs. Murray, and Mrs. Carpenter provided the Board members with a binder of information including a Board of Education Handbook, Bylaws, Committee membership and meeting schedules, communication references, and the Board Goals. Dr. Pittenger and sitting Board members discussed the materials and provided additional insight to the new Board members.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 9:42 p.m.

  
Susan L. Carpenter  
Recording Secretary

Approved August 11, 2021