

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION

MEETING MINUTES

PLACE: ANSONIA HIGH SCHOOL **DATE:** 24 June 2020 **TIME:** 6:30 P.M.
SPECIAL MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: Chris Phipps, president

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call – Mr. Phipps called a quorum

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MR. RICH BSHARA	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI	X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president	X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA		X	
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	X		
TOTAL	6	1	0

Mr. Phipps asked everyone to stand for a moment of silence to remember Ms. Natalie Cafasso, who recently passed. He said served for over thirty years at Prendergast School. He thanked her for the many years of service and dedication, and sent thoughts and prayers to her family.

C. Recognition of the Teacher of the Year (Karen Phipps – AHS) and Paraprofessional of the Year (Grace Lockett – AHS)

Mr. Phipps congratulated Mrs. Phipps and Ms. Lockett. He asked if these staff members were present on the virtual meeting, they were not.

D. Thank you, student Board member Lexi Brinkmann.

Mr. Phipps thanked student Board member, Lexi Brinkmann, who graduated this year and will be headed to UCONN in the fall. He said she has proven to be a true student leader and hears nothing but amazing things from staff regarding her leadership.

Mr. Phipps also wanted to acknowledge the retirements of staff this year. He thanked AHS Tech Education teacher, Mr. Ed Nicefaro, Ms. Maureen Ryan, Prendergast School Special Education Teacher, Ms. Betty Tuccio, grade three teacher at Prendergast School, and Mrs. Patty Biga, Special Education Teacher at Mead School. Mr. Phipps said all of these teachers were a huge asset to our district and they will be missed. He wished them well in their retirement.

II. Action items, consideration of approving the following items:

A. Ansonia Board of Education minutes from May 20, 2020 (special)

MOTION: To approve the meeting minutes
from May 20, 2020(special).

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
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MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

B. Report and recommendations from the Facilities Committee.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps briefed the Board on the recent finding of failure to report completion of roofing projects done in 2003, after discussion of policies with management. He said these projects were not closed out and submitted to the state as completed. He asked someone to make a motion to mark these projects completed. The projects are listed below.

Projects: 002-0055 Board of Education roof project, 002-0056 Prendergast roof project, 002-0057 Mead School roof project, and 002-0058 Ansonia Middle School roof project.

MOTION: To mark as complete the following

Roofing projects: 002-0055 Board of Education roof project,

002-0056 Prendergast roof project, 002-0057

Mead School roof project, and 002-0058

Ansonia Middle School roof project.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

C. Project completion discussion.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said there is no discussion needed since the vote was taken and discussion happened in the above action item.

D. Report and recommendations from the Finance Committee.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps asked Ms. Jo-Anne Cegan to report. She informed the Board that after the Finance Committee meeting, she is reporting the end of the year balance process is going well. She said the hope is to put up to 2% in a non-lapsing account, which will assist in future projects. She said having this will benefit greatly. She reminded the members they have reports up on BoardDocs for their viewing. She said there won't be a final total until all bills are paid. She said the insurance reserve is very good.

Superintendent DiBacco asked Ms. Cegan to speak about the roll out of Infinite Visions software. Ms. Cegan said the staff is working very hard, training is underway and meetings will be happening to begin the process of payroll. Superintendent DiBacco thanked Ms. Cegan for completing the rollout by July 1, 2020 like he asked. She said the staff has been a tremendous help and doing a great job.

Mr. Phipps said he wanted to take a minute to thank the Board of Aldermen and Mayor Casseti regarding the non-lapsing account fund. He said the Board of Aldermen approved this project.

Mr. Phipps asked Mr. Bshara if he had anything to add. Mr. Bshara told the Board they are looking into the upcoming year's budget by reviewing all cost savings and moving numbers.

Ms. DiGiorgi asked Mr. Phipps when the Personnel Committee met and if there was notice of the meeting. Mr. Phipps said he apologizes to everyone; there was a lack of communication regarding that meeting. He said they reduced it to a committee of the whole, to a subcommittee, based on a recommendation made by Attorney Fred Dorsey. Mr. Phipps said Attorney Dorsey informed them anytime you meet as a whole, it would be considered a regular board meeting. Mr. Phipps said this is why they had just a subcommittee meeting, but the communication

did not go out by mistake, to the whole Board. He said he again, is very sorry about the lack of communication regarding the meeting. Mr. Phipps said any subcommittee meeting going forward will be communicated to all Board members.

E. Report and recommendations from Personnel Committee.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said the Personnel Committee meeting was basically regarding non-union contracts. He said the discussion was regarding the need for a universal benefits form and term sheets, to streamline and update the non-union contracts. He said these are contracts, which have not been updated for many years or were expired. Mr. Phipps said the employees whose contracts were expired did not receive a raise this past year. He said retro pay was requested and the job description needed to be updated on the outdated contracts. He said the contracts that were affected are; Grants Manager, Director of Facilities, Food Service Director, Head Chef, Data Manager, Director of Technology, Computer Technician, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Payroll and Benefits Specialist, and Technology Coordinator.

Ms. Varoschak asked if they will see the job descriptions from the meeting. Mr. Phipps said they have not been updated as of yet. He said the committee is asking for approval to do that. Ms. Varoschak asked if the contracts will be uploaded on the city website by the town clerk. Superintendent DiBacco said all bargaining union contracts are on the district's website. He said these contracts they are referring to are year to year employees. Superintendent DiBacco said the individuals went the whole year and he wants to make sure these staff members get what they deserve. He said some of these people stepped up during the pandemic, going way above and beyond for the district. He said he could not let the year go by without acknowledging them, and also giving them what they deserve. Superintendent DiBacco said hopefully someone will agree and make the motion to give these employees their pay. Mr. Bshara said additionally, it was discussed at the meeting where payroll will have much more complicated responsibilities with Infinite Visions, and IT will be handling more regarding distance learning.

MOTION: To accept the job reclassifications and retro salary increases based on the recommendations made by Superintendent DiBacco and the Personnel Committee.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

Mr. Phipps said also in the discussion at the Personnel meeting was the need for adding a part-time Special Education Pre-K Teacher. He said this will mean the position will go from part-time to full time. Mr. Phipps said they are also asking to add a transportation specialist, and a Human Resources Director. He said this HR position which may also include a shared services position at city hall.

MOTION: To accept the request from Superintendent DiBacco and the Personnel Committee to add a part-time Special Education Pre-K Teacher position, a Transportation Specialist, and a Human Resources Director.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		

MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

F. Non-union contracts (Central Office) and non-union positions (Grant positions).

Mr. Phipps said there was also a discussion at the Personnel Committee meeting to approve a salary increase of 2.5% for the 2020-21 school year for Smart Start, School Readiness, Crossing Guards, and Pre-K aides. He said these are Grant and Alliance positions.

MOTION: To accept the request from Superintendent DiBacco and the Personnel Committee to approve a 2.5% salary increase for the 2020-2021 school year for Smart Start, School Readiness, Crossing Guards and Pre-K aides.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

G. Authorize signature change form of the ED-099 Agreement for the Child Nutrition Program.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said the motion is needed to allow the Superintendent and Finance Director to be signatories on the ED-099 for the Child Nutrition Program

MOTION: To allow the Superintendent and the Finance Director to be signatories on the ED-099 for the Child Nutrition Program.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE	2	X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	1	X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

H. Permission for the Superintendent to hire certified staff during the summer months.

Discussion: Mr. Phipps said this is generally permission that is given each year because usually, meetings are not frequently held during the summer months. He said there will be a great chance due to the reopening of schools from the pandemic, there will be meetings in August. He said there will also most likely be special meetings as well.

MOTION: To allow Superintendent DiBacco
to hire certified staff during the summer months.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	1	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTALS		6	0	0

III. Information Items:

A. Special Education Director's Report

Mr. Kevin Keating reviewed his report. He said 508 students are currently receiving services in the district, not including the 25 students that have recently graduated high school. He said there are also outplaced students that will be removed from requiring services as well. Mr. Keating said this will mean that the district has gone from 560 to under 500 students being serviced. He said that is a direct reflection of the dedicated staff using the evaluation process correctly as well as successful intervention in place. Mr. Keating said extended school year staff has been hired. He said there is collaboration with Southern CT State University students who are creating videos for our extended school year students. He said there is an awesome project happening at the Middle School where fifteen empty planters are now growing vegetables, and when the special education students return in the fall, they will harvest and prepare food. He said the safest practices are being researched for the students in need. He thanked the Board for approving the part-time Special Education Teacher position. He said that alone will allow for 8 outplaced students to return to district and receive education. He said this saved approximately \$800,000 plus transportation costs. Mr. Keating said there are eleven students starting in September at the Mead School modular classrooms. He said this will allow for no tuition, or reduced tuition for our students placed there. He said he was also involved in the hiring process for a new principal for the ACE program.

Mr. Bshara said he has also heard the Medicaid reimbursement amount will be going up and billings to outside districts will be increasing and he wanted to thank Mr. Keating.

Mr. Keating said the savings will continue to increase and he is happy to have the team he is working with.

B. Informational Systems

Mr. Vinny Pastore said his department is still working on the chrome book deployment project. He said the teacher laptops have been received and they are in the process of disbursement. He said there was training for the laptops that teachers will use for distance learning. He said there have been meetings with Xerox for more savings and improved service with the company.

C. School Business Administration Financials

1. 2019-2020 Year-to-date
2. Athletics
3. Food Services
4. Grants and other income

Discussion: Mr. Phipps and the Board agreed, Ms. Jo-Anne Cegan gave her report earlier in the meeting.

D. Youth and Family Outreach Summary

Mr. Bob Lisi talked about the meal distribution program. He said from the last day of school in session, the Food Service staff distributed 34,664 meals to our community. He said the staff did a phenomenal job. Mr. Phipps thanked Mr. Lisi for the incredible effort in getting all of the meals out.

E. Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent's Report.

47483647. Superintendent Bergin shared the details of the successful transitioning of the distance learning process. He said the end of the year had great attendance. Superintendent Bergin said the process continues with student distribution of belongings. He said as guidelines come in, they will put them in place for the fall. He told the Board a lot of the processes are changing.

and staff is eager to learn and make the necessary changes. Mr. Bergin said he would also like to address the amazing high school graduation that took place on June 20th. He said the event that was spearheaded by Principal Giansanti was beyond what anyone could imagine. He said the work of the staff and the whole community came together. He said he is the daughter of a high school senior and if he could have had half of what happened on the 20th he will be happy. He thanked everyone for the preparation and dedication. He said professional development has continued throughout the pandemic. He said when the students return there will be emotional support and the staff has been virtually trained by experts. He said there are ongoing training programs that are proving to be more beneficial virtually than if they were to happen live. He said kindergarten registration is taking place and they are gathering information for the incoming students. Bergin also said the hiring process will be different this year, but he will ensure they will take every effort in making sure to have amazing staff come on board. He said the new staff is outstanding and many candidates are eager to come to Ansonia. He said it is a great problem, to have too many qualified candidates. Superintendent DiBacco said he would like to add that five years ago the resignation rate was 21%. He said this year, because of only retiring, the rate is 10%. He said if you look at teachers who are moving, not retiring, the rate is 2.6%. He said he appreciates this from his heart and is thankful the staff is staying in Ansonia. Superintendent Bergin said the important thing is that they are building a team and after training and implementation, staff is remaining with us. Mr. Phipps thanked Superintendent DiBacco and Bergin. Ms. Voroschak said she has heard amazing feedback regarding graduation. She asked about staff going out this year to homes of incoming Kindergarten students. Mr. Bergin said that will happen and they will also have a Kindergarten orientation.

Mr. Phipps said he wanted to ask Mr. Bob Evans, facilities director, to brief the Board at this time. Mr. Evans said he was happy to report there was a savings of approximately \$25,000 on the access road project at the high school. He said his staff continues to do well with the buildings. He said he will keep up on all requirements for the upcoming school year.

Superintendent DiBacco greeted the Board and said he wanted to let everyone know he attends weekly updates on what is happening in the state as well as Naugatuck Valley Health weekly phone calls to see what the health department is saying. He said they have put together a re-entry committee that meets regularly. He said there were funds given for re-entry, which requires specifications that will be followed. He said he wanted to thank the Board of Aldermen for the approval on the non-lapsing account. Superintendent DiBacco said he appreciated the effort from everyone that was involved and it will absolutely be advantageous moving forward. He said this shows tremendous collaboration with the city and it will be a huge benefit. He said he wanted to applaud the high school for the amazing graduation that took place. He said he received numerous compliments. Superintendent DiBacco said long-time staff members said it was one of the most memorable moments in their career. He said this event was a blessing and became an intimate moment that was shared with family and the staff like no other graduation. He said people that were there can confirm there were not many dry eyes in the room. Superintendent DiBacco said they will be moving accounting from the Food Service Department to Central Office, he said this will be a very important transition for the district. He said Food Service negotiations will begin in July. He thanked the Board for approving the roof projects. Superintendent DiBacco added that he is going to put every effort in working with local legislatures to hopefully get legislation to shorten the timeline from the closing of the projects. He said it will be absolutely necessary for the students to be safe before returning in the fall. He said there is a new, unpaid Compliance Liaison position that he appointed Assistant Superintendent Bergin to. He said that position is required to ensure all of the CDC guidelines are being followed. He said he also wanted to thank all of the wonderful Food Service staff for their tireless efforts in the distribution of meals program. He said there was a barbeque luncheon that was held for the staff as a small token of appreciation that was led by Mr. Lisi. He said the commissioner came to the district again to observe several things at the district, but mainly to see our program that was feeding the community. He said our process of bus stop drop-off was innovative and interesting to them. He said Mr. Jimmy Martinez led them around the Food Service kitchen like a true professional. He said the commissioner told him the dedication and passion of the staff is clear, and he enjoys visiting our district. Superintendent DiBacco said, he has never been more impressed, never been more proud or excited in his career. He said here in Ansonia, we have the most amazing staff, the community is great, and the students are wonderful. He said in a time like this, school should be constant and we are proving that here.

Mr. Phipps asked if there can be a weekly update on goings on in the district since so much is happening now.

Mr. Bshara said he wanted to thank Mr. Giansanti for the invitation to the wonderful graduation and it was a great event. He said the staff should be thanked for their job, it was very memorable.

V. Executive Session

MOTION: To enter into Executive Session at 7:38p.m.

to invite Superintendent DiBacco,

Assistant Superintendent Bergin and Ms. Jo-Anne Cegan.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO		X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				

MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	2	X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

To return to regular meeting.

VI. A. Action as needed. As a result of Executive Session

MOTION: To accept the actions discussed in Executive Session.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA	1	X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK		X		
TOTAL		6	0	

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. RICH BSHARA		X		
MRS. TRACEY DELIBERO	2	X		
MS. FRAN DIGIORGI		X		
MS. BETH LEBERGE		X		
MR. CHRIS PHIPPS, president		X		
MR. VINNY SCARLATA				
MS. SHARON VOROSCHAK	1	X		
TOTAL		6	0	

Respectfully submitted,

Cassie Venson

Cassie Venson Recording Secretary
Date: 7/01/2020