

**ANDOVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
ANDOVER, CT  
Regular Board of Education Meeting  
Wednesday, December 11, 2024  
7:00 pm  
Virtual Meeting/School Library**

**Members Present:** Caitlin Greenhouse (newly named Chairperson), Eric Becker, Mike Beckwith, Gerard Cremé, Brianne Lanzieri, Shannon Louden, (virtual), Celeste Willard

**Members Absent:** None

**Administration:** Valerie Bruneau, Superintendent  
Taylor Parker, Principal  
Terri Smith, Finance (virtual)

**Others:** Jen McGoldrick (virtual), Jennie Morrell (virtual), Liz Lokiec (virtual), Kimberly Person (virtual), Kirstina Frazier (virtual), Joanne Hebert (virtual), Charlene DelMastro (virtual), Ann Cremé (virtual)

**1. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Supt. Bruneau, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. Comments from the Public – None.**

**3. Nominations of Board of Education Officers**

Supt. Bruneau explained that tonight is a reorganization meeting, which is the time to nominate and vote on chair, vice-chair, and secretary. Supt. Bruneau explained the nomination and voting process. Discussion about the process.

**Chairperson:**

- G. Cremé nominated S. Louden, seconded by M. Beckwith.
- C. Willard nominated C. Greenhouse, seconded by B. Lanzieri.

Discussion: None

Roll call vote:

G. Cremé – Shannon	E. Becker – Caitlin	C. Greenhouse – Caitlin
M. Beckwith – Shannon	B. Lanzieri– Caitlin	C. Willard – Caitlin
S. Louden– Shannon		

**C. Greenhouse took over the meeting as Chair.**

**Vice-chairperson:**

- G. Cremé nominated M. Beckwith, seconded S. Louden.
- C. Willard nominated E. Becker, seconded by B. Lanzieri.

Discussion: M. Beckwith appreciates the nomination, has no interest in being vice-chair and asked to be removed from consideration.

G. Cremé nominated himself, seconded by S. Louden.

No further nominations or discussion.

Roll call vote:

- S. Louden – Gerry
- E. Becker – Eric
- M. Beckwith – Gerry
- G. Cremé – Gerry
- C. Greenhouse – Eric
- C. Willard – Eric
- B. Lanzieri– Eric

**E. Becker voted in as Vice-Chairperson**

**Secretary:**

C. Willard nominated herself, seconded by E. Becker

No further nominations or discussion

Roll call vote:

- C. Willard – Celeste
- M. Beckwith – Celeste
- B. Lanzieri – Celeste
- E. Becker – Celeste
- G. Cremé – Celeste
- C. Greenhouse – Celeste
- S. Louden - Celeste

**C. Willard voted in as Secretary**

**4. Executive Session (if needed) – For the Purpose of Discussion of Board of Education Officer Nominations/Vacancy – Not needed.**

**5. Communications – None.**

**6. Student Celebrations**

None today. Spelling Bee season coming up as well as other fun activities, so there will be lots of fun student celebrations to share!

**7. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the November 13, 2024, Regular Board of Education Meeting

**S. Louden made a motion to approve the minutes from the November 13, 2024 Regular Board of Education Meeting, seconded by G. Cremé. No discussion.**

**8. Opportunity to Add or Delete Agenda Items – None.**

**9. Other Celebrations**

Supt. Bruneau noted that there is a small gift for each BOE member and thanked BOE members for their service and for a great year.

**10. Reports**

**A. Chairperson’s Oral Report – None.**

**B. Superintendent’s Report**

Supt. Bruneau provided a maintenance vendor schedule to the BOE members which includes vendor, what services they provide, service intervals and the next service date. Supt. Bruneau reviewed the information on this list. There is an issue with outside parking lot lights, six lights are out currently. This is a safety issue; the vendor has indicated lights will need to be replaced, and since a lift is required, they will do all of the lights at once, \$7350.00 to replace all six lights. Other repairs/services this month were maintenance.

Grant landscape is quiet at the moment. Put in for year three for the mental health grant, which has been approved. Must be used for additional services with AES psychologist since she is the year 1 and year 2 paid portion of the grant. The year 3 grant is funded at 70% of the initial grant request from the initial grant application three years ago. Psychological services line in budget will not increase this year as we will get those services covered through the grant. Also got the summer mental health grant extended for the third year (2026) which was approved at 70% of the initial request as well. Did get notice that we will be approved for six more preschool slots through school readiness. This does not offset the General Fund but it helps with preschool expenses since preschool is not in our budget and funded entirely through grants and tuition.

**C. Principal’s Report**

Principal Parker shared information on collaborations with Marlborough and Hebron. Currently in an Affinity group that provides support for using Bookworms, which we use with grades K-5, and beginning to create program for 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Staff from Marlborough and Hebron have joined. In January, for professional development (Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>), we will be sending some staff to Hebron to see how they use the program, and Marlborough will come to Andover to see how it is used in our district. Then grade level teachers will get together to share information. Our 4, 5, 6 team has had a lot of discussion about RHAM and what the transition will look like. Working with the new RHAM curriculum coordinator, and Andover staff will attend RHAM classes to get a sense of what our students will experience. When our staff has the information on what will be expected of students at RHAM, we can ensure we prepare our students for those next steps so they are not rushed to become middle school students. Nice collaborations are forming to benefit teachers and students. Had Bookworms representatives from Delaware come in to help our teachers incorporate Bookworms; will do this again in February.

#### **D. Financial Report**

Supt. Bruneau reported that there was a notification from the bank of seven counterfeit checks that went through the bank. There were no actual counterfeit Andover checks, it was from usage of an ATM by a fraudster with made up generated checks. The money came out and went right back in since we have protection. Supt. Bruneau and T. Smith met with specialists from the bank to ensure this doesn't happen again, and their recommendation was to switch status of account to commercial with Positive Pay, which will provide a higher level of fraud protection. Supt. Bruneau shared how this would work and what systems would need to be put in place to add the safeguards.

T. Smith has used Positive Pay before and will set it up this week. Reviewed financial report as presented and answered questions from the BOE members. While some line items are showing overages, with grant funding and excess in other line items there will be funds available to cover current overages. T. Smith noted that many of the technology line items will need to be increased for the 25/26 Budget.

#### **E. Liaison Reports**

**School Readiness** – Nothing to report, next meeting in January.

**PTA** – C. Willard reported Holiday Breakfast on Saturday went well. The playground part is in, waiting for installation to be complete. Restaurant Night in January and Pasta Dinner in February. February 22 - annual Wolf Pack Game.

**Tri Board Policy** – C. Greenhouse thanked BOE that many were able to attend this meeting. Good opportunity to meet with other Boards in town, feel better coming out of that meeting, building relationships with other Boards; another meeting in spring/summer. S. Loudon noted that next step is to go to BOF meeting next week and ask them to put the money left over into the School Capital Fund. C. Willard reached out to Jeff Maguire after the meeting with the BOE regarding top three needs with a range of costs. Jeff Maguire suggested emailing this to Eric Anderson.

**Town Meetings** – M. Beckwith reported on November BOF and BOS meetings. BOF meeting had conversation on AES Capital Fund account and Town Charter changes and how that impacts budgets. BOS noted BOE update on fans for AES Gym and solar installation project, including layout of panels on the roof, etc.

**CIP** – S. Loudon noted they are meeting next Thursday and will be discussing Firehouse needs.

**STIF Account** – C. Greenhouse reported that the BOE can have their own STIF account. AES Capital Account exists in several different places not in one account, but is spread over several accounts; some accounts will be closed and put into the General Fund as a line item for the AES Capital Fund. Trying to determine what happens with the interest that is earned on these funds which are held in the General Fund. Interest goes into the General Fund and is not proportionally distributed among line items. BOF could change it to break down interest, but then the Town would not fund line items fully as they expect the interest to cover the shortfall. C. Willard

shared more information on how the STIF Account might work with the 2% Non-Lapsing Fund, spoke with the auditor about this. Money in the STIF Account would go into AES Capital Fund. STIF not an option/recommendation for General Fund money. Discussion.

**F. Items for Discussion & Actions**

**a. Item: Bathroom Project  
Action: Discussion/Possible Action**

Supt. Bruneau noted that BOE members received report from Fuss & O’Neill, currently waiting to determine whether to sign contract with Fuss & O’Neill or to continue to look at other options. Supt. Bruneau reviewed the phases listed in the Fuss & O’Neill contract, which is about \$48K and covers all of the work comprehensively. Aztec quote from the Town came in at \$15K but does not complete the same amount of work. Discussion.

**S. Louden makes a motion to move forward with the Fuss & O’Neill proposal for the MEP bathroom project, seconded by E. Becker. No further discussion.**

**7 – 0 – 0 (PASSED)**

**b. Item: Solar Project  
Action: Discussion**

Supt. Bruneau gave an update; she shared a schematic image of the roof with numbers that show area of the roof. Areas 2 and 7 will need additional inspection to determine structural integrity through the inside of the building. They (structural engineer) will take out a piece of the ceiling to see the interior beams and they will fix that section of the ceiling on the same date. As long as this inspection, which will happen over Christmas break, shows no concerns, they will move forward to get permits and schedule work. Interconnection paperwork has been completed by the chairperson; step one has been approved. Additional paperwork, which C. Willard has signed as BOE Chair, will be submitted.

**c. Item: 2025 - 2026 Budget Schedule  
Action: Discussion**

M. Beckwith shared some ideas on getting information on the budget out into the community. Supt. Bruneau will attend a senior luncheon to share information and ask questions from senior citizens in the Town. The other suggestion is to hold a parent meeting hybrid (in person and Zoom) to share specific, useful information on the budget. Would like to hear input on the efficacy of the Zoom meetings held in prior years. S. Louden noted that there is a lack of attendance in the Zoom meetings and feels six meetings is too much, also suggested a budget presentation to the seniors during a luncheon. C. Willard feels the Zoom sessions are helpful and though no one attends, people can go back and watch them and they are helpful to have, feels it is helpful for the BOE members to get that information in chunks. B. Lanzieri found the meetings helpful personally and allowed BOE members to ask questions and make suggestions; could consolidate sections to decrease number of meetings, suggested a student

advocate to talk at some of the budget meetings. E. Becker feels that consolidation to 2-3 meetings would be beneficial, likes the student advocate idea but would like that to be thought through, would like to consider school newsletters sent home to families outlining budget changes and how they will impact service and comparison to other communities. G. Cremé feels there is benefit to a decreased amount of Zoom meetings, concerns about an elementary school student being an advocate for the budget, show value of teachers, staff, programs provided, shorter budget season - budget due Feb. 15, 2025. C. Greenhouse summarized the input from BOE members, would there be a way to come to a middle ground that meets everyone's needs, meetings and recordings for BOE presentation, BOF presentation, and family meeting presentation. Supt. Bruneau will make several short videos that can be posted on Town website so that people can view those prior to the January 8 meeting which will have budget presentation. This allows people the option to watch or not. Discussion.

- Jan. 8 – Budget presented to BOE by Superintendent
- Jan 23 – Budget presented to the families, 7:00 p.m.
- Feb 12 – BOE meeting, vote to approve budget anticipated

**G. Comments from Public on Agenda Items**

J. Hebert noted that the budget dates have not been set formally. STIF account interest generation, overall the Town's STIF account is a benefit to the Town and taxpayers, issues will be worked out.

**H. Other Action Items – None.**

**I. Upcoming Meetings**

- Regular Board Meeting – January 8, 2025
- Items for Next Meeting – STIF Accounts update, Budget, Solar update, Bathroom project report/project update

**J. Adjournment**

**C. Willard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:13 p.m., seconded by S. Loudon.**

**7 – 0 – 0 (PASSED)**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Longley, Clerk