

**Fort Edward Union Free School District**  
**Meeting of the Board of Education**  
**220 Broadway, Fort Edward, NY 12828**

**DATE:** January 10, 2022

**TYPE OF MEETING:** Regular Meeting

**PLACE OF MEETING:** YouTube Channel Link for Public :  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCc0hxw8F322B5Vqp4eX-hrA>

**MEMBERS PRESENT** Thomas Roche, Ella Collins, Amanda Durkee, John Guglielmo, Christina Durkee, James Donahue and Patricia Suprenant, Christopher Miles

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Joseph Carroll

**OTHERS PRESENT** via the above mentioned ways:

Interim Superintendent Mark Bessen, John Godfrey, Tobie Bessette, David Cutler,  
Audra Aul, Jill Boucher, Maggie Torra, Tabitha Fish, Tadgh Nealon

**President of the Board**, Thomas Roche, called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

**I. Pledge of Allegiance** - Mr. Thomas Roche asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Roll Call was made by Mrs. Bessette:**

Tom Roche, Christopher Miles, Ella Collins, Christina Durkee, Amanda Durkee, John Guglielmo, James Donahue and Patricia Suprenant

**Absent:** Joseph Carroll

**II. Community Comments: Mr. Roche read the following:**

*A public comment period not to exceed thirty (30) minutes each shall be provided at each business meeting. In an effort to provide an opportunity for all interested speakers, all speakers shall be limited to three (3) minutes during the public comment period. Community members, who wish to address the Board, are requested to complete the speaker request form and submit it to the Clerk of the Board prior to the meeting. Comments regarding agenda items will be taken first. Speakers are reminded of the three-minute time limit. Should the 30 minute time limit expire additional written comments may be taken prior to the meeting's adjournment. A member of the Board or the Superintendent will respond that the BOE received and reviewed the comments.*

*When members of the public speak to the Board, they shall state their name and address, the name of the organization (if any) which they represent, and the agenda item they wish to comment on. Please be aware that by law individual student information or particular personnel issues cannot be discussed at public sessions of the board. The Board will not permit interruptions, slanderous remarks or "name-calling" by speakers or the audience. We take public comment very seriously and careful notes*

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*will be taken. However, the board generally does not respond while the meeting is in public session.*

Tabitha Fish 38 Canal Street, Fort Edward addressed the Board regarding issues she was having with an employee and her son. Mr. Roche informed Tabitha Fish to put her thoughts in an email and send it to Tobie Bessette and she can get more specific information. The Board will speak with the administration and get back to her.

#### **III. Presentations:**

- IV. Recognition of Success:** Mr. Godfrey informed the Board that students in Kindergarten, 1st grade along with Mrs. Brown-Knobel's class is learning about the impact of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Students are creating an "I Have A Dream" poster in which they are encouraged to discuss and share ideas that would make the world a better place. Some of the thoughts the students came up with are: I have a dream that everyone feels loved and people have enough food to eat and everyone can play together and the world would be a fair place.

Student Council has started a new lunch group and this is where members of the Council come together and welcome new students to our district and learn some fun facts about our school and they get a chance to make some new friends. Mr. Roche asked if they could come to one of the Board meetings?

The high school ski club is up and running with our first ski trip to West Mountain last Wednesday, it was a success for all, everyone had fun. There are 13 students in all.

Our 6th grade class recently finished their research paper on Egyptian mummies where each student had to complete a display with fun facts. Another nice project by our kids

#### **V. Reports:**

##### **Board Committee Reports (9 Board Committees)**

- i. Finance Committee met tonight prior to this meeting  
Amanda Durkee reviewed the documents from Sharlene Petro-Durgan, reviewed cafeteria report, treasurer report, and three resolutions that are on the agenda tonight. Budget planning and following the same process as last year from the departments of what they want and what they need. Take steps from there.
- ii. Grievance and Negotiations Committee (next meeting TBD)
- iii. Curriculum Committee (next meeting TBD)
- iv. Policy Committee (met on 11/16) Amanda Durkee stated that they need to have another Policy Committee meeting.
- v. Athletic Committee (met on 12/7/21)
- vi. Strategic Planning Committee (next meeting TBD)
- vii. Personnel Committee (next meeting TBD)
- viii. Building and Grounds Committee for Health & Safety (next meeting TBD)
- ix. Building Project Committee (next meeting TBD)

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**VI. Superintendent's Report:**

Mr. Bessen reported that we have had a couple of our grants approved, that Sharlene Petro-Durgan covered at the previous meeting, we have \$150,000 which came at a very nice time for us. We are also looking at the budget bill so you will hear about this in the next few meetings. We have had to spend a lot of time on COVID. After the Holidays it has spiked. We have had a number of children come down with COVID during the Christmas break around the 25th 26th and then they were out this week

Mr. Bessen reported is that the State is sending out different guidance on different days, so we are in a holding pattern right now. We do not want to put out information today and it will change in two days. Mr. Bessen reviewed what the CDC recommends compared to the NY State Health Department. We are starting to hand out the Home Health COVID Kit, we are letting people know that if they want a kit they can come to school and sign it out and Mr. Bessen then will send the numbers to the state. The kits were for informational purposes only but now the state is saying that if a person uses a home health test they are going to count that as valid as a PCR. The State is so far behind so they are saying if you take the test at home you are given the link to the State website to log it in yourself. We have applied for a limited lab license. There was discussion about the logistics of the COVID testing and what the CDC is recommending.

**VII. Treasurer Report:** Report was in packet. The Finance Committee met prior to this meeting.

**VIII. Principal's Report- Mr. Godfrey** reported that the Elementary School will be conducting a practice CBT which is a computer based testing on January 12th for grades 3-8. The purpose of this test is to check the readiness of our school systems including our internet and our chromebook capabilities. The actual CBT test will take place later this Spring.

**Middle School/High School Level** - With all the NYS Regents exams were canceled for January, we will have the mid-term exams. These exams are for our middle school and high school students. It will be given in school during their class. Exam period will be the last two weeks of January. Week of January 18th and the 24th

**IX. Buildings and Grounds Report:** There is a report in the drive and the Board packets

**X. Discussion Items:**

**Superintendent Search:** Mrs. Durkee had a copy of the OnBoard paper where our school district's Superintendent Search is in it along with many others. The word is out that we are accepting applications. Mrs. Durkee also stated that she is very pleased with the communications between James Dexter and Tony Muller. Mrs. Durkee stated that she is very pleased with the process.

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**XI. Consent Agenda:**

- (a) Motion made by Amanda Durkee second by John Guglielmo to approve the Board Minutes of December 13, 2021. Motion carried 8-0
  
- (b) Motion made by Amanda Durkee, second Ella Collins by to approve consent items:
  - a. Approval of Warrants and Claims for December 2021 and January 2022
  - b. Approval of Treasurer Report for November 2021
  - c. Approve of the Budget Transfers

Motion carried 8-0.

**XII. Action:**

- (a) Motion made by Amanda Durkee, second by John Guglielmo to approve the second and final reading of the revised policies:  
#6160 Professional Growth/Staff Development  
#5640 Smoking, Tobacco, and Cannabis (Marijuana) Use  
Motion carried 8-0
  
- (b) Motion made by Christina Durkee, second by Patricia Suprenant to approve the CSE/CPSE Recommendations as included in the Board Packets.  
Motion carried 8-0
  
- (c) Motion made by Amanda Durkee, second by Christina Durkee to approve the following resolution: BE IT RESOLVED that upon the recommendation of the Superintendent of Schools, this Board of Education hereby authorizes the Business Manager to open bank sub-accounts as outlined in the attached.  
Motion carried 8-0
  
- (d) Motion made by Ella Collins , second Amanda Durkee by to approve the Transfer, Relocation, Disposal of Fixed Assets (see attached)  
Motion carried 8-0.
  
- (e) Motion made by Patricia Suprenant, second by John Guglielmo to approve the following changes:  
**BE IT RESOLVED**, the Board of Education approve a (~~20-21~~) 2021-22 budget amendment in the amount of \$5,911.20 in order to recognize the remaining balance of the CARES ACT “grant in aid” carried over from (~~2019-2020~~)2020-21.

Increase Estimated Revenue:

A4286 State Aid CARES ACT Federal Flow Thru “Grant in Aid”	\$5,911.20
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Increase Appropriations:

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A2250.150-01-ESSE ESSER-CARES ACT Instructional Salaries            \$1,114.60

A1620.160-01-GEER GEER-CARES ACT Salaries                                 \$4,796.60

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of the Board of Education be authorized to appropriate funds as specified by this resolution.

**Motion carried 8-0.**

- (f) Motion made by Christina Durkee, second by James Donahue to approve the following resolution: Motion to approve the following resolution: **BE IT RESOVED**, the Board of Education approve a 2021-22 budget amendment in the amount of \$150,000.00 in order to recognize the “Grant in Aid” received from the State Treasury on December 16, 2021.

Increase Estimated Revenue:

A3289 Other State Aid “Grant in Aid”    \$150,000.00

Increase Appropriations:

A5510.4 Transportation-Contracted Services    \$100,000.00

A1320.4 Auditing     \$7,000.00

A2815.16 Bus Admin BOCES Services     \$43,000.00

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Treasurer of the Board of Education be authorized to appropriate funds as specified by this resolution.

Motion carried 8-0

**XIII. Personnel:**

Motion made by Christina Durkee, second by James Donahue to appoint Lynn Mykins as School Nurse effective December 15, 2021 at a rate of pay per contractual rate. Welcome to the Fort!!

Motion carried 8-0.

**Second Community Comments: None**

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**XIV. Executive Session:**

**At 7:15 p.m.** motion made by Patricia Suprenant, second by Amanda Durkee to enter into Executive Session to discuss matters referring to employment of specific individuals. Motion carried 8-0.

**At 8:10 p.m.** Motion made by Patricia Suprenant, second by Christopher Miles to return to public session. Motion carried 8-0.

**XV. Adjournment:** There being no further business, motion was made by Patricia Suprenant, second James Donahue adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion carried 8-0.