

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
MAY 4, 2010**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Debra Bibeau, Acting Chair, Stanley Schwartz, Bonnie Schultz, Gale Hanshaw, Tom McGee, Ann Connolly King, David Jack, Superintendent of Schools and Stuart Farnham, SAC Representative.

The Vice Chair called the meeting to order. Mr. McGee led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Bibeau welcomed Stuart Farnham, Student Representative, in Ms. Havey's absence.

## **II. PRESENTATIONS**

### **1. South Hampton School Board**

Don Harper, Chair, Kim Mullen and Gary Crosby were present to fulfill the section of the contract between Amesbury and So. Hampton that states that the two school boards/committees meet once per year. The consensus of both sides was that the relationship/partnership was a good one and expected to remain so in the future. Mr. Harper thanked the superintendent for keeping the lines of communication open. Mr. Jack stated that the contract between the two communities ends with the FY'11 school year so there will be meetings during FY'11 with regard to the contents of the contract. Mr. Jack invited the So. Hampton Board to the high school graduation and told them to let him know if they needed any accommodation.

### **2. Responsive Classroom Presentation**

Wally Helliesen, AES Principal, Ellen Elliott, 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teacher and Sheila Harney, 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, presented a program they are involved with and are using at AES called the Responsive Classroom. This program is a powerful tool that helps students learn social skills as well academic skills. Learning these social skills teaches students respect for one another and minimizes negative activity. It also involves the parents of the students. This summer 12 teachers will be attending this training.

### **3. Collaboration to Support our Youth**

Telena Imel, Curriculum Director, Deb Smith, Director of Pettengill House and Donna Georges, Principal of the Amesbury Academy, explained details on a matching grant in the amount of \$1m through The Tower Foundation and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Pettengill House would be the lead agency so any funds would go through Pettengill. There would be a team of teacher leaders and a "train the trainer" model. It is a three-year grant. The program target is to help students who have been through some kind of trauma in their lives, to come to school ready to learn. The trauma memories prevent a student from using both sides of the brain, this program will help students to access both sides of their brain and ensure that they come to school able to learn.

Programs like the arts are extremely important in helping students to use both sides of the brain. Studies have shown that talk therapy is not effective in treating children who have gone through trauma. The trauma takes over the child's ability to learn. The DESE has a book called, **Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools**. Copies of this book will be made available to school committee members.

#### **4. Landry Stadium Committee**

Les Anderson, Chairman, Dave Randall and Francis Notargiacomo gave a PowerPoint presentation of the finances of the stadium committee. Their request is that ticket prices to events at Landry be increased by \$1.00 and that dollar be given to the stadium committee to help in the maintenance of the stadium. The stadium committee is looking into getting the stadium declared as a registered war memorial. Mr. Schwartz asked if there were benefits to having it declared as a war memorial. The members of the stadium committee were not sure what benefits there would be but thought that by declaring it a war memorial perhaps they could apply for funding to keep up with the maintenance. Ms. Schultz asked the committee if they considered advertising the stadium as a place people can rent to use in order to raise money. Mr. Schwartz stated that the school department has already made a contribution to the maintenance of the stadium by taking on the mowing of the grass. Mr. Notargiacomo told Mr. Schwartz that the school department has a football field at the high school that the school athletic department could use instead of the stadium.

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to delay a vote on adding \$1.00 to each ticket purchased for events held at Landry Stadium to the May 18<sup>th</sup> school committee meeting. Vote: 5, Yes; 1 Abstain (Bibeau).*

### **III. COMMENTS BY VISITORS, DELEGATIONS**

- Greg Noyes, 8 Clark's Road, recommended that the school committee charge a \$2.00 fee for graduation to raise money for the stadium. He also spoke about requiring that students pay a fee to park in the high school parking lot and that the proceeds be held in an account established for repairing the parking lot.
- Jim Thivierge, 106 Friend Street, spoke about the budget and recommended that the school department wait until the budget is finalized in mid-July to see what money is available. He suggested that Amesbury regionalize with Newburyport to reduce costs. He also said that he could not find a law that allows the school department to pre-pay SPED tuition. He was assured by the superintendent that there is a law that allows this and that the information would be made available to him.

*Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to suspend the rules so that the committee could vote after 9:00 p.m. Unanimous Yes.*

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

##### A. Curriculum Director's Report

###### 1. Collins Writing/Literacy Grant

Ms. Imel gave the school committee a list, by grade, of literacy tasks that students should be able to accomplish. Ms. Connolly King said that the list was a great tool for parents and asked that the list goes home to parents and put on the website.

Ms. Imel also handed out the list of offerings for teachers on the Professional Release Time Day on May 5<sup>th</sup>.

##### B. Business Administrator's Report

###### 1. Quarterly Report

Mr. Bergeron asked the school committee if they had any questions with regard to the quarterly report that he gave them at the previous meeting.

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to take the vote on the quarterly report out of order. Unanimous, Yes.*

*Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to accept the quarterly report as presented. Unanimous, Yes.*

###### 2. FY'11 Health Insurance Changes

Mr. Bergeron reported out on the upcoming changes to town employees' health and dental insurance as well as the flexible spending account program.

Mr. Bergeron informed the committee that unlike what was stated by Mr. Thivierge during Comments by Visitors, pre-paying special education tuition is in the Mass. General Laws.

##### C. Superintendent's Report

###### 1. Health Insurance Changes

Mr. Jack gave credit to the unions for the co-pays to the health insurance that will result in a significant change in the cost of health insurance for FY'11.

###### 2. Race to the Top (RTTT) Grant

As was reported at the last school committee meeting, Massachusetts was not one of the states that was approved for the Race to the Top funding. The AFT has advised the union members to withdraw their support for this funding. Ms. Bibeau stated that she would like to see

RTTT funding kept on the agenda for the future. She also stated that MASC will be coming forward with their opinion on RTTT.

**3. AEFI Hall of Honor**

Mr. Jack wanted to remind the committee and the general public that the AEFI Hall of Honor dinner would take place on May 7<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Budget Schedule**

The superintendent stated that the school committee will be presenting their FY'11 budget to the Municipal Council on the evening of May 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Connolly King asked that she be notified of any upcoming events that the school committee traditionally attends.

Mr. Jack also told the committee that he had just received an update to the anti-bullying legislation. He also reported on the update regarding the conducting of the evaluation of the school superintendent as a result of the Wayland law suit. The evaluation of the superintendent can be discussed in public but the scoring and tabulations of the actual evaluation will be done in executive session. Mr. Jack said that he would like to meet with each school committee member independently following the results of his evaluation.

**ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION**

**A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to approve the regular minutes dated April 6, 2010. Unanimous, Yes.*

*Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to approve the executive session minutes dated April 6, 2010. Unanimous, Yes.*

**B. BUSINESS**

1. **2<sup>nd</sup> Reading GBCBC/JFCB & Exhibit, JFCB/GBCBC & Exhibit Promoting Civil Rights & Prohibiting Harassment, Bullying, Discrimination, and Hate Crimes including Exhibits.**

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to approve above policies and the exhibits. Unanimous, Yes, Student Rep., Yes.*

2. **2<sup>nd</sup> Reading GBCBD/JFCD & Exhibit, JFCD/GBCBD & Exhibit Sexual Harassment including Exhibits.**

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Ann Connolly King to approve the above policies and the exhibits. Unanimous, Yes.*

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Bonnie Schultz, to approve policies JFCB/GBCBC & Exhibit. Unanimous, Yes.*

*Motion by Gale Hanshaw, seconded by Bonnie Schultz, to approve policies JFCD/GBCBD & Exhibit. Unanimous, Yes.*

Ms. Connolly King thanked Donna Georges for her work with the District Attorney's office in getting these policies in place. She also requested that every employee read these policies electronically as well as acknowledge electronically that they have read them.

3. **Quarterly Report – previously taken out of order**

4. **Acceptance of Parent Donation for AHS Art Club**

Ms. Hanshaw stated that this \$600 donation was for photography supplies for the AHS Art Club and a letter of thanks will be going out to the donator.

*Motion by Tom McGee, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to accept the donation from Nor'East Architectural Antiques, LLC in the amount of \$600. Vote: 5, Yes; 1 Abstain (Hanshaw).*

C. **WARRANT**

*Motion by Stanley Schwartz, seconded by Tom McGee to approve the warrant dated April 22, 2010 in the amount of \$404,990.42. Unanimous, Yes.*

*Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to approve the warrant dated May 6, 2010 in the amount of \$118,726.43. Unanimous, Yes.*

**INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

A. **Subcommittee Reports**

1. **Budget/Finance Subcommittee**

Ms. Hanshaw was the acting chair of this meeting and reported out the subcommittee's acceptance of the \$600 donation for the AHS Art Club.

Brad Ford, Director of Operations, reported information on storm damage throughout the district and the insurance coverage, energy conservation that was discussed with

the principals of each building that resulted in a 95% increase in energy conservation, the AMS security camera was fixed and a buzzer was installed at CES.

The superintendent thanked the adult baseball team for painting the dugout and the Little League for prepping the field. Ms. Bibeau stated that prior to the May 20<sup>th</sup> budget presentation, she would like to meet with Mr. Ford and Mr. Bergeron on capital items. Ann Connolly King asked for a list of items on the capital plan and what is the issue with the plan. Ms. Bibeau replied that none of the items are funded so every year they just move the same items forward, however, they could now take the resurfacing of the high school track off the list.

**2. Policy Subcommittee**

This subcommittee met on April 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. in the superintendent's office. Ms. Hanshaw told the committee that included in their school committee packet was policy AGA Recognition for Accomplishment. She stated that through this policy, they could acknowledge students in the manner of their choosing.

**3. Personnel Subcommittee**

This subcommittee has been meeting throughout the negotiations process. The next personnel meeting is scheduled to take place prior to the next school committee meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

**4. Student Advisory Council**

Stuart Farnham was the acting student representative in Chanelle Havey's absence. He reported that they met with Mr. Murray, Ms. McAndrews and Mr. Hamond to review the student handbook. They talked about enforcing the cell phone policy. As they did last year, the SAC plans on going to the middle school to talk to the 8<sup>th</sup> graders regarding activities they can get involved in when they get to be freshmen. The SAC elections are on May 24<sup>th</sup> and their next meeting is scheduled for May 11<sup>th</sup>.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

- Mr. McGee reported on the rededication of the high school track. He said the event was very nice and the track is beautiful.

- Ms. Schultz reported on the competition the AHS band and chorus participated in and won the following: AHS Concert Choir and Select Chorus each received Excellent National Ratings. The Concert Band placed second and the Jazz Band received an excellent rating. She also stated that the Boosters Club would be hosting a fundraiser at Friendly's on May 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The superintendent spoke about the Excellence in Education Awards luncheon held at Flatbreads on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The recipients were: Steven Bastien, Cheryl Basque, Marne Cowden, Althea Cynewski, Joanne Merrow, Erik Smith, Milly Sanford, Brett Twombly, Deborah Welch, Debra Whitney and Cathy Woods.
- Ms. Bibeau reminded the committee that the prom would take place on May 14<sup>th</sup> beginning with the promenade in front of the town library at 4:30 p.m. She also reported that she attended the NSBA conference in Chicago and that Emily Hanshaw's book, Wolf Prints, was at the conference and sold out.
- The superintendent asked the committee if they wanted to move up the beginning time of the next school committee meeting in order to have time to fit in all of the items included in that agenda as well as the added time needed for the superintendent's evaluation. The consensus of the committee was to move the May 18<sup>th</sup> meeting to 6:00 p.m. and to reschedule the Personnel Subcommittee meeting scheduled for that evening. Mayor Kezer will be notified.

### **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

1. AHS & AMS Handbook (5/18/10)
2. Superintendent's Evaluation (5/18/10)
3. Coordinated Program Review (5/18/10)
4. OPTIONS Program (5/18/10)
5. Naming of the Amesbury High School Library (5/18/10)
6. Summer Meeting Dates (5/18/10)
7. Whittier Superintendent and Reps. (6/2/10)
8. Amesbury Academy Charter Renewal (6/2/10)
9. Summer Reading List (6/2/10)
10. Retiree Reception (6/2/10)

***Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Gale Hanshaw to adjourn the meeting at 10:15 p.m. Unanimous, Yes.***

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom McGee, Secretary

### **Amesbury Public Schools Mission Statement**

***The Amesbury School District is unconditionally committed to every child, ensuring that all students experience success through the development of attitudes and skills necessary for lifelong learning by providing the highest quality staff, meaningful learning experiences, and a vitally involved community.***