

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
JUNE 15, 2010**

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Thatcher Kezer, Chair, Debra Bibeau, Stanley Schwartz, Bonnie Schultz, Tom McGee, Ann Connolly King, David Jack, Superintendent of Schools and Courtney Ouellet, SAC Representative.

The Chair called the meeting to order. Ms. Bibeau led all attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. PRESENTATIONS

1. Whittier Supt. & Representatives

The Whittier members were unable to attend. They will attend a future meeting tentatively scheduled for the 2nd meeting in September.

2. Chartwells Food Services

Kevin Kish, Chartwells Food Services Manager and Theresa Sullivan, Regional Manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation in conjunction with Michael Bergeron, Business Administrator for Amesbury Public Schools. The presentation included accomplishments such as honorable mention in the National Whole Grains Challenge. Chartwells uses local produce as much as possible and plans on doing that in the coming school year through November.

A few of the challenges faced by Chartwells this past year were the general downturn of the economy as well as a medical leave of a school department employee at the high school that increased labor costs. Participation in the free and reduced lunch program at the high school is low. The point of service program, pre-paying for lunch online, has received positive feedback.

Chartwells' focus for 2011 will be on several areas; adding another lunch period at the high school would help the congestion issue and could invite more students to make purchases in the cafeteria, the planned purchase of a pizza warmer will help to reduce labor costs, increasing the breakfast, lunch and some select beverage prices by \$.25 and increasing the a la carte items by \$.10, excluding milk, would help to get Chartwells to a break even status. The last increase in food prices was \$.25 in 2008.

The current Chartwells contract states that any loss in the food services program will be covered by Chartwells. Mr. Bergeron proposed to the committee that in order to keep Chartwells as Amesbury's food services provider and as a show of good faith, for FY'11 that the school department pay the first \$15,000 of any loss Chartwells may incur.

Discussion ensued regarding how to get the word out to students that free and reduced lunch status is totally anonymous. All students have a 4-digit PIN number that only they know.

The Mayor asked if Chartwells had noticed any increase in business since the high school building project was completed. Mr. Kish stated that he did not see any change. Ms. Sullivan told the committee that high school lunch participation numbers are typically lower than they are at the middle and elementary levels. Mr. Kish also stated that some students leave the high school at lunch and find other food sources. The middle school numbers are the best in the entire district.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to take School Lunch Price Increase out of order. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to increase breakfast, lunch and some beverage prices by \$.25 at all levels and increase a la carte items by \$.10. The price for milk will not increase. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Stanley Schwartz, seconded by Bonnie Schultz to pay the first \$15,000 overage cost in food services for FY'11. Unanimous, Yes.

3. Amesbury Academy Charter Renewal

Donna Georges, Academy Principal, introduced to the committee the attending Academy staff as well as a member of the Board of Trustees. Ms. Georges gave a PowerPoint presentation beginning with the history of the Horace Mann Charter School. Included in the presentation was demographic data, innovative practices, funding, including district expenses, grant funds received, and a timeline for the charter renewal. In order to move forward in the charter renewal process, the teachers union and the school committee are required to sign their approval.

Ms. Connolly King expressed her concerns regarding the 5-year commitment to the charter school because she didn't know if the items that are required by Horace Mann Charter Schools law, were taking place between the Academy and the school committee. She asked Mr. Bergeron to explain how "in kind services" are handled in the town/school department budget. Ms. King suggested that the committee have the Memorandum of Understanding and the Horace Mann Charter School laws reviewed by the school department attorney. Ms. Bibeau stated that MASC offers a service just for this purpose and it is at no charge to member districts.

Mr. Schwartz stated that the cost to the town to see all of the seniors at the Academy graduate could not be measured. Ms. Imel spoke to the issue of bringing the innovative ideas from the Academy back into the district.

Ms. Bibeau suggested that a school committee member be put on the Academy Board of Trustees in an effort to increase the level of communication between the Academy and the school committee.

Ms. Georges stated that there are two students currently attending the Academy who would be eligible for outside placements but the Academy staff is overseeing the needs of these students. Costs of sending any student to an outside placement would be between \$60 and \$85k.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to suspend the rules to conduct business and vote after 9:00 p.m. Unanimous, Yes.

Mr. Schwartz stated that some of the students who graduated from the Academy in the past may not have graduated from high school at all if it weren't for the opportunity to attend the Academy.

A discussion ensued regarding whether or not to proceed with a vote of approval of the Academy charter or to put the decision off until a meeting in July. Mr. Cabana, a former district teacher and current Academy teacher, gave some history regarding how the idea for the charter school began. He was the teacher at the high school in charge of the alternative education program for 22 years or more. When the idea of a charter school was being discussed, the superintendent at that time thought it would be better to move the alternative education program off campus.

Ms. Connolly King stated that Barnstable opens the Memorandum of Understanding with their charter school every year and re-signs it during budget time. She suggested that Amesbury do this as well, especially with the "in kind" services provided. Committee members stated individually their consensus to revisit the Memorandum of Understanding annually and ask MASC to look at the law regarding what the school committee is responsible for under a Horace Mann Charter School.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Ann Connolly King to take business item #2, Amesbury Academy Charter Renewal, out of order. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Stanley Schwartz to enter into the process of the renewal and endorsement of the Amesbury Academy for an additional 5-year period. Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Tom McGee to change the date of the next school committee meeting from July 27th to July 20th. Unanimous, Yes.

III. COMMENTS BY VISITORS, DELEGATIONS

None.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

C. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Jack spoke about the letter regarding the No Child Left Behind report card and the district meeting the required Adequate Yearly Progress by 2014.

The superintendent read aloud the recipients of 2010 grants from the Amesbury Educational Foundation (AEFI).

ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Debra Bibeau to approve the regular minutes dated June 7, 2010. Vote: 5 Yes, 1 Abstain (McGee).

B. BUSINESS

1. School Committee Goal Setting Session

The committee agreed to a goal setting session off-site on August 24, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

Ms. Connolly King asked if the school committee could obtain a subscription to the Harvard Education Letter for accessing online. The committee agreed to this suggestion.

C. WARRANT

Motion by Debra Bibeau, seconded by Tom McGee to approve the warrant dated June 17, 2010 in the amount of \$604,545.13. Unanimous, Yes.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Budget/Finance Subcommittee

Ms. Bibeau stated that the subcommittee will meet at 6:00 p.m. prior to the July 20th school committee meeting. She thanked the community for their support at the public hearing on the budget and reminded all that the Municipal Council will be taking a final vote on the budget on June 22nd at 7:00 p.m. at town hall.

2. Policy Subcommittee

This subcommittee will meet on June 22nd at 3:00 p.m. in the Superintendent's office.

3. Personnel Subcommittee

Mr. Schwartz stated that the subcommittee reviewed the personnel reports for the current year and the new report for the coming school year. Ms. Schultz asked that these reports be sent to the full committee.

4. Student Advisory Council

Courtney gave a report on the council's visit to the 8th graders at the middle school. She stated that the reactions from the 8th graders was positive for freshmen participation.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Ms. Bibeau congratulated Coach Gene Burnham and the high school varsity baseball team for reaching post-season play.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Whittier Superintendent and Reps. (9/21/10)
2. Report on Diversity in Students & Personnel
3. CACD/Tufts University Program at AMS
4. School Committee Goal Setting Session (8/24/10)

Motion by Bonnie Schultz, seconded by Debra Bibeau to adjourn the meeting at 10:00 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.