

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
May 6, 2019**

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gray, Chair; Deb LaValley, Peter Hoyt, Rob Chamberlain, Tim Kisieleski, Robert Lavoie, Kyra Tripp, Joan Liporto, and Jared Fulgoni, Superintendent of Schools.

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.

This meeting will be broadcast live on ACTV and will also be recorded.

I. Call to Order

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM. Mr. Kisieleski led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement aloud.

II. Comments by Visitors and Delegations

Mayor Gray opened up the floor for comments. Each speaker will be given three minutes. School Committee will hear all comments and any response will be held to the end. One community member shared frustration about a recent FOIA request and the resulting articles that were written. She requested that the committee investigate the source(s) used to write the article and review the district privacy practices. A number of community members, parents, and teachers spoke regarding their concerns about the FY20 school budget. They shared concerns that the budget presented will not support the schools the way they should be supported and requested that the School Committee reconsider. Additionally there were a couple of comments supporting the approval of the FY20 school trips (Disney and Bournedale).

Comments were closed at 7:34 pm.

III. Presentations and Administrative Reports

A. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Fulgoni shared an update on the turnaround work being done at Amesbury Middle School. Mr. Curry developed a team that meets regularly and has worked with a consultant to create a vision and mission for the school and set goals for their progress. He thanked the team that has been working on the turnaround process and congratulated them on their success so far. The Superintendent then introduced Eryn Maguire, Principal of Amesbury Innovation High School and invited her to present their School Improvement Plan.

B. Amesbury Innovation High School Improvement Plan:

Eryn Maguire, Principal, presented the School Improvement Plan for the Amesbury Innovation High School. Ms. Maguire indicated that they had three main objectives that

they were working on and shared that time is being spent on:

- Standardizing assessments and communicating these to the students so that they are acknowledging successes and noting areas that need improvement. This allows the students to see their progress and the result of their work.
- There has been a 60% increase in the number of students making honor roll each quarter and a 50% decrease in the number of D and F grades.
- Each quarter they have set out a new set of reading and writing norms for the students to help reinforce their learning in this area.
- Provide a safe and supportive environment for the students to learn by incorporating therapeutic supports and providing real time feedback.
- Student and parent/guardian surveys reveal a 90% satisfaction rate with the program. 85% of students indicate they would probably have dropped out with this program.
- There are 13 students graduating on June 14 – seven will be attending community college and three will attend adult education programs.

The School Committee commended Ms. Maguire on her leadership and the students on their progress.

C. SEPAC Year in Review

Maryann Welch and Mary Jepson shared an update on the work being done by the Special Education Parent Advocacy Council (SEPAC). Through regular meetings with Dr. Catarius, they have implemented a number of initiatives including increasing participation, improving communication between families/schools/district, creating a stronger culture of inclusion and working more closely with PTO groups during the coming year. They requested the presence of a School Committee member at their events. The Superintendent and Ms. LaValley both thanked them for their involvement and encouraged them to continue the good work. Ms. LaValley shared that there may be funds available through the Amesbury Hospital Charitable Trust that they might be able to access to help them provide more educational programming and workshops to the community. Ms. LaValley indicated she would provide them with more information.

IV. Communications

A. Student Advisory Council

Kyra Tripp, Vice Chair of Student Advisory Council, attended in the absence of Ms. Costello. The monthly SACTivity raffle will happen later this week. SAC elections within the Council for officers as well as NERSAC and class-wide elections will be happening soon.

B. Resignation of Gretchen Marinopoulos from School Committee

Mayor Gray asked for a motion to accept the resignation from School Committee of Gretchen Marinopoulos, declare a vacancy and authorize the Mayor to notify City Council. Mr. Hoyt noted that it would be difficult to fill her shoes on the Policy Committee. Mr. Chamberlain noted that Gretchen was a devoted and diligent School Committee member and shared his frustration about the information in the media. He suggested that the School Committee follow through with Gretchen's request for a formal investigation. Ms. LaValley shared frustration to see this treatment of a colleague and agreed that an outside investigation should be conducted.

Motion to accept resignation (with regrets) by Mr. Lavoie; seconded (with regrets) by Ms. LaValley. Vote: 4-Yes, 1-No (Chamberlain), 1-Abstain (Kisieleski)

C. Other

Ms. LaValley shared that she would have liked to see a reconsideration of the entire budget not just the High School budget on tonight's agenda and questioned how it got on the agenda. She expressed frustration about the budget and indicated that people need to make their voices heard at Capitol Hill. Additionally, she shared that she knows enrollment is dropping and that we need to look at restructuring. Finally, Ms. LaValley made a motion to open an outside investigation on what happened with the emails on Gretchen Marinopoulos and her family. Mr. Chamberlain agreed that we assure parents that their students' information is safe and that an investigation be opened. Mayor Gray indicated that he supports an investigation that incorporates all sides to determine what led up to this.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to open an outside investigation. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

V. Items for Approval or Early Consideration**A. Approval of Minutes: 04/08/2019**

One vote that was misrepresented in the minutes but was a discussion on AES guidance counselor position. Additionally there was a correction to a quote made by the Mayor. Minutes were updated to reflect the correct votes and the quote from the Mayor.

Mr. Lavoie also noted that the minutes (page 5) correctly reflects his vote on Amesbury High School elimination of .5 Assistant Principal position. A newspaper article stated that he was in the minority opposition.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Ms. LaValley to approve the minutes as amended dated April 8, 2019. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

B. Approval of Warrants:	04/11/2019	\$406,120.97
	04/25/2019	\$131,084.83

Motion by Mr. Kisieleski, seconded by Ms. LaValley to approve the warrant in the amount of \$406,120.97 dated April 11, 2019. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Mr. Lavoie, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to approve the warrant in the amount of \$131,084.83 dated April 25, 2019. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

C. Second Reading of Policy JJIB – Athletic Participation

Mr. Hoyt shared that since the first reading of this policy he had an opportunity to gather feedback from Mrs. McAndrews and Mr. Gearin and that he did not support a second reading of this policy as presented.

Discussion: The update to the policy being recommended is the addition of the following language:

In the event there are not sufficient numbers of freshman participants to run a freshman sport/team, then that sport will not be offered that season. It is not the policy of the

Amesbury Public Schools to offer middle-level participation in a freshman sport, nor is it the policy of the APS to accept the participation of private school students residing in Amesbury in any freshman, junior varsity, or varsity sport. However, those private school students who were participating beginning in the 2017-2018 school year are exempt from this policy.

Ms. LaValley disagreed with the last sentence of the additional language that allowed students currently participating to continue until graduation. Mr. Kisieleski shared that the number of private school students currently participating is negligible (2-3). His reasons to not support continuing these programs is that we do not currently have JV coaches for some of these programs and he does not support having an 8th grade freshman team.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Kisieleski to amend the additional language for policy JJIB by striking the last sentence. Vote: 3-No; 3-Yes. Amendment fails.

There was considerable discussion about how the adoption of the additional language would affect the relationship with Sparhawk and our ability to use their fields and participate in their robotics program. Mayor Gray shared that his understanding is that we are trying to increase participation in sports, in general, and that it is dependent on other factors such as having coaches. He indicated that he would rather see that part of it left to the discretion of the administration as it is currently – if they decide we can't field a team, we don't field a team.

Motion by Mr. Kisieleski, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to adopt the additional language for policy JJIB. Vote: 4-No (Mayor Gray, Hoyt, LaValley, Lavoie); 2-Yes (Kisieleski, Chamberlain). Motion fails.

D. Reconsideration of Vote on Amesbury High School Budget

Mayor Gray indicated that we would review the Amesbury High School budget in three parts. Mr. Chamberlain questioned whether or not we could take this vote and read an excerpt from the City Charter:

The operating budget as adopted by the School Committee, shall be submitted to the Mayor at least 30 days prior to the submission of the proposed operating budget to the city council. The Mayor shall notify the School Committee of the date by which the operating budget of the School Committee shall be submitted to the Mayor. The Chief Financial Officer shall coordinate preparation of the budget with the Superintendent of Schools; the School Committee budget process in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth.

There was discussion about concerns that the City Council vote on the budget would be pushed out past the end of the current fiscal year if a new vote was taken. Mayor Gray suggested that the votes be taken and we would discuss it with legal counsel following the meeting as the intent behind the charter is to provide his office with sufficient time to review the budget.

Ms. LaValley raised a question about who could second motion. Mayor Gray shared

Roberts Rules, Section 6, Article 36: *The Motion needs to be made by any member of the prevailing side but any member can second it.*

Mr. Kisieleski asked about the grant we received for the counseling position (Improving Student Access to Behavioral and Mental Health Services) and allows us to provide increased services at AMS and across the district without impacting the local operating budget.

Motion by the Chair, to rescind the vote taken on April 8, 2019 on the Amesbury High School budget in the amount of \$4,747,969. Accepted by Mr. Kisieleski, seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: 3-Yes (Mayor Gray, Hoyt, Lavoie); 1-No (LaValley); 2-Abstain (Chamberlain, Kisieleski). Motion passes.

Motion by the Chair, to approve the Amesbury High School budget in the amount of \$4,803,225 replacing the \$55,256 that was removed in the April 8, 2019 vote. Accepted by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. Lavoie. Vote: 3-Yes (Mayor Gray, Hoyt, Lavoie); 3 – Abstain (LaValley, Chamberlain, Kisieleski). Motion passes.

Motion by the Chair, to revise the total FY20 budget in the amount of \$32,641,401 which reflects the approved budget of April 8, 2019 of \$32,586,145 plus the \$55,256. Accepted by Mr. Lavoie, seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: 3-Yes (Mayor Gray, Hoyt, Lavoie); 3 – Abstain (LaValley, Chamberlain, Kisieleski). Motion passes.

Mr. Einson commented that clarification is received from counsel about the question of the 30 days noted in the City Charter before this comes to City Council for a vote.

Motion made by the Chair, to take Item G under Items for Approval or Early Consideration out of order. Accepted by Ms. LaValley and seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Unanimous

Overnight Field Trips School Year 2019-2020

Michelle Sanchez shared information supporting both the Camp Bournedale and the overnight Disney trip. There has been considerable fundraising done, a 503(c) has been created to manage the donations for both trips. She requested that the School Committee consider approving the trip for more than a single year at a time. Both this trip and the Bournedale trip have proved to be a good social emotional learning tool for the children.

Mr. Hoyt indicated that approval for more than a year at time would require a policy change. This policy will be reviewed at the next Policy Committee meeting on May 29, 2019.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to support the 5th grade overnight trip on October 21-23, 2019 to Camp Bournedale trip for the 2019-2020 school year. Vote: Yes, unanimous.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to approve the 8th grade overnight trip in June 2020 to Walt Disney for the 2019-2020 school year. Vote: 4-Yes; 2-No (Chamberlain, Kisieleski).

Motion made by the Chair, to add Item E (Executive Session) under Items for Approval or Early Consideration to the Executive Session at the end of the meeting. Accepted by Ms. LaValley and seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Unanimous

Motion made by the Chair, to table Item F (Approval of Contract of Superintendent of Schools) under Items for Approval or Early Consideration to the June 3, 2019 meeting. Accepted by Ms. LaValley and seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Unanimous

VI. Informational Items

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance Subcommittee:

Mr. Chamberlain attended a session held by Senator DiZoglio's office with Senator Jason Lewis, Chair of the Joint Committee on Education to help educate local representatives about the effect that funding legislation is having on districts. An update on revolving accounts will be provided in July. We expect to receive \$211,000 in Circuit Breaker funds. It was also noted that our Choice numbers across most grades are increasing and suggested that we readvertise for Kindergarten Choice enrollments. There were several votes taken in the subcommittee meeting:

Transfers: we are still trying to correct accounts to effectively monitor our budgetary status.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to accept transfers as recommended on May 6, 2019 in the amount of \$166,281. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

We have the option of renewing year five of a contract with Salter. There are no competitive bids and there is a fixed price increase of 7% (\$39,000).

Motion by Mr. Lavoie, seconded by Ms. LaValley to renew year five of the contract with Salter as recommended on May 6, 2019. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Surplus of a Special Education Van: 2009 Ford E150 with 120,000 miles needs \$6,000 in repairs. The proposed plan is to surplus this vehicle and get a 3-year lease after July 1.

Motion by Mr. Chamberlain, seconded by Mr. Lavoie to surplus a 2009 Ford E150 van as recommended on May 6, 2019. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

2. Personnel Subcommittee:

Contract negotiations are in process. The subcommittee has met on several occasions in executive session to review proposals received and to prepare responses. The next meeting with the AFT Teachers/Nurses will be held on April 23. An executive strategy session will be held on April 17.

3. Buildings/Grounds Subcommittee:

The subcommittee has not met but plans to meet in May.

4. Policy Subcommittee:

Mr. Hoyt indicated that the next scheduled meeting is on May 29 and they will review the approval of Field Trips policy, a change in the bussing policy and the addition of a Social Media policy.

Motion made by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to suspend the rules to go past 9:00 pm. Vote: 5-Yes; 1-No (Kisieleski)

5. Curriculum Subcommittee:

The subcommittee has not met.

6. Joint Ed:

The subcommittee plans to meet again on May 29, 2019 in the Bank Room.

B. School Building Committee Report:

Mr. Hoyt shared that the committee met on April 25. A design update was given and there were no major changes. Two cost estimates would be received. The schematic design will be submitted by July 10. The next Community Forum will be held on June 17 at 7 pm.

VII. Future Meetings/Agenda Items

The next regularly scheduled School Committee meeting will be held on June 3, 2019. Subcommittees and other meetings will be held on the following dates:

1. Personnel Subcommittee Executive Session/contract negotiations -
May 21, 2019 at 4:00 pm followed by negotiations with Teachers and Nurses
2. AES School Building Committee – May 23, 2019 at 3:30 pm
AHS Library
3. Policy Subcommittee – May 29, 2019 at 4:00 pm
4. Curriculum Subcommittee – May 29, 2019 at 5:00 pm
5. Buildings/Ground Subcommittee – date TBD

VIII. Executive Session

Mayor Gray motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss strategies to negotiate non-union personnel: Superintendent of Schools pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, section 21 as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, as declared by the chair.

Roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Gray – yes
Ms. LaValley – yes
Mr. Hoyt – yes
Mr. Chamberlain – yes
Mr. Kisieleski – yes
Mr. Lavoie - yes

Mayor Gray motioned to go into Executive Session to conduct strategy session in preparation for collective bargaining with AFT AMESBURY, LOCAL 1033 (TEACHERS/NURSES), AFT AMESBURY, LOCAL 1033 Paraprofessionals and Tutors, and AFT AMESBURY LOCAL 1033, AFT MASSACHUSETTS, AFL-CIO FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE UNIT as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the School Committee, as declared by the chair.

Roll call vote was taken:

Mayor Gray – yes
Ms. LaValley – yes
Mr. Hoyt – yes
Mr. Chamberlain – yes
Mr. Kisielecki – yes
Mr. Lavoie - yes

Entered Executive Session at 9:03 pm.

X. ADJOURNMENT
Meeting will adjourn from Executive Session.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor Kenneth C. Gray, Chair