

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
June 19, 2017**

Present at 7:00 PM: Deb LaValley, Acting Chair; Peter Hoyt, Rob Chamberlain, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Nick Wheeler, Amy Sherwood, Michael Gonthier, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.

Absent was Mayor Gray.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. LaValley called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM and Rob Chamberlain led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement aloud.

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.

II. COMMENTS BY VISITORS AND DELEGATIONS

- An 8th grade student spoke about her recent class trip to Disney. She spoke about how nice the trip was. The trip taught her life skills, learned to work with peers and how accommodating the venue was.
- A 7th grade student spoke how her class has been looking forward to go on this class trip since fifth grade. She went on to point out how educational this trip is for students, learning about physics, marine biology and much more. This is a great opportunity for kids to go to Disney that will never be able to go with their families.
- A parent also spoke about her supporting the Disney trip.

III. PRESENTATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Retirement Recognition –

Ms. LaValley read a proclamation from Mayor Gray and presented Jean Farmer, 32 years of employment with the Amesbury Public Schools, and a gift (picture) from School Committee. She thanked Mrs. Farmer for her dedication and involvement with the schools.

Ms. LaValley also presented John Lyman, 22 years as a teacher at the middle school, a proclamation and gift. She thanked Mr. Lyman for his continued dedication to the children of Amesbury.

Mr. Lyman thanked the committee and added that he is honored to have worked in Amesbury with all the quality staff and doing what is best for every child.

B. Spring Sports Recognitions (Girls Softball, Girls Track)

Steve Bastien, Assistant Athletic Director, spoke about the great year the kids have had in sports. He spoke about the girls softball and their 7 year in a row being Cape Anne Champs. He went on to introduce Jackie Waters, AHS Softball Coach.

Coach Waters, 29 years of coaching, spoke about the phenomenal captains and team that she had this year. They are not only leaders but excel in academics, they are the whole package. She stated that Amesbury is one of a kind, work well together and has followed the lead from Coach Perry.

Mr. Hoyt thanked Jackie for her years of service and her leadership which is emulated by her captains.

Ernie Bissailion, girls track coach was then introduced. Coach Bissailion thanked the committee for acknowledging sports and congratulated Jackie for her accomplishments. He spoke about his team, tremendous year (7-1), introducing 6 girls that were at the meeting, 2 of which were captains. He concluded by stating that 2 sophomores and 2 juniors broke records for AHS.

Mrs. Marinopoulos stated that this was the year of the ladies. She went on to say that as a mother of an eighth grader, the younger generation sees that this is possible and motivates them. She thanked them for their successes.

Ms. LaValley motion to take the presentation by the School Resource Officers and Attendance Officer out of order.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to take presentation of the Resource and Attendance Officers out of order. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

F. Presentation by the School Resource Officers and the Attendance Officer

Lieutenant Donovan, with Officer LeSage and Officer Guilmette by his side, spoke about the success of the School Resource Officers. This three year grant will end in August 31, 2018. Lieutenant Donovan went on to say that this year they have responded to 191 offenses with 13 of them being criminal issues. Officer LeSage has been at this job since conception and Officer Guilmette joined in about four months ago. Presently the two officers are working 4 on and 4 off, but next year they will be working 5 on and 2 off, one officer will be coving AHS & CES while the other will be covering AMS and AES. The Lieutenant concluded by stating that they not only are visible in all schools, but are present at many activities and are involved in coaching and sports activities.

Ms. LaValley asked if they have seen a difference with communication and how they are applying SEL learning. They stated that the communication is working and will work even better when the schedule changes next year. They are doing lots of training, will be taking over the safety presentation from Officer Hanshaw next year and will be right in the schools. Ms. LaValley also asked Officer LeSage if he has seen a difference with the schools and kids. Officer LeSage stated that he felt it has helped a lot and with the implementation of the new schedule next year, it will be more flexible for all.

Mr. Hoyt asked if Officer Guilmette has found it challenging with this new position. Officer Guilmette stated that he does have experience with the youth of Amesbury through coaching eight grade basketball and working with the kids in Amesbury.

Dave Muse, Attendance Officer, spoke about his 9 years on this job. He stated that if parents have not called in their child, he will get a call from the school to check on the child. He also checks on addresses, being close to the New Hampshire border, this sometime poses a problem.

C. Report of the Superintendent

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

- AES Building Committee – first meeting was held in June establishing sub-committee – (OPM, architect) – will be meeting with MSBA in October.
- AIHS – RFP has gone out and is due by 2:00 on July 10th. Will ask for a month to month lease at the present space.
- School Website – School World, present website, is no longer supported. Looking at Blackboard. Two ways of getting trained, at their site or trainers come to us. If the training is done on site, cost is less but will only be able to train three people; if they come to us a bit more expensive, but will be able to train more people at once. Dr. Reese stated that he was looking for direction to proceed from the committee. All present asked for training to come to here. Ms. LaValley was concerned with this cost not being anticipated or budgeted. Dr. Reese responded that there is a \$8,000 savings on My Learning Plan. Mrs. Sherwood asked if there is a contract, yes annually. Mrs. Marinopoulos asked if other programs were looked into. Dr. Reese stated that MIS has looked into it, but not extensively. Blackboard is used by other districts and is established. Question about the transition period, School World ends end of December, will have training this summer and then clean up website and proceed.
- Reading Lists – Ms. Richie, AMS; Ms. McIntyre, CES; and Claire, Amesbury Public Library presented the committee with the schools summer reading lists. Claire spoke about the collaboration that the City Library has with the schools to produce the lists. The books are accessible at the public library, multiple copies by authors for grades 1-4 and can also request from other libraries. The lists are on the web site and they went home with all students at the end of the year. Mrs. Sherwood shared that if you are a Massachusetts resident, you are able to access the Boston Public Library. Danielle, Assistant Principal at AHS, spoke about the faculty favorites. This is a community endeavor that is loved by the teachers and students. This year the kids signed up before the end of school – there is an 89% participation. This is a team effort with a large range of 21 titles to choose from.

D. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations

Joan Liporto spoke about the following regarding tonight's meeting:

- Closing out FY17
- Salaries are completed
- Will be asking for approval of transfers at the July meeting
- Encumbering expenses
- Will be meeting with Beth, at City Hall, to help with account numbers for the budget
- Will not have the final report until August
- Need to revote on FY 18 budget by \$58,000 – need for audit purpose

E. Presentation by Director of Student Services and SEPAC

Mary Houde spoke about the following:

- SEPAC – had 3 workshops and 3 social events (26 people) – did a lot of work and well attended. Thank you to Tim and Mary Jepson and Andrea Chase.
- Wellness Program – lead by Rita O’Neil, Lead Nurse. Met 4 times had a Fitness Program that was well attended and a great night.
- Child Study Team Summary – unified across all the schools – 16 students referred to SPED evaluations.
- Letter – confirming that the site visit will be in March – will be well prepared by then
- Thanked the committee for their support and is starting to get a handle of everything now.

Mr. Hoyt thanked Ms. Houde for her leadership with the SPED Facilitators expectations. Ms. Houde stated that they were struggling with getting things done, shifted responsibilities, paperwork piece and working with Aspen. Ms. LaValley asked about the contract with Chartwells and the need to participate. Ms. LaValley asked about the Nutritional Ed, was it all the high school grades. Maggie Furlong stated that is was for sophomores and juniors.

G. Educational Showcase – Amesbury High School

Danielle Ricci and Maggie Furlong spoke about the partnership with the Honors Child Development Class and CES. They thanked Dr. Charette and Elizabeth for their approval in the program. One day a week, AHS students would walk to CES to work in small groups working on SEL, community outreach, real life connection, role model for activities, behaviors and problem solving. The high school students would then write a report about their experiences. This was a 9 week program that was very well received by the students.

IV. COMMUNCIATOANS**A. SAC Report – Michael Gonthier**

Michael spoke about going down to the middle school to speak with the 8th grade students promoting sports and clubs that are offered at the high school. The eighth graders were very respectful and it was a great leadership experience.

B. Other

- Mr. Hoyt spoke about the fourth grade celebration at CES
- Ms. Sherwood spoke about the emails that she received from the students regarding the Disney trip. These emails were articulate and some were form letters – kudos for engaging in the process.
- Ms. Sherwood spoke about City Council voting down the capital request. Mr. Hoyt stated the \$250,000 is needed for roof replacement and hot water heater, need to advocate and move forward. Ms. Sherwood stated that the city is supportive, need to look into supplemental budget, put on next meeting agenda and take action. Mr. Chamberlain asked about options, plan B, emergency funding. Mrs. Sherwood suggested setting up a workshop to discuss capital improvements in the schools for the future.

- Ms. LaValley asked to set meeting dates for summer School Committee meetings. After discussion, the meeting dates are as follows:
July 17 at 6:00 – Aug. 14 at 7:00 – Sept. 5 (Tuesday)
Block Party is this Thursday

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. Approval of Minutes: 6/5/2017

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to approve the School Committee minutes dated June 5, 2017. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

B. Approval of Warrant: \$425,292.70 (6/8/17)

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to accept the warrant dated June 8, 2017 in the amount of \$425,292.70. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

C. Out of State Field Trip Approval: Disney Youth Education Series

Dr. Reese opened the discussion by thanking Mr. & Mrs. Hoyt for offering an alternative program of local history field trip. The criteria and application for next year's Disney trip is submitted. The proposed dates are June 4-8. This trip is approved by Dr. Reese with questions offundraising and cost.

- Mr. Hoyt echoed Mrs. Sherwood's comments on the emails received. He spoke about the 40 students that stayed behind and did the history tour. Mr. Curry thanked Mr. Hoyt for offering the alternative trip and working with teachers. This was a great opportunity and a solid alternative.
- Ms. LaValley asked how many students went to Disney. 70 students stayed back and 30 – 40 came to school.
- Mrs. Marinopoulos was also impressed by the emails she received and the students that stood up to speak in favor of the trip. She went over the policy that is in place for overnight field trips (fundraising, educational, scholarships, part of school program, overnight weekends). She stated that 40% of the class did not attend, consider cost of trip, loss of wages, anxiety, overwhelming and gender separation to name a few. She ended with saying that it is an amazing trip but will not support it, this is a difficult conversation.
- Mr. Hoyt disagreed with Mrs. Marinopoulos but respects her opinion.
- Michael Gonthier stated that regarding the financial piece, let's look for a solution and not cut the trip.
- Mr. Wheeler asked Mr. Curry about how many attended the trip and why didn't the others attend. Mr. Curry stated that 110 attended. It was a combination of things, will get the breakdown. He went on to explain that 90% of the kids express interest in October, \$100 non-refundable deposit is requested at that time – parents then sign a statement off understanding. For the kids that cause issues, still eligible but cannot happen one more time – for some kids this is an extra motivator and helps them to get thru the year. Mrs. Marinopoulos asked if there is an appeal process if happens a second time, if not what happens to the money. Mr. Curry stated that money goes into a Disney fund.

- Ms. LaValley asked about adding fundraisers to addition to the wreaths. Mr. Curry stated that they did add movie night and are looking into Flatbread fundraiser. She suggested looking at other businesses. Ms. LaValley was also interested in knowing if the program offerings have changed at Disney. Mr. Curry stated that there are 2 new programs that were very successful.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to suspend the rules and continue School Committee meeting after 9:00 PM. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mrs. Sherwood to approve the 8th Grade Disney trip for FY 17-18 school year. Vote: 4 in favor (plus Michael Gonthier also voting in favor) and 2 opposed (Chamberlain and Marinopoulos), Approved 4 to 2.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee

Mr. Chamberlain stated that they met prior to this meeting discussion the following:

- Food Service – Kevin Kish – lower revenue, lower enrollment, uncollected debt lower than in the past, need to review policy
- FY17 – thank you Joan – getting things done
- Issues – SPED vans – look at leasing program, future agenda item
- Chromebook carts ready to order
- July meeting – transfers and approvals
- FY18 – need to revote numbers (AHS \$58,000 and total budget \$30,589,294)

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to approve the FY18 High School Budget at \$4,552,101. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to approve the FY18 Total Budget at \$30,589,294. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

2. Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Hoyt stated the need to set a date.

3. Personnel Subcommittee

Mrs. Sherwood stated they will be meeting on June 27th on school schedule at 8AM (tentatively).

4. Strategic Plan Subcommittee

Mrs. Sherwood stated the need for another date on calendar.

5. Joint Education Subcommittee

Ms. LaValley stated they met two weeks ago on budget, AIHS, Strategic Plan and Landry stadium.

6. Building Grounds

Ms. LaValley stated they spoke about Landry Stadium – lack of use, fees for outside groups, money into funds for repairs, shared responsibility between the city and school. Mrs. Marinopoulos shared her concerns about the many layers in the history of Landry – Ms. LaValley talked about the background and history (graduate of 1937, veteran, work after the Great Depression) – lots of vacancies on the committee at this point – reach out, put forth a plan, maybe city budget line item, work with city councilors. Michael asked for the cost of maintenance, Ms. LaValley will get that information.

7. AES Building Committee

Mr. Wheeler stated that they had their first meeting discussing the following:

- select subcommittee - OPM
- RFP reviewing – make recommendations

VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**A. Superintendent Evaluation – TBD**

Add: Capital Project Funding/Plan – Long runway for some capital improvements.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 PM.

Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gretchen Marinopoulos, Secretary