

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
December 19, 2016**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Deb LaValley, Acting Chair; Tom McGee, Rob Chamberlain, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Nick Wheeler, and Sydney Knowlton, SAC Representative.

Absent were Mayor Gray, Peter Hoyt and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. LaValley called the regular meeting to order at 7:02 PM and Mr. Wheeler led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement.

**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**

- Amy Sherwood spoke regarding the Strategic Plan Draft, discussing the following:
  - Mission Statement states that we are “unconditionally committed to all children”. This mission statement was developed many years ago, (2000). Highlighting this promise, theme, in the Strategic Plan Draft – Need to focus on the following to meet these needs of ALL children. 1. Change in demographics, challenges that it brings, 2. Look at budget and revenue (decline of).
  - If we do not focus on these things, all of the other aspirations will decline, (continued retention, coding, STEM, additional language) – need to focus on this Strategic Plan.

**III. PRESENTATIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**A. Special Recognition – Retirement**

Roger Welch , employed by the School District Maintenance Department, for 38 years, 10 months and also was on call for the Amesbury Fire Department. Ms. LaValley presented Roger with a Proclamation from Mayor Gray and a gift from the School Committee. Representative Kelcourse also presented Roger with a Citation from the House of Representative.

**B. South Hampton Student Report – South Hampton School Staff**

Three parents from the South Hampton School Board commented on how welcoming Amesbury High School is to our students entering as freshman. Nice transition for our children.

Census information is as follows: 68 students are enrolled at the Barnard School – Coming to AHS from 2017-2018 through 2025-2026 = (8, 8, 8, 12, 8, 3, 8, 7, 6 students). Could change with people moving in and out of the town.

Ms. LaValley asked if there was any building going on in the town – Not at this time, a few homes being built. Ms. LaValley introduced Joan Liporto to the group and thanked them for taking the time to come out and speak.

**C. Presentation by Student Advisory Council – SAC Goals 2016-17 School Year**

Eight of the council members introduced themselves prior to their presentation.

The presentation reviewed the following goal:

- Full council including athletes
- Acceptance 3 seasons of AHS sports equaling 1 gym credit – affected students – fall season had 254 athletes
- Reviewed the state gym requirements
- Reviewed 2 school in other districts and how they counted sports as gym credits.
- Reviewed how this will enhance athletes (more participation in sports, academic opportunities)

Ms. LaValley asked if this proposal was presented to administration. Michael Gonthier stated that he spoke with Mr. Gearin and went over some figures. Ms. LaValley stated that this has been brought up in the past, but we would be unable to charge a sports fee, if it counted for credits. This might have changed though, need to look into it. She thanked the students for their presentation and their comparison of other districts.

**D. Presentation by the Director of Finance and Operations – Joan Liporto**

Ms. Liporto went over the following:

- Food Service contract up, RFP was published today and proposals are due on January 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Working on the new negotiated salaried and placing them into our spreadsheet to project out FY18 figures
- Format for the budget process, on going
- Soft freeze right now on the budget related to Special Education costs.

**E. Athletics Fall Season Recap – Glen Gearin**

Mr. Gearin spoke about the following:

- Thanked the parents for their support of the players, the staff and community for their continued support and the School Committee
- Successful fall, not necessarily for the wins and loses but for the 254-athlete participation.
- Highlights – girls soccer team, division 4 champs; boys cross country Cape Ann League champs and division 6 state champs; girls field hockey team – Sportsmanship award; 5 teams qualifying for the MIAA state tournament; 8 members of teams make All League; proud of our cheerleaders this year;
- Santa parade participation
- Fall awards night, together
- Football Team participated in helping a community member decorate for Christmas

Mrs. Marinopoulos commented on the amount of sports programs that feed into the High School make a difference. Regarding considering offering credits for participation in sports, need to look at our policy, how that plays into earning credit. Mrs. Marinopoulos highly encourage a subcommittee to look into current policy. Ms. LaValley stated that she will ask Mr. Hoyt to put on next agenda. Mr. Chamberlain asked that as we go into the year, if they could get unique number of students participating.

**F. Academic Presentation: Model UN Program – Elizabeth McAndrews**

Ms. McAndrews and 7 student representatives spoke about the following:

- Co-curricular activity – Model UN – impact on teaching and learning preparing students for the future. Prepared to think about issues as they arise.
- Spoke about the background of this program – Ms. Fuller, Advisor.
- This program is a mock model of United Nations
- How to prepare for a Model UN conference – need to work together – research topics and how it applies to the real world and its affect
- Public speaking skills – opportunity to express your voice
- Negotiation and communication skills with other countries/delegates
- Started in 2014 at Phillips Exeter Conference with 6 – 8 students, now have 23 students participating. 6 awards already.
- More enthusiasm

Mr. Chamberlain asked what primary source they used to attain the information. They use CIA fact book and look at general information web sites. Colleges give out sources to look at on the specific issue. Mr. McGee stated that he is blown away and wished they had that when he was in school. Starting off with the right foot forward. Good job. Ms. LaValley asked what they can do to speak with Middle School students to expand this program. As an advisor, Mrs. Fuller stated that she is very proud of them. The students are so excited about what happened in their conference. Mrs. Marinopoulos added that she is so impressed at their presentation, and what they are doing. She added, asking what School Committee can do to support them as they go into the budget season. They would love if the School Committee members could attend their fundraiser in January at Flatbreads. They also struggle with bus fees, very expensive. The cost for a bus can be as high as \$800 and an event cost for each delegate and additionally to enter the event.

Ms. LaValley suggested reaching out to AEFI, Mrs. Fuller stated that they have helped in the past. Mrs. Marinopoulos asked for a break-down of the years' cost for last year with details. Ms. LaValley suggested reaching out to Congressmen Seth ~~How~~lton. Sydney added that there are not many public schools that participate, mostly private schools that can afford it.

**IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

**A. SAC Report – Sydney Knowlton**

None – Ms. LaValley thanked the Student Council for presenting this evening and look forward to a follow-up on the gym credits.

**B. Other**

Mr. McGee stated he will be moving to Manchester NH next month. It is a bitter sweet move, as a 9-year member of this committee and a lifelong community member of Amesbury. He thanked the members and stated that January 3, 2017 will be his last meeting.

**V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION****A. Approval of Minutes: 12/05/2016**

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to accept the minutes of the Regular School Committee meeting dated December 5, 2016. Vote: Yes, unanimous.*

**B. Approval of Warrant: \$348,420.04 (12/08/16)**

*Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to accept the warrant dated December 8, 2016 in the amount of \$348,420.04. Vote: Yes, unanimous.*

**\$638,098.65 (12/22/16)**

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to accept the warrant dated December 22, 2016 in the amount of \$638,098.65. Vote: 4, Yes, 1 excused (LaValley).*

**C. Policies – First Reading:****a. GCAA – Coaches/Advisors**

Mr. McGee stated Policy GCAA – Coaches/Advisor Policy is being looked at to review how coaches and advisors are selected to fill the position. Mr. McGee read the policy aloud.

**b. KE – Communication Channels**

Mr. McGee stated that this was a policy that Dr. Reese asked to be reviewed. Mr. McGee read the policy aloud.

**D. Policy – Second Reading:****a. JFAB – Non-Resident Students**

Mr. McGee stated the subcommittee updated to reflect J-1 Visa and limitations on foreign students.

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to accept policy JFAB – Non-Resident Students as presented. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS****A. Subcommittee Reports****1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee**

Mr. Chamberlain stated they met this evening discussing the following:

- Approving the format of the budget with better summarization
- Making sure the submission to the state is in-line with our budget
- Balances and increase of out of district placements, asking Mary Houde to attend the next meeting.
- Housekeeping – approval to dispose of outdated Special Education evaluation kits.

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to declare Special Education evaluation kits surplus and to dispose of them. Discussion: Mr. Wheeler asked what the kits are comprised of? Ms. Liporto stated that they were evaluation kits that were used by School Psychologist, then updated kits replace them. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**2. Policy Subcommittee**

Mr. McGee stated they met last week on the 12<sup>th</sup>, spoke about the following:

- Coaches/Advisor Policy
- Chain of Communication for Parents/Guardians
- Next meeting will be Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30

**3. Personnel Subcommittee**

Mr. McGee stated they will be meeting prior to the next School Committee meeting. Last meeting looked at the Elements and Indicators and shared with folks and was looking for feedback. No feedback came forth, Mr. McGee recommends that we vote on them so that Dr. Reese can move forward.

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to adopt the Elements and Indicators as presented at the last meeting. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**4. Joint Education Subcommittee**

Ms. LaValley stated will be meeting March 22<sup>nd</sup> – Agenda items so far, McKinney Vento Act; and Medicaid reimbursement.

**VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

**A. Principal's/Superintendent Award (1/03/17)**

**B. Budget Goals/Initiatives:**

- a. January 9, 2017 – Curriculum, Maintenance, Central Office, Transportation
- b. January 12, 2017 – Middle School, High, Innovation, Athletics/Activities
- c. January 19, 2017 – CES, AES, Technology, Special Education

**C. Presentation by Eryn Maguire, Principal of Amesbury Innovation High School (1/17/17)**

**VIII. Adjournment**

*Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to adjourn the meeting. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McGee, Secretary