

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
October 24, 2016**

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gray, Chair; Deb LaValley, Tom McGee, Peter Hoyt, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Nicholas Wheeler, Sydney Knowlton, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.

Absent was: Rob Chamberlain

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Gray called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and Mr. Hoyt 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

Mayor Gray stated that if members of the audience were here to speak on behalf of the 8th grade Disney trip, they should wait until that comes up on the agenda later on.

There were no comments by visitors or delegations at this time.

III. PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF

A. State Rep. James Kelcourse

State Representative, James Kelcourse was not present.

B. Report of the Superintendent –

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

- DSAC – attending a meeting – helps support level 2 & 3 schools – benefit different ways of looking at data focusing on social and emotional learning.
- Be A Buddy, Not A Bully – attended a breakfast – assemblies at all schools with guest speakers at all 4 schools (AMS & AHS Terry O'Reilly former Bruins member) (AES & CES Slugger for the Portland Seadogs) All students received a band to wear. Thank you to Sherry Buchanan and Rosie Warner for organizing the event.
- NHS – 9 students inducted, Elizabeth McAndrews was the guest speaker did a great job about her high school experience. Thank you to Maggie Furlong for her continued work with NHS.
- Public Records Access laws – new beginning January 1, 2017. Some components include a designated access officer, which will be posted on our district web site; provide records in electric format, unless the person does not have access, then provide hard copy. This information has to be provides within 10 day. Lots of conversation about charging for fees, can only charge the lowest paid person in the office but not over \$25.00 per hour. Also attorney fees, if there is request, can get financially reimbursed.

The district is already compliant with all of this. Dr. Reese has identified himself as the records officer. Have had one request so far. Ms. LaValley asked if Dr. Reese was on vacation when a request comes in, who will take over. Dr. Reese will look into it and designate someone.

C. Report of the Director of Teaching and Learning – MCAS Results

Lyn Jacques was not present

D. Report of the Director of Finance and Operations

Joan Liporto spoke about the following:

- FY 17 concerns – Special Education (working with Mary Houde) and Maintenance (working with Norm Fredette).
- Went over staffing patterns
- Creating new accounts
- 60 transfers – salary line items – received approval from Finance sub-committee this evening.
- Meeting with Jim Lynch – FY 15 – speaking about when Munis was rolled over to Softright – glitch in revolving accounts.
- Food Service – loss in September but was less than last year – Kevin Kish did a Café Chat survey to develop new menus – have 50% participation
- Regarding the Melanson & Heath report from 2015 – following their recommendations

IV. COMMUNICATIONS

A. SAC Report – Sydney Knowlton

Sydney stated they will be meeting next week and will have a report at next School Committee meeting.

B. Other

Ms. LaValley reminded the viewing audience that School Committee will be having a meeting next Monday. She also stated that the AEFI Night of Giving will be November 7th at the Ale House.

V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. Nurse Leader – Rita O’Neil (AMS Nurse)

Dr. Reese stated that part of last year’s budget included hiring a Nurse Leader. The position was posted and Rita O’Neil (AMS Nurse) was interviewed by Mary Houde as one of the applicants. Ms. Houde felt that Mrs. O’Neil was the best candidate for the position, she came with good ideas and knowledge of the district.

Mrs. O’Neil approached the podium and spoke about her ideas and plans to incorporate this position. The following are some of her ideas:

- Contract with a city physician – Dr. Schissel will be on board
- Review standing orders
- House cleaning tasks
- Small substitute pool of RN’s to cover field trips, and children’s needs (added 3 more nurses)

- Training the nurse substitutes on the data base
- Communication amongst other schools – everyone on the same page
- Wellness Committee established – federally mandated – 1st meeting was last week – great ideas addressing the growing needs of our students
- Narcan in schools addressing opioid epidemic.

Questions from the committee:

- Ms. LaValley asked what the make-up was of the Wellness Committee? Mrs. O’Neil stated that she has invited everyone, but present at the first meeting was health teachers, gym teachers, administration, nurses. She would like to see a School Committee member, Dr. Schissel, resource officers and community members join as well
- Mr. Hoyt asked about establishing working relationships with the other nurses, and that there is not a lot of time during the day to come together. Mrs. O’Neil stated that they stay in touch through email, but would love to have more one-on-one time. This would be the biggest complaint with a lot of mandates coming up.
- Sydney Knowlton stated that she is doing a research paper on childhood obesity and would love to connect. Mrs. O’Neil responded that she would love to have a student rep on the Wellness Committee.
- Ms. LaValley asked Mrs. O’Neil if she knew about the Amesbury Hospital Trust. She will get the information of contacts to her.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the hiring of Rita O’Neil, RN as the nurse leader for the Amesbury Public Schools. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

B. Field Trips Approval – 8th Grade Spring Trip – Disney Youth Education Series

Mrs. Marinopoulos asked to be excused from the discussion and voting on the 8th grade trip because she has an 8th grade child attending AMS.

Mayor Gray asked the audience, if they were to speak, they should keep their comments to 3 minutes. There were 4 parents who spoke:

- Deb – parent of an 8th grader asked about the survey results that Dr. Reese had taken at the end of the summer. Dr. Reese stated that there were 461 responses, survey was sent out to AMS and AHS parents regarding the overnight trips and affordability. Dr. Reese stated that he did not have the totals with him, but results were discussed and reviewed at a previous meeting. Deb stated that her daughter, who is now in high school, attended the Disney trip and learned a lot. She is supporting the trip.
- Sheila – parent of an 8th grader and freshman, stated that she supports the trip. It was great learning experience and a lot of fun for her high school child. She also stated that people at school helped the kids that needed financial help.
- Tina – parent of an 8th grader and a senior. Tina stated that her son is excited to go, her older son learned a lot, team building, working with peers, time to mature, equate it to Camp Bourndale. She is in favor of the trip.
- Tina – parent of an 8th grader, a senior and a 5th grader. Tina is in support of the trip. She stated that she went as a chaperone with her

older child and was not looking forward to the trip. She was surprised and happy to see that the group was amazing, Disney program was amazing with all of the hands on and learning that was happening. She learned that the instructors that were teaching were actual teachers. She concluded with saying that the entire trip was amazing with lots of support financially.

School Committee members then spoke:

- Mr. Hoyt thanked the parents who communicated by email and spoke this evening. He spoke about the new Field Trip Policy that was implemented and will be voted on annually for overnight trips. Mr. Hoyt also thanked Mr. Curry for his presentation of the 8th grade trip and for keeping a balance academically, life skills, independence which mirrors Social and Emotional Learning. Mr. Hoyt supports this trip as presented.
- Mr. McGee echoed Mr. Hoyt, appreciating all the emails. He stated that this is valuable and it is an open process. Mr. McGee is impressed with the trip and stated that it is a worth-while trip. Regarding the educational value, he would look at Dr. Reese for that.
- Sydney Knowlton stated that she surveyed students at the high school about their experience of the trip. The students spoke about the Space Mountain ride that they learned about visual effect, sense of mystery with the lights out; learned about hydraulics; and much, much more. They also commented on learning to plan their day, being responsible, budgeting their money and a great learning experience. She concluded with stated that the students felt that Disney was safe and the best place to go.
- Ms. LaValley also echoed her colleagues and thanked Sydney for speaking with her peers. She stated that discussion is valuable and it brought back the review of Field Trip Policy. She is looking forward to hearing about the alternate plan for students that do not attend Disney.
- Mr. Hoyt also stated his concern for the alternate plan.
- Mr. Wheeler thanked everyone for their hard work. He stated that he advocates for both sides – does have concerns. Is also looking forward to hearing about the alternate plan, but stated there is lots of time to decide.
- Mayor Gray thanked everyone for voicing their opinion and understands the needs of families. He stated that this was a good process with Mr. Curry deeply involved.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt seconded by Ms. LaValley to approve the 8th Grade spring trip to Disney.

Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

After the vote a parent asked about the annual vote and would it be the same time frame. Dr. Reese stated that they will be voting on it in the spring for the following school year.

Another parent asked about additional fundraisers for the number of twins and triplets that will be coming up in the near future. Ms. LaValley stated that they will let Mr. Curry know their concerns and added the possibility of having a conversation with AEFL.

C. Superintendent's Goals

Dr. Reese spoke about his goals. He did have a conversation with a school committee member regarding his second student learning goal. Dr. Reese did rework that goal to reflect "S.M.A.R.T", this goal is still focusing around Math. ELA still has a gap but not as big as Math. The other goals stayed the same. The student goal focusing around Social, Emotional Learning through curriculum development. The professional practice goals working around social, emotional and academic learning throughout the curriculum and effective ways to address basic administrative tasks to focus more on instructional improvement. Doing a lot of work around observation and funnel down to the students, resulting in student achievement.

Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Ms. LaValley to accept the Superintendent's Goals as presented. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

D. Review of School Committee Goals – Educational Goal 2

Mayor Gray read goal 2 under the Educational Goal for discussion and review by the members. Discussion:

- Ms. LaValley stated that this goal is very timely – common theme – Social, Emotional and Physical needs of students – this theme will be discussed at the annual conference.
- Mr. McGee added that he has seen, at meetings, that these issues have been looked at – getting it forefront
- Mr. Hoyt stated that goal D has been in place, but now in print – more credibility and importance – on going.

E. Acceptance of Gift – Richard A. Eaton Charitable Foundation - \$4,000 (to offset athletic fee costs for families needing financial assistance)

Ms. LaValley stated that the Finance Sub-Committee accepted this gift.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. McGee to accept the gift of \$4,000 from Richard A. Eaton Charitable Foundation to offset athletic fee costs for families needing financial assistance. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

F. Second Reading of Policy:

a. JKAA – Physical Restraint of Students

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. McGee to accept Second Reading of Policy JKAA – Physical Restraint of Students as presented. Discussion: this policy reflects the changes that were made in January. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

G. MASC/MASS Joint conference (10/17)

a. Appointment of delegate from the Amesbury Public Schools

Ms. LaValley stated that she will be attending, but not sure when she will arrive.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. Wheeler to appoint Ms. LaValley as the Amesbury Public School Delegate for the MASC/MASS joint conference. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

b. Discussion of Resolutions

Mr. McGee read the four resolutions and a vote was taken after each resolution.

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos in favor of the first resolution: Foundation Budget, as stated. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt in favor of the second resolution: Tax Reform Ballot Question, as stated. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Mrs. Marinopoulos, seconded by Mr. Hoyt in favor of the third resolution: Charter School Reform, as stated. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Ms. LaValley in favor of the fourth resolution: Social and Emotional Well-Being of Students, as stated. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

H. Meeting Minutes – October 3, 2016

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to accept the minutes dated October 3, 2016. Vote: 5 Yes, 1 abstain (Mr. Hoyt).

I. Warrant - \$180,206.78 (10/13/16)

Motion by Mr. Wheeler, seconded by Mr. McGee to accept the Warrant dated October 13, 2016 in the amount of \$180,206.78. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

\$319,220.99 (10/27/16)

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the Warrant dated October 27, 2016 in the amount of \$319,220.99. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee

Ms. LaValley stated that they met prior to this meeting with a healthy agenda. In attendance was Ms. Liporto, the following was discussed:

- 60 transfers adding up to \$723,894.00 – this will clean up line items, clarifying definition of salaries. Finance sub-committee approved the transfers, bringing a vote to the School Committee to accept the recommendation

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the recommendation of Ms. Liporto to transfer of \$723,894.00 as presented. Discussion: Mayor Gray thanked Ms. Liporto for a job well done. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.

- Food Services – coming up for bid in June
- Acceptance of International students – on going
- Freezing of the budget soon
- Traditional Energy – looking into it
- Looking at doing an audit on Special Education transportation – review the program – will cost \$6,000. with the state paying half of that cost

2. Policy Subcommittee

Mr. Hoyt stated that they met prior to this meeting discussing:

- Ms. Liporto busy in her first few months of employment identifying problems – has made a huge difference
- Policy JJE, Student Activity Accounts will have its first reading on October 31st.

- Policy BEDB-E, Agenda Format will have its first reading on October 31st.
 - Next meeting will be December 14th at 5:30 PM
3. **Personnel Subcommittee**
Mr. McGee stated that the next meeting will be October 31st, continue to review job descriptions.
4. **Joint Education Subcommittee**
Ms. LaValley stated that their next meeting will be on November 15th in the high school bank room. On the agenda will be AES school building updates.

VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

- A. **South Hampton Visit (TBD)**
- B. **Report of the Director of Teaching and Learning: Curriculum Development Work (10/31)**
- C. **Meeting with SAC (12/16)**
- D. **Visit to Whittier Tech (12/2)**
- E. **Joint Education Committee (11/15)**
- F. **Review of School Committee Goals – Operational/Financial Goal #1 (10/31)**

Mr. McGee added voting on Executive Session minutes (10/31)

VIII. PRESS CONFERENCE

None

IX. **Executive Session: Pursuant to MGL c 30A, S21 (a) (2)**

- ***To conduct strategy sessions in preparations for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. AFT Teachers, AFSCME Cafeteria Workers (Local 93).***
- ***To discuss the deployment of security personnel and devices, or strategies with respect thereto.***

Mr. Hoyt asked Mayor Gray if the second part of the Executive Session could be first, since he would need to excuse himself from attending the first part of the session. Mayor Gray agreed.

X. **Adjournment**

Motion by Mayor Gray to adjourn into Executive session. Roll Call was taken: Mayor Gray, Yes; Ms. LaValley, Yes; Mr. McGee, Yes; Mr. Hoyt, Yes; Mrs. Marinopoulos, Yes; Mr. Wheeler, Yes. Adjourned regular meeting at 8:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McGee, Secretary