

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
March 7, 2016**

---

Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gray, Chair; Deb LaValley, Tom McGee, Peter Hoyt, Rob Chamberlain, Gretchen Marinopoulos, Katie Veseley, SAC Representative and Dr. Gary Reese, Superintendent of Schools.

Absent was Nick Wheeler.

Mayor Gray called the Meeting to order at 7:02 PM and Deb LaValley 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, DELGATIONS**

Mr. Hoyt asked for a moment of silence for Mr. McAllister, retired 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher, who passed away this week.

**III. PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY THE SUPERINTENDENT AND STAFF**

**A. Director of Student Services Candidate Interviews**

Dr. Reese spoke regarding the 2 final candidates for the Director of Student Services. Both are very strong, qualified candidates that have been through an extensive process of interviews, community forum and now tonight with the School Committee members will each ask, each candidate a question.

Both **Kathryn Clark** and **Mary Anne Houde**, separately, addressed the committee with their background, experience, education and why they would like this position. The committee members then each asked the individual a question ranging from their greatest learning curve; goals; dealing with the high needs population; how to communicate with staff and parents; changes based on needs; use of resources; and why they are equipped to handle the job.

Both candidates were very articulate with their responses and gave a lot of personal examples to their answers. They thanked the committee and Dr. Reese for the chance to fill this position.

**B. Report of the Superintendent**

Dr. Reese spoke about the following:

- Two well qualified candidates – bringing strengths in many aspects
- Elizabeth McAndrews hired for the High School Principal position. Will be posting her position soon.

- Budget season has begun – heard from the public, teachers, principals of their vision. Looking at a 3-5 year plan. High, Innovation and Middle Schools have already presented their key areas of needs. In the upcoming weeks will be hearing from the remainder of the administrators. Public Hearing will be March 23<sup>rd</sup> with a School Committee vote on the budget on April 4<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. LaValley asked if it had to be 30 consecutive days before the vote.

Mr. McGee stated that the hiring of the Director of Student Services would have to be at a public meeting, not an Executive Session. Mayor Gray asked who's decision is it. Dr. Reese stated that he would make his recommendation and then the School Committee would then accept and vote.

- Innovation School – still looking for a home – Horace Mann is not an option. The church is looking at the school either continuing to lease from them or purchase. Would like to move this decision to the finance subcommittee.

***Motion by Mr. Chamberlain, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to move the discussion of a home for the Innovation High School to the Finance Subcommittee. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

- Dr. Reese's recommendation for the position of Director of Student Services is Mary Anne Houde. Dr. Reese stated that we had 2 very strong candidates that brought different strengths. Telephone references, for both, were glowing. The community forum tally sheet on Leadership; Background; Personal Characteristics; Professional Development; and articulates a plan was Mary Anne Houde – 7 and Kathryn Clark – 5.

***Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the Superintendent's recommendation as stated. Discussion: The committee members all stated that they were both fantastic candidates, felt they both connected with the parents and felt that Mary Anne had more experience in the field. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

#### **IV. COMMUNICATIONS**

##### **A. Student Advisory Council – Katie Vesely**

Katie spoke about the following:

- Week of fun with Frost Festival, activities every day and ending with a dance on Friday
- Student Council will have a 3-day trip to Hyannis regarding leadership skills
- Exciting for some students being their first time voting

##### **B. Other**

Ms. LaValley spoke about a few events coming up:

- AEFI Flatbread Fundraiser tomorrow night
- March 18<sup>th</sup> Pettengill Fundraiser at Seaglass in Salisbury
- March 22<sup>nd</sup> Jeanne Geiger – if you cannot attend, can make a donation

**V. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION**

**A. AFSCME Contract Ratification**

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Ms. LaValley to endorse the AFSCME contract as presented. Discussion: Mr. McGee stated that this contract is a fair agreement with the 3 remaining café employees. The contract will begin this school year (2015-2016). Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**B. Suburban Coalition Resolution Discussion**

Ms. LaValley read the Suburban Coalition: Resolution Calling for full funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's Recommendation. She stated that many local School Committees are putting this on their agenda and is asking this committee to sign and support the resolution.

*Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to sign and support the Resolution for funding as stated. Discussion: Mr. Chamberlain stated that this will not close the gap but it is a start, moving forward. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**C. Meeting Minutes – February 22, 2016**

*Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Marinopoulos to accept the Minutes dated February 22, 2016. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**D. Warrant - \$360,695.69 (3/3/16)**

*Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the Warrant dated March 3, 2016 in the amount of \$360,695.69. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**E. School Calendar Revision – 2016-2017 School Year**

Dr. Reese spoke about a few dates that needed to be changed on the 2016-2017 school calendar that was voted on last year. (Sept. 11, no PD day; Nov. 2, change to Nov. 8; Jan 2 no school).

*Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Ms. LaValley to accept the 2016-2017 school calendar with changes as stated. Discussion: Ms. LaValley asked to have this on the web site and to inform principals. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**F. Acceptance of Gifts – The Benevity Community Impact Fund \$500.**

Dr. Reese stated that this gift is an employee match for high school technology

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Chamberlain to accept the gift of \$500.00 from the Benevity Community Impact Fund. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**G. Joint School Committee/City Council Education Committee**

Mr. McGee stated the need for building a bridge with the City Council and the School Committee. He spoke with City Councilors and they asked for a description of what the committee would be. Mr. McGee looked into what Newburyport's joint committee description looked like and put one together. He read it to the committee (better dialogue; make-up of 3 members of each committee chosen by Council President and Mayor) and will send it to city council members for an endorsement.

**VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**

**A. Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee**

Mr. Chamberlain spoke about the following that was discussed at the meeting tonight prior to this meeting:

- Lyn Jacques informed the committee regarding Professional Development; requirements for licensure; the need for curriculum work and a Social Emotional Learning Program.
- Dr. Reese informed the committee with staffing updates and the large number of applicants for these positions. Posted the open positions early to get the best.
- Looking to revise the job descriptions

**2. Policy Subcommittee**

Mr. Hoyt stated that the next meeting will be Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at 10-11.

**3. Personnel Subcommittee**

Mr. McGee stated they continue to work with the unions.

Mayor Gray stated that Mr. Wheeler would be on the Policy Subcommittee, replacing Mr. Chamberlain.

**VII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

- Review of the Melanson and Heath audit – Mayor Gray asked for the committee to send him questions in advance.
- SRO – 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the grant – get a sense of how it is going.

**VIII. PRESS CONFERENCE**

None

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**


None

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

*Motion by Mr. McGee, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to adjourn the meeting at 8:44.*

*Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McGee, Secretary