

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
March 16, 2015**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Debra LaValley, Stanley Schwartz, Bonnie Schultz, Tom McGee, Peter Hoyt, Christian Scorzoni, Jill Hadwen, SAC Representative and Michele S. Robinson, Superintendent of Schools.

Absent was Mayor Gray, Chair

Ms. LaValley, Acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:00 and Christian Scorzoni 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**

- Mrs. Schultz stepped up to the podium and read from a letter she had composed. She stated that she was away for family matters for the past few meetings but followed the meetings on line. She commented that bullying is not tolerated by students at APS but yet heard a lot of bullying during the past meetings. She stated that she was ashamed at what transpired and hope that we can move forward.

**II. PRESENTATIONS**

**Bill Scott – Director Office of Community Development and Tom Bourasso**

Mr. Scott spoke about the Grants that the city and schools have received pertaining to energy savings. He showed the committee reports on energy savings/projects for FY 2014 (LED lighting throughout the city and schools; electric car used by the water department; trash compactors; and charging stations). With the LED lighting, this is a 15 thousand dollar savings annually. The next grant, which will be used for Phase 2, is due in May.

Mr. Bourasso then spoke about the individual grant (Green Community Grant) for the solar Project that is being looked at for the landfills in Amesbury (Titcomb & South Hunt Road). This will be the biggest solar farm in the state. He also commented on the Ford Motor Company, electric cars, and new funding sources.

Mr. Bourasso and Mr. Scott spoke regarding the Energy Reduction Study that was done at the Amesbury Middle School. They came up with a possible energy savings of over \$58,000. A handout of all the specifics were given out.

Questions:

- Mrs. Schultz asked about the savings of the LED lighting and replacement of outside school lighting was done 5 years ago. She was also wondering why AES was not one of the schools on the list. Also wondering about wind power at the Cashman Schools. *Have not worked with wind power, but is looking for applicable grants.*

- Mr. Scorzoni thanked them for the presentation and the opportunity to be a Green Community. He asked how the grants were obtained and how many years is it for. Need to drive down energy in the schools – need to meet yearly to obtain competitive grants.
- Mr. Hoyt asked about the Titcomb landfill and the solar farm and what the proposal looks like. *They have not seen the proposal yet but will share when they do.*
- Mr. Schwartz asked about the cost of trash compactors? *The cost of compactors is \$1200.00 for 2 which were covered by the grant.*
- Ms. LaValley stated that the next grant is due March 27<sup>th</sup> and will take a few months to find out if we got the grant.

#### IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

##### A. Director of Student Services

Kevin Pierce spoke about the following:

- Guidance Department – courses are on line to be viewed for next school year. Also on line are scholarship information for the seniors; and volunteer work and summer work.
- ELL – 26 students with 14 different languages. Parents are very involved, even with their language barrier. There will be spring courses available for teachers and administration to work toward their ELL licensure. In the fall there will be 16 teachers with ELL certification that will be shared within 3 schools.
- Special Education – At the High School, Michelle Poirier, Ann Peterson, and Linda Young, (retired teacher and now working with Coastal), are working with Life Skill students and working on giving back to the community. Great program working with the students on shopping, making lunches and delivering.

Mr. Hoyt asked how many students are involved in the Life Skill program. (12-14 students). Mr. Hoyt went on to speak on last Thursday's workshop. He thanked Mr. Pierce for his presentation and the school achievement plan and working with all of the schools. FY16 will continue to focus on ways for the 3 tiered intervention model to thrive.

Mrs. Schultz asked how conferences are done with the ELL families – *sometimes a interpreter is needed but most of the time a family member can help.*

Ms. LaValley spoke regarding the Task Force and meeting with Legislator/ Senator Connor-Ives assisting with residency issues; Chapter 70 monies and transportation reimbursement.

##### B. Assistant Superintendent

Deirdre Farrell spoke about the following:

- Audits – Circuit Breaker – received letter last week - \$45 thousand dollars declared non reimbursable. This is less than 2% on our budget. Will be appealing a \$12,000. claim that was disallowed.  
DESE audit on the school lunches – use to be every 5 years that was audited, but now yearly. Helen worked on the lunch applications and the Virtual Gateway. Had an exit interview this morning will need to work on direct verifications.

End of year audit will be March 17<sup>th</sup> - per pupil financial report.  
April 2<sup>nd</sup> AMS & AHS will be audited on the student activity accounts/check book.

- Met with Melanson & Heath on the end of year process and the finances. Has written to City council on the process. (Copy of the memo was given out to the School Committee Members) DIC Financial Reporting – How year end will look like.

Mr. Schwartz asked what level of percentage is audit off? *2% is reasonable for appropriate debt with our budget.*

Mr. Hoyt thanked Ms. Farrell for sharing the information and stated that the financial item is unfortunate.

### **C. Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Robinson spoke about the following:

- Carriage Town Robotics Team – 1<sup>st</sup> place in their division now going to UNH. She thanked Mr. Casto and all mentors for all of his work and time and hats off to all of the students.
- District review – late fall – received a draft version – Have now received a final report that is available on the website.
- FY 16 – two workshops – 1<sup>st</sup> looked at central office, transportation and administration – 2<sup>nd</sup> both elementary schools and Special Education at the elementary. Next workshops will be March 19, 26 & 30. April 2<sup>nd</sup> will be the public hearing and April 6<sup>th</sup> will be the vote on the budget.
- AHS weekly – hats off to the Laramie Project – a one act show on bullying and harassment.
- Innovation Grant – meeting weekly – short time to do a lot of work – outlining the transition from the Charter School to the Innovation School – optimistic about being on time.
- Received an email from Sharon Dunning to be present at the March 24<sup>th</sup> Council Meeting – will be there.

Mr. Hoyt spoke about his concern on the March 24<sup>th</sup> special meeting and that the votes for the National Grid bill and the SOI were not taken at the City Council meeting on March 10<sup>th</sup>. With Ms. Farrell and 3 of the school committee members at attendance, there was no reason for the vote to be postponed and a special meeting taken place.

Mr. Schwartz also spoke about the same issue on the city council and had a hard time understanding their decision. With due respect to Mayor Gray, Mr. Schwartz made a motion:

***Motion by Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mr. McGee to have Mayor Gray represent School Committee at the special City Council meeting on March 24th.***

*Discussion – Mr. McGee stated that these issues were dragged on enough. Ms. LaValley read the School Committee Oath that they all took as elected bodies. She also stated that if anyone has any questions or concerns on these issues to please email the Mayor or the Superintendent.*

***Vote: Yes, unanimous.***

**V. COMMUNICATION**

**A. Student Advisory Council – Jill Hadwen**

Jill spoke about the high school yearbook – last Friday Christopher Cioffi was elected State Student – Advisory meeting with Mr. Hammond discussing student needs.

Ms. LaValley added that they should be planning meetings with 8<sup>th</sup> graders regarding next year.

**B. Other**

- Ms. LaValley noted that a letter of congratulations should be sent out to Christopher Cioffi. She also congratulated Jane Grogan for her AHS Art Award.
- Mr. Hoyt spoke about the Pettengill House fundraiser that was held at the Blue Ocean. The fundraiser was well attended. He noted that Pettengill help families from Amesbury, Salisbury and Newburyport.

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

**A. 1. March 2, 2015 Minutes**

*Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. Scorzoni to approve the regular minutes dated March 2, 2015. Vote: 5 Yes, 1 abstained (Mrs. Schultz)*

**B. Warrant**

**1. \$441,932.00 (3/19/15)**

*Motion by Stan Schwartz, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the Warrant dated March 9, 2015 in the amount of \$441,932.00. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

**VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. Subcommittee Reports**

**1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee –Mr. Schwartz**

Mr. Schwartz reported that the workshops will continue and that the audit will help with improving and management of finances.

Ms. LaValley mentioned she is unable to attend Thursday's budget meeting and ask the Mrs. Schultz be allowed to audio record that meeting for her.

**2. Policy Subcommittee – Bonnie Schultz**

Mrs. Schultz reported that there will be a meeting on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:00

**3. Personnel Subcommittee – Mr. McGee**

Mr. McGee spoke they did not know when their next meeting will be but is looking forward to working with the unions.

**VIII.. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chair read the future meeting and agenda items aloud.

1. Technology Update (4/15)
2. Academy MOU (4/15)
3. MASC/MASS Conference Update (4/15)
4. Visit with State Representative and State Senator (4/15)
5. South Hampton Visit (4/15)
6. School Committee & Superintendent's Goals (4/15)

*Reminder June meeting on retirees and Whittier Budget*

**VIII.. PRESS CONFERENCE**

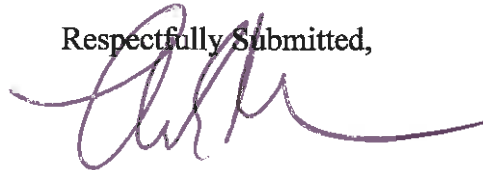
None

**IX.. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

***Motion by Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to adjourn the meeting at 8:48 PM. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Tom McGee', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Tom McGee, Secretary