

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
May 19, 2015**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gray, Chair; Debra LaValley, Bonnie Schultz, Tom McGee, Peter Hoyt, Christian Scorzoni, and Michele S. Robinson, Superintendent of Schools.

Absent were: Jill Hadwen, SAC Representative – Sitting in for Jill Hadwen was Charlotte Hyde.

Mayor Gray, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03 and Deb LaValley 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**

- A parent addressed the committee and thanked them for the development of the budget – good data and headed in the right direction – The parents are supporting the School Committee Budget..

**II. PRESENTATIONS: Student Showcase**

**Nick Heitmann – Violinist; AHS Student**

**Eli Ratner – Tenor; AHS Student**

**Ms. Susanne Meyer – AHS Music and Performing Arts Teacher**

Ms. Meyer began the presentation with recognizing 2 students Nick Heitmann and Eli Ratner accompanied by AHS Rhythmic participation in the 2015 All-State Orchestra and Chorus. The group spent 3 days in Boston and performed at Symphony hall. Nick played a selection for the audience with his violin. The rhythmic team joined Eli with their selection for the audience. Ms. Meyer was thanked by one of the parents in the audience for her countless hours of volunteering.

Mr. Hoyt thanked the students that had just performed and stated that it was breath-taking – stunned with the quality of music at AHS.

One of the parent's stated her disappointment of not having a full time band instructor at the middle school and high school.

**Innovation School Conversion Plan**

**Eryn Maguire – Academy Principal**

**Lyn Griffin – Director of Teaching and Learning**

Ms. Griffin started off the presentation with a hand out for the committee. This packet included the overview of the Innovation School and the proposal plan.

- An Innovation School is – as in-district public school that can operate with increased autonomy and flexibly in many areas (curriculum; budget; schedule; polices; and professional development).
- Converting from Horace Mann Charter to Innovation
- Partnership with Pettingill House customized assessment system

- Can retain any unused funds which is different than the public school
- Plan to accept out of district students which may have a tuition – working with DESE
- Will be at same location opening doors for the fall of 2015
- Next step – the school committee will vote to authorize the Innovation School, for 5 years, on June 1, 2015.

Mrs. Schultz asked what the roles for School Committee were from Charter vs. Innovation. There will be a 5 year review and the Superintendent will evaluate the school each year. Mr. Scorzoni asked about the legal aspect of transferring, closing accounts, obligation, transitions, contracts, and shutting down? Ms. Griffin explained that in the packet, there is a DESE checklist, the stock-holders have been notified, Ms. McGuire is the Board of Contact and Ms. Griffin is a trustee. Dr. Robinson concluded by saying the teachers are part of the APS contract and will still have their jobs.

The discussion was then given to Eryn McGuire, Principal of the Academy – Ms. McGuire began by stating that Amesbury is one of three grants awarded in the state. She presented a power point outlining the goals (1. Curriculum and assessment; 2. Vocation and internship; 3. Therapeutic services); partnership with Pettingill House and the district role in guiding the process.

Mr. Hoyt questioned the new admission policy – Ms. McGuire stated that they will fill out an application, will have an interview (no longer a lottery) and will look at social and emotional assessment.

Ms. McGuire introduced her staff that were in attendance. She stated that this school was founded 15 years ago and to date there has been 100 graduates.

Ms. LaValley, as a board member, thanked them for the presentation and stated that this has been a lot of work and effort - Great placement. She asked how this information was communicated to the public – Ms. McGuire stated that in April there was a public forum which was well received. Dr. Robinson stated that this was remarkable work by all and spoke about how humble Eryn is directing this alternative education and partnerships.

Ms. LaValley concluded by asking if this information could be put on the website – Yes.

### **III. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

#### **A. Director of Teaching and Learning**

Lyn Griffin spoke about the following:

- Curriculum Development = Phase 1 review on Go Math – whether to continue with Go Math – scope and sequencing of this current program – is there enough time and amount of time of instructional times.
- Next area to look at – ELA/Reading – WAT have been meeting regularly to discuss needs
- Looking into revamping report cards – getting a report card committee this summer – work to be done in this area
- Title 1 Literacy Camp is tentatively scheduled for July 27-30 and August 3-6
- Assessments –
  - May is MCAS Math – will be done this week
  - MAP testing – have until June 15<sup>th</sup> to complete spring testing
  - MKEA – kindergarten teachers with their observation due to the state by June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Report on expired licensure on teachers for this coming fall. Aspen will be updated as information comes in. Started tracking those teachers who are getting certified in Sheltered English Immersion Endorsement.

- Educator Evaluation – DESE has proposed 3 Alternative Pathways for districts: ( 1. More time; 2. Student goals & professional practice goals; 3. 5-step evaluation cycle) DESE needs information by June 30, 2015.

Mr. Hoyt asked for more information on the Summer Title 1 classes. Ms. Griffin stated classes will be offered to grade 1, 2 and 3 – ratio of 10 to 1 teacher – class size based on responses.

Ms. LaValley asked if there will be parent and principal input on the report card committee - *Yes*

*Motion by Mr. Scorzoni to take line item (IV. Communications – A. Student Advisory Council – Charlotte Hyde) out of order, second by Ms. LaValley. Vote: Yes – unanimous.*

#### IV. COMMUNICATION

##### A. **Student Advisory Council – Charlotte Hyde**

- Charlotte stated that they will be visiting the middle school this Tuesday to recruit incoming freshman to sign up for activities and clubs.

##### B. **Assistant Superintendent**

Deirdre Farrell was not in attendance

##### C. **Superintendent’s Report**

Dr. Robinson spoke about the following:

- Report Cards – in the initial discussion – Do we want to change? Need a communication plan
- Legislative update – overall increases in government budget – keeping an eye on Kindergarten funding and Early College Funding
- Excitement for seniors
  - Top 10 in academics for seniors – last night celebration – honor and tribute of the teachers and students
  - Graduation June 5<sup>th</sup> at Landry Stadium (weather permitting) at 7PM
  - Baccalaureate June 2<sup>nd</sup> in high school auditorium
- Last Wednesday, May 13<sup>th</sup> – budget was presented to the City Council. They were given a packet with each school’s achievement plan; celebrations and concerns; action steps; identification measures and benchmarks; lists of requests and then top 2 requests.
- Awards Ceremony – Excellence in Education – nominated by their peers. This year there were 13 APS staff that will be receiving the awards at a luncheon, next Tuesday at Flatbread.
- LEA stands for Lead Educational Agency for the public schools – Academy will be giving up that title.
- Lots of homework - Referring to the packet for the Innovation School that Ms. Griffin has given the committee, please direct all questions and concerns to Lyn or myself before the June 1<sup>st</sup> School Committee meeting.

#### IV. COMMUNICATION

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

- Ms. LaValley spoke regarding the AEFI Hall of honor – fantastic night honoring Mr. and Mrs. Peterson, Mappy Gray and Christopher Gwinn.
- All this years ‘retirees will be honored at a reception prior to the June 1<sup>st</sup>

School Committee meeting at 6:30 –

- Ms. LaValley commented that she has had numerous emails inquiring about the coaching openings for the Football, Girls Basketball and girls softball positions. She stated that for the Football position, with all of the staff retiring, there will possibly be a candidate from the high school. The girls basketball and softball position will be posted.
- Mr. Scorzoni stated that on May 27<sup>th</sup> Tom Bourassa and Mayor Gray will be showcasing Innovation Lecture Series, 9 Water Street, at 2PM. featuring electric car presentation by the Ford Motor Co – Learn how electric and hybrid cars work.

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

### **A. 1. May 4, 2015 Minutes**

***Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. McGee to approve the regular minutes dated May 4, 2015. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

### **2. Update Financial Operations Review**

Mayor Gray spoke about City Council approving up to \$50,000. for the MASBO financial review. Councilor Lavoie, Councilor McMilleon and School Committee member Mr. Scorzoni met yesterday to set the scope of the review.

Mrs. Schultz commented on her frustration on just receiving the email today and no time to review the scope or to represent the committee.

Mr. Scorzoni tried to clarify the reasoning for short notice and how the meeting yesterday was a preliminary meeting.

Mr. Hoyt stated that he and Mr. Scorzoni attended the City Council meeting and stated that he felt comfortable having Mr. Scorzoni represent the school committee. Mr. Hoyt had no time to offer his services for another meeting.

Ms. LaValley asked that the committee get any questions or concerns, after reading the scope, to the Mayor by tomorrow at 3:00PM.

MASBO will be here May 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> – limited time.

### **3. School Committee Goals**

Mr. McGee suggested that we tweak the way goals are decided – would like to have a couple of meetings and brain storm. Like to see more breathing room and see the committee work as a group. Ms. LaValley agreed. Mrs. Schultz suggested that the vacant seat be filled before dates are set - Dates were discussed – First meeting will be June 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 6:30. Dr. Robinson will see if the Newburyport Bank room is available.

### **4. Summer Dates**

Discussion on summer meeting dates. The following were decided: School Committee dates will be: July 20, 2015 and August 24, 2015

### **B. Warrant**

#### **1. \$232,611.37 (5/14/15)**

***Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Ms. LaValley to accept the Warrant dated May 14, 2015 in the amount of \$232,611.37. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.***

**VII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**A. Subcommittee Reports**

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

Mr. Hoyt stated that the next meeting will be June 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:30.

**2. Policy Subcommittee – Bonnie Schultz**

Mrs. Schultz reported that they met on May 14<sup>th</sup> – they will be having the first reading on the Domestic Violence Policy at the next School Committee meeting. Student activity funds audit – they have decided to not change the School Choice Policy – Not sure on the next meeting date.

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

Mr. McGee reported that they continue to meet with the union.

**VIII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS**

The Chair read the future meeting and agenda items aloud.

1. Summer Reading (6/15/15)
2. Visit with State Representative and State Senator (6/15)
3. Retirement Recognition (6/1/15)
4. CREST Collaborative Amended Agreement (6/1/15)
5. Whittier Regional Vocational Technical Update (6/15/15)
6. Innovation School Plan/Proposal (6/15/15)
7. Report of District Review (6/15)
8. South Hampton Visit (9/15)

**VIII. PRESS CONFERENCE**

None

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Pursuant of M.G.L. c.30A, s. 21 (a) (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to *conduct collective bargaining sessions* or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. AFT Amesbury local 1033 Teachers/Nurses; Para-professionals and Maintenance and Facilities Technicians.

***Motion by the Chair to go into Executive session. Roll Call was taken. Unanimous, Yes. Meeting adjourned at 8:53 into Executive Session.***

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Tom McGee, Secretary