

AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
HIGHLAND STREET
June 2, 2014 7:00 P.M.

I. Call to Order, Pledge of Allegiance and 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, Delegations

III. Presentations

A. Retirement Celebration

Senator Katy O'Connor Ives

IV. Administrative Reports

A. Director of Assessment and Accountability

B. Assistant Superintendent's Report

C. Superintendent's Report

V. Communications

A. Student Advisory Council – Liam Gallagher

VI. Items for Approval or Early Consideration

A. 1. FY15 Budget Update

2. May 20th Minutes

3. Two Year Calendar

B. Warrant

1. \$327,339.20 (5/29/14)

2. \$273,245.21 (5/15/14)

VII. Informational Items

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee – Stanley Schwartz

2. Policy Subcommittee – Bonnie Schultz

3. Personnel Subcommittee – Thomas McGee

VIII. Future Meetings and Agenda Items

1. Academy MOU (8/14)

2. Visit with State Representative and State Senator (8/14)

3. Student Handbooks (6/14)

4. Middle and High School Summer Reading Lists (6/14)

5. Discussion – Educator and Employ Evaluations (7/14)

7. Whittier Regional Vocational High School (6/14)

IX. Press Conference

X. Executive Session

XI. Adjournment

The listing of matters is of those reasonably anticipated by the Chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

Please make sure that all cell phones are placed on the silent mode while School Committee meeting is in session.

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL
June 2, 2014**

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

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. Mr. Schwartz led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. Then read the School Committee Mission Statement.

The Mission reads as follows:

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.

***Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to take the agenda out of order, switching Comments by Visitors, Delegations with Presentations of Retirement Celebration.
Vote: Unanimous, Yes.***

III. PRESENTATIONS

A. Retirement Celebration; Senator Katy O'Connor Ives

Mayor Gray began the presentation with introducing Senator Ives. She will be presenting the State Senate Citations to the Retirees.

The following retirees were acknowledged with a framed picture and the State Citation, for their years of service at Amesbury Public Schools:

- | | | | | |
|------------------------|---|--------------|---|-------------------------|
| • Maureen Boody | - | AHS 14 years | - | Foreign Language |
| • Robert Canning | - | CES 30 years | - | Maintenance Facilitator |
| • Lee Simmons | - | CES 34 years | - | Secretary |
| • Susan Mitchell | - | AES 28 years | - | Special Education |
| • Barbara Wallack | - | AMS 26 years | - | Teacher |
| • Linda Clark (absent) | - | AES 28 years | - | Secretary |

Certificates from Senator Costello are on their way.

Ms. LaValley acknowledged the retirees and spoke about all of them playing a specific role with the students of Amesbury. She also thanked Whittier Vo Tech for making the cake that was shared at the reception.

Mr. Hoyt congratulated and thanked all of the retirees. He stated that he had the pleasure of working with all of them at different levels and schools.

Mr. Scorzoni recognized Senator Ives and thanked her for coming this evening. He went on to point out her leadership and appreciation for all of the work that she has done with getting money for the schools.

Senator Ives spoke about local aide and Chapter 70 monies being top of her list. She went on to say that she is only 1 senator out of 40 and that it is important to continue to advocate for the schools. She and many others are meeting once a month specifically regarding Special Education.

III. COMMENTS BY VISTITORS, DELEGATIONS

Mayor Gray went over the ground rules for comments – limiting 3 minutes per person and a 20 minute cap.

In all, 8 parents and 5 students spoke about the cuts that were being presented to City Council for reduction. A petition was presented to the Mayor with 1186 signatures of Amesbury tax payers. The petition stating that to preserve the current services and fund these programs, a tax hike is needed, which would be below the 2 ½ cap. The citizens that spoke, spoke about the tough decision that the School Committee needed to make but felt that these programs need to be funded to continue APS with a sound and adequate education for the students. Many comments by students and parents were regarding choicing out to different districts if, in fact, these cuts were going to move forward.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. Director of Assessment and Accountability

B. Assistant Superintendent's Report

- Ms. Farrell spoke about the Special Education task force that she, Senator Ives and many other administrators have been attending. These meeting are focusing on why Special Education is so expensive and what can be done differently. The next meeting is in North Andover, June 25th at 6PM
- Regarding the Energy Conservation Grant – there will be a meeting on Wednesday at 3:00. This grant has many opportunities for the schools.

C. Superintendent's Report

- Dr. Robinson updated the committee on the districts' mandates. The District Determine Measures is getting to the point that we have to present the plan for evaluation tools in the district. They have given us the opportunity for an extension that we have put in for. Looking at the measurement tool that we have in place, like MAP and Dibels and working with teachers at grade level to identify the measurements.
- Looking at MCAS or PARCC – What will the state do? They are both different exams with lots of logistics to work out. The decision, which test APS will use, is due in October and will not file for an early consideration.

Mr. Hoyt commented on the lack of technology in APS to use the PARCC test. Dr. Robinson commented that there will have a chance to use paper and pencil for

the first year if PARCC is the choice.

Ms. LaValley asked if the PARCC test was approved by the DOE. Dr. Robinson said it is a 2 year trial with this year being the first year. The DOE has not yet voted to continue with the PARCC.

Mr. Schwartz asked if School Committee will be voting on the MCAS/PARCC decision? Dr. Robinson answered that the state needs to have a decision by October.

- Next School Committee will be Monday, June 9th
- June 25th is the last day of school
- Exciting week, especially for our seniors with all of the senior celebration going on; Graduation this Friday, Baccalaureate tomorrow night. Also the calendar is rich with plays, dedication and performances.

V. COMMUNICATION

A. Student Advisory Council -Jill Hadwen

Jill reported that they are wrapping up the year and saying good-bye to the seniors. They were still working on being able to meet with 8th graders at the middles school. Mrs. Schultz will contact Mr. Curry to move that forward.

B. Other

Mr. McGee attended senior sing-out and was blown away. What a great way to end the year.

Mr. Hoyt acknowledged Amesbury High School Teacher, Mark Casto being the 32nd recipient of the Rotary Educator of the year.

Mrs. Schultz spoke about bringing calendars to the next meeting to set dates for summer meetings and goal setting session. She also discussed an email that was received from Derek Kimball, Mr. Hoyt's son-in-law, regarding a letter addressing unfunded mandates sent to different School Committee. She encourages all to read it.

Ms. LaValley spoke about looking at the summer meetings and staying on the Tuesday schedule just until September.

VI. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL OR EARLY CONSIDERATION

A. 1. FY15 Budget Update

Mayor Gray went over the notes that he presented to the finance committee prior to this meeting.

- Recap, where we have been and where we are now: Taxes will be going up pending approval of the tax levy. The school budget is not being cut, pending approval by the city council

- Plan: close half of the \$330K gap (\$165K); by the following proposal - \$45K from Senator Ives efforts; \$45K removing SRO from school budget; \$35K from free cash; \$40K cost reductions from administration.
- Going Forward: need information sooner; working together; and communicate our state leadership to continue their efforts to better funding.

Mr. Schwartz, commented on, as a chair of the budget subcommittee, feeling responsible through this difficult time. He appreciates the mayor dedication of the process, all of the emails that the committee received and the outpouring of parents and students that came out. He went on to talk about the Common Core and wanting every child to be the same but noting that no child grows at the same time. He thanked everyone for all of their efforts.

Mr. Scorzoni thanked Mayor Gray for the lay out of the budget. He asked if the SRO position would be paid out of the police budget. Mayor Gray answered yes. Mr. Scorzoni also had questions regarding the free cash and the \$40K and what the plan was for that savings.

The Mayor stated that he is not able to free up the free cash, only the city council is. Regarding the \$45K, Ms. Farrell stated that with the new Leslie University Masters program coming to the high school, they will be paying APS \$20K; additionally there will be savings on placement with retirees and new hires; and lastly the two new contracts that are up for bid HBAC and Cleaning will have a savings. Lastly, still working on cutting the athletic budget by \$10K with Glen.

Mr. Hoyt thanked everyone for their attendance, emails and being part of the process. We are all here for the children. Need to work with the state (Chapter 70). Need a Foreign Language Teacher at the high school and one position at the middle school.

Mrs. Schultz stated that voices were heard and the need to support the mayor.

Mr. McGee echoed the thanks and stated that there is no easy solution and the need to move forward and advocate to the state.

2. May 20, 2014 Minutes

Motion by Mr. Hoyt, seconded by Mr. McGee to approve the regular minutes dated May 20, 2014. Opposed, Ms. LaValley – in Communications, Mr. Cammett donated \$25,000. to AEFI not \$20,000. as stated. Motion amended to read as stated, Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

3. Two Year Calendar

Dr. Robinson stated that a team of parents, administrators and staff are meeting about finalizing a two year calendar. A 2015-2016 calendar was handed out and

stated that it is still not finalized at this point. The start date for students will be the Monday before Labor Day.

B. Warrants

Motion by Mrs. Schultz, seconded by Mr. Hoyt to accept the Warrant dated May 29, 2014 in the amount of \$327,339.20. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

Motion by Mr. Schwartz, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to accept the Warrant dated May 15, 2014 in the amount of \$273,245.21. Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

VII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Subcommittee Reports

1. Finance/Budget Subcommittee – Stanley Schwartz

2. Policy Subcommittee – Bonnie Schultz

Mrs. Schultz indicated the they met last week and are working on the Finger Printing Policy. They should have the first draft ready for review next meeting. No other meeting dates at this time.

3. Personnel Subcommittee – Thomas McGee

No report

VIII. FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

The Chair read the future meeting and agenda items aloud.

1. Academy MOU (8/14)
2. Visit with State Representative and State Senator (8/14)
3. Student Handbooks (6/9)
4. Middle and High School Summer Reading Lists (6/9)
5. Discussion – Educator and Employ Evaluations (7/14)
6. Whittier Regional Vocational High School

Ms. LaValley added that the July and August meetings will have to be scheduled.

Mr. Scorzoni added that Bill Scott will need to be added as an agenda item.

IX. PRESS CONFERENCE

None

X. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

None

Motion by Ms. LaValley, seconded by Mrs. Schultz to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Vote: Unanimous, Yes.

Respectfully Submitted,



Tom McGee, Secretary

Amesbury Public Schools Mission Statement

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