

MINUTES
AMHERST SCHOOL BOARD
March 20, 2006
Amherst Middle School First Floor Music Room

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Chairperson Dwight Brew called the Board Meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

Amherst School Board: Deborah Cort, Dwight Brew, Nancy Head, Jim O'Mara, and Pam Dudoff

Administrative Team: Howard Colter, Porter Dodge, Susan Ward, Kathy Skoglund, Deborah Martel, and Gerry St. Amand

Ways & Means: CJ Butler and Jim Jacobs

Minutes Recorder: Terri Connolly

Gerry St. Amand reported on highlights at Clark and Wilkins Schools and thanked the many volunteers and health staff for their efforts during the recent health fair; Connie Hebert, nationally recognized literacy expert, spent March 16th with Clark School staff members and then spent March 17th with Wilkins school staff members modeling effective strategies to use with wide ranges of students; on Thursday, March 30th, staff members from Amherst Middle School and Wilkins School will meet to discuss topics related to the transition of students from grade four to grade five; the subject of transition is also being addressed at all grade levels at Clark and Wilkins Schools, as staff members address ways to aid all children in moving successfully from one grade level and/or building to the next grade level and/or building; the formal student placement process will begin in early April; interviews for the reading specialist vacancy at Clark School will be conducted in April and May 2006; Nicole Heimarck and Gerry met with the trustees of the Peabody Mills Environmental Center to discuss future collaborative efforts between the elementary schools and P MEC; second grade students will be presenting a program to their families on March 23rd; parents will be invited to visit their children's music classes during the weeks of March 20th and March 27th.

ADMINISTRATORS' REPORTS

Pam Dudoff added the health fair was outstanding and the professional staff and health leaders were fantastic. Pam suggested sending thank you notes from the board to the health fair participants and offered to aid in that endeavor. Gerry St. Amand will get a list of participant names to the board secretary.

Jim O'Mara suggested having ASD board stationery, to which Deborah Cort noted she would create some stationery for the board to review.

Porter Dodge reported on highlights at AMS and noted the last two teams have gone to Pinkham Notch; *Bye Bye Birdie* was a great production; Porter thanked Meg Peterson, Michelle Emmond, Larry Ballard, and Susan Nichols for their hard work and dedication to the production; NECAP student reports were received today; these reports will be described in detail in the Guide to Using the 2005 NECAP Reports, which will be available online by March 29th. Fifth grade teachers will be having lunch with the fourth grade teachers from Wilkins next Thursday.

Jim O'Mara moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, dated February 2006. Deborah Cort seconded the motion.

**TREASURER'S
REPORT**

Jan Bunker brought up the process of issuing stop payments on stale dated checks, to which Jan Bunker noted she would like to have a SAU-wide policy established whereby stale checks, after reaching a certain time period, be issued for stop payment. Jan noted she could contact the other boards' treasurers, to which Howard Colter suggested checking with the auditors regarding a policy. It was agreed that Susan Ward will contact the auditors and Jan will work with Susan regarding the matter.

The motion passed.

Susan Ward presented a financial update and noted all accounts are being closely monitored, which has resulted in three business transfer requests this month. Energy costs are also be closely monitored and there should be projections available next month for final year-end costs.

**FINANCIAL
REPORT**

Deborah Cort moved to approve Budget Transfer Request #24, and Nancy Head seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Jim O'Mara moved to approve Budget Transfer Request #25, and Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Nancy Head moved to approve Budget Transfer Request #26, and Deborah Cort seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Pam Dudoff moved to approve the MS-22 form, as presented for board signature. Jim O'Mara seconded the motion. All board members voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

The board members signed the MS-22 form.

Jim O'Mara expressed his appreciation to the administration, staff, SAU, and Ways and Means Committee in creating a successful budget, which passed with a significant margin.

Doug McAllister presented information to the board concerning the options available in televising school board meetings. Doug explained there are two options available, which included taping and rebroadcasting or live broadcasting. When asked about the costs associated with each option, Doug reported on the various equipment lists for both and noted the live broadcast would cost approximately \$20,000 versus \$5,000 for the tape delay and replay option. Doug also noted there are ongoing costs for consumables such as tapes, cleaning materials, etc. When asked if the music room was a conducive location for recording the school board meetings, Doug added it was a good location and that the largest challenge will be to recruit volunteers to set up, record, and tear down equipment at the meetings.

Jim O'Mara suggested moving forward with the recording option, to which Dwight Brew suggested checking with the SCHS board in terms of what they will be doing and possibly purchasing equipment with them resulting in a set up cost of approximately \$2,500.00. Nancy Head and Pam Dudoff both agreed it would be best to look at what SCHS was going to do regarding broadcasting.

CJ Butler suggested creating an Educational Communication Committee and find someone to drive the committee and objective. The board expressed they liked CJ's idea and thanked Doug for attending the meeting and presenting the information.

Jim Miner presented a list of priority buildings and grounds items. Jim highlighted specific projects for the board to review, including playground issues at Clark; asphalt replacement, a gym ventilation sock, and back flow prevention at Wilkins; gym floor damage, unit ventilations, broken sewer line, and Annex heating installation at the

**BUSINESS &
INSTRUCTION
MS-22 Statement of
Appropriations
Requiring Board
Signature**

**Amherst
Communication
Infrastructure**

**Buildings and
Grounds Update**

Amherst Middle School. Jim noted bids have been received for many of these items while other items were going through the bidding process currently. Jim also reported that the new software and a recent correction in the installation mode for the air conditioning system at AMS should realize a savings of 50 gallons of oil per day.

Deborah noted the asphalt issue at Wilkins is part of the Master plan review and has been on hold pending the review. Howard added that a review of the ventilation, whether to repair or replace, should also be part of the Master Plan study, as well as the entire heating system design at AMS.

Porter Dodge noted PSNH had conducted an in-house audit and some recommendations were made; the staff will be making efforts in those areas.

The board agreed to have the Expendable Trust Fund Committee review the list of priority items, with details, and make a recommendation to the board.

Nancy Head added she would like to have Jim Miner meet with the Mariance Associates representatives for those items relative to the Master Plan review.

Susan Ward presented a proposal for the board to receive agendas and corresponding materials via email only. Susan noted larger files, over a certain page limit, would be emailed prior to the meeting and hard copies would be made available at the board meeting.

Distribution of Agenda and Corresponding Materials

There was a discussion regarding potential cost savings of electronic submittals and Howard noted the SCHS and Mont Vernon boards have both accepted electronic receipt of agendas and attachments. Howard suggested this be a topic for review at a SAU-board meeting, and Jim O'Mara suggested the item be discussed a future ASD board meeting.

Nancy Head reported representatives from Frank Mariance Associates will be meeting with ASD staff for input regarding educational programs and trends and corresponding space needs. The architectural firm representatives will also talk with Kathy Skoglund, Nicole Heimarck, Howard Colter and Jim Miner. Nancy noted Howard has received a timeline and copies of the timeline will be distributed at the next board meeting.

Master Plan Update

Nancy requested the board give her permission to be the board spokesperson regarding the Master Plan, to which the board agreed to

do.

It was agreed the board did not have to approve the coaching nominations; however, Jim O'Mara thanked Porter Dodge for the information presented and would like that process to continue of who's who.

**Coaching
Nominations**

The Board agreed to do the board goal setting process at a future meeting.

**Board Goal Setting
Process**

Pam Dudoff moved to approve the meeting minutes of March 6, 2005 and Deborah Cort seconded. The minutes were accepted as amended:

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES OF
MARCH 6, 2006**

Page 1418, under Attendance, change Dufoff to Dudoff
The motion passed with Nancy Head abstaining.

Pam Dudoff moved to enter into a Non-Public Session, under the provision of RSA 91:A-3,II(b). Nancy Head seconded the motion. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board went into a Non-Public Session at 7:45 p.m.

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board discussed personnel matters.

Jim O'Mara moved to come out of Non-Public Session and Deborah Cort seconded. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board came out of Non-Public at 7:47 p.m.

Howard Colter nominated Lisa Smith as a Special Education Paraprofessional, effective March 20, 2006 and Mary Nagy as a Long-Term Substitute Teacher, effective April 3, 2006.

PERSONNEL

Pam Dudoff moved to accept the Superintendent's recommendations, as presented. Jim O'Mara seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Jim O'Mara moved to enter into a Non-Public Session, under the provision of RSA 91:A-3,II(a). Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board went into a Non-Public Session at 7:48 p.m.

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board discussed a personnel-related matter.

Pam Dudoff moved to come out of Non-Public Session and Nancy Head seconded. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board came out of Non-Public at 8:06 p.m.

Jim O'Mara moved to enter into a Non-Public Session, under the provision of RSA 91:A-3,II(c). Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board went into a Non-Public Session at 8:07 p.m.

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board discussed a litigation matter.

Jim O'Mara moved to come out of Non-Public Session and Pam Dudoff seconded. By a roll-call vote, each member of the Board voted in favor: O'Mara-yes; Dudoff-yes; Cort-yes; Brew-yes; Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board came out of Non-Public at 8:15 p.m.

**OTHER
Election Results**

Jim O'Mara noted all school board warrants and budget passed by a significant margin. The board thanked Nancy Head regarding her communication efforts concerning the Olson matter.

The next SAU Board meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2006.

Deborah Cort suggested a review of the Milford school district website, as they do a great job communicating district matters. Deborah questioned if the ASD could post information, such as DOE and DRA filings, on the ASD website. There was additional discussion regarding methods of communicating to the community more effectively and a suggestion was made to post the audit results on the website as well.

Jim O'Mara moved to adjourn. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:22 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT