

MINUTES
AMHERST SCHOOL BOARD
May 15, 2006
Amherst Middle School First Floor Music Room

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Chairperson Dwight Brew called the board meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. **CALL TO ORDER**

Present: **ATTENDANCE**
Amherst School Board: Deborah Cort, Dwight Brew, Pam Dudoff, Nancy Head (arrived at 6:04 p.m.), and Jim O'Mara
Administrative Team: Howard Colter, Susan Ward, Gerry St. Amand, Kathy Skoglund, Jim Miner, and Porter Dodge
Minutes Recorder: Terri Connolly

Dwight Brew invited comments from the public, but none were forthcoming. **PUBLIC TIME**

Dwight Brew called the public hearing meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. for the purpose of approving and utilizing funds from the Expendable Trust Fund. **APPROVAL OF EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND (ETF) ITEMS DISCUSSED AT PUBLIC HEARING**

The items being discussed are the ventilation repair at the Amherst Middle School (AMS) and drainage and paving at Wilkins. Jim Miner presented information to the board concerning the proposed changes for the ventilator repair at AMS and the drainage and paving project at Wilkins. Jim noted all of the proposed projects have been reviewed and approved by architects of the master plan.

Dwight Brew closed the public hearing at 6:11 p.m.

Jim Miner presented information regarding the drainage project at Wilkins School and recommended the vendor and lowest qualified bidder for the drainage project to be Leighton White, Inc. for an amount of \$23,813.00.

Jim Miner presented information regarding the paving project at Wilkins School and presented a recommendation that the vendor and lowest qualified bidder for the paving project is Bronx Industries, Inc. in the amount of \$149,400.00.

Jim Miner presented additional information regarding the ventilation repair for the Amherst Middle School and reported there are 32 ventilator units that are not functioning properly. Air quality

tests will be conducted prior to and after the work is completed for measurement purposes. Jim reported costs for this work should be no more than \$26,440.00 and recommended Granite State Plumbing as the lowest, qualified vendor.

Deborah Cort moved the board accept the recommendation of the Expendable Trust Fund Committee to award a bid for unit ventilators work, in the amount not to exceed \$26,440.00, to Granite State Plumbing, the lowest qualified bidder. Nancy Head seconded the motion. All board members voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Nancy Head moved the board accept the recommendation of the Expendable Trust Fund Committee to award a bid for the drainage project, in an amount not to exceed \$23,813.00, to Leighton White, Inc., the lowest, most qualified bidder. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Deborah Cort moved the board accept the recommendation of the Expendable Trust Fund Committee to expend funds from the ETF and award a bid for the paving project, in an amount of \$149,400.00, to Brox Industries, Inc., the lowest, most qualified bidder. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted unanimously in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Deborah Cort thanked Jim Miner for his work and efforts in presenting thorough and concise information and thanked the ETF Committee in working together expeditiously to get the job done.

Jim O'Mara thanked Jim Miner for working with the town and Gerry St. Amand as part of the process for the proposed projects.

REPORTS Administration

Gerry St. Amand reported on highlights from Clark and Wilkins Schools and expressed thanks to Jim Miner and the Expendable Trust Fund Committee for the work to be accomplished at Wilkins. Gerry also noted that last week there was an assembly to honor Joannie Egenhardt as a recipient of Wal-Mart's Teacher of the Year award. Joannie received a \$100 gift card and the school will receive a \$1000 donation for the honor. Gerry noted Connie Hebert was scheduled to conduct a professional development segment tomorrow, May 16, 2006, but due to a school closing, the session will be rescheduled for next fall or spring. Gerry recognized Mike McGuire and the custodial staff for their efforts; Gerry noted Mike came in over the weekend to check the schools for flooding issues.

The board agreed a note of congratulations would be sent to Joannie Egenhardt.

Porter Dodge reported on highlights from the Amherst Middle School and noted that NWEA testing has been postponed until the week of May 30th for 8th grade students and 6th grade testing is planned for the week of May 22, 2006. Grade 8 “60s Unit” is scheduled for next week; the 5th and 6th grade Spring Concert was held on May 10, 2006; parents of students entering the 5th grade at AMS in the fall attended a Grade 5 Transition Night; students from the 7th grade will attend the annual Project Safeguard event at Rivier College on May 25th and May 26th; in a cost savings measure, the program will be brought to AMS and SCHS next year. DARE graduation has held last Friday, May 12, 2006.

Pam Dudoff noted a forum was held at SCHS recently regarding the Student Risk Behavior Survey. Pam reported there was some discussion that night about extending the Project Safeguard program into high school.

Howard Colter reported Nicole Heimarck has reviewed the late starts questions and will present a recommendation some time mid-year next year for implementation the following school year. Nicole would like to incorporate input and discussions from Mont Vernon and SCHS with regard to this matter.

The board reviewed the Treasurer’s Report for April 2006. Jim O’Mara moved to accept the Treasurer’s Report for the month of April 2006. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Treasurer’s Report

Jan Bunker reported monies have been transferred out of the CD account into a higher interest savings account. Jan continues to work closely with the SAU regarding treasury matters. The board thanked Jan for her efforts.

Susan Ward presented a summary of the April year-to-date FY’06 results. Susan noted there has been a review of all deficit accounts with input from principals and department directors. There are two ongoing areas of concern, which are SPED, and Operations and Maintenance. SPED remains over budget by approximately \$48,000.00 due to the unanticipated addition of five students from out of district. The IDEA grant approval has been received for the state. Based upon a review of year-to-date expenditures, a revision will be required on the grant in order to transfer charges. A number of internal transfers will also need to be created to realign the general

April Financial Reports

fund expenditures. Some accounts have been closed which will be used to offset deficits and prevent further increases.

The other remaining issue is Operations and Maintenance with a deficit of approximately \$22,000 for electricity. The SAU, along with the building administration teams, will continue to monitor this item and other accounts to determine areas that can offset this deficit balance.

Susan reported she would have a firm estimate of end-of-year projections for the board meeting scheduled on June 5, 2006, and added she had no concerns for the budget.

There was a brief discussion regarding the allocation of unanticipated income to deficit items in the budget, to which Susan reported the district is not allowed to over expend the budget (with the exception of the SPED accounts) without a special hearing. All unanticipated revenue must be allocated to the unreserved fund balance. Susan added she would check with the Department of Education regarding the application of anticipated revenue (such as interest) to the SPED over expenditures.

CJ Butler noted concern about the April report and that Food Service may show a surplus but not a profit because the costs of the Director of Food Service and staff are reported through the SAU budget. CJ added any surplus should be applied to the labor costs before funds are made available to purchase equipment.

Susan Ward presented budget transfer requests and briefed the board on the proposed accounts and amounts.

Pam Dudoff moved to approve budget transfer requests 200632 through 200636. Deborah Cort seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Susan noted the district participated in the State bid for oil and opted for a fixed price. The winning bidder is the same vendor currently used by the district. The fixed amount is 9.9 cents over the current estimated price.

Deborah Cort reported the balance in the Expendable Trust Fund, based on approvals tonight, is \$70,000.00. The fund will receive \$15,000 from taxation and, based on an end-of-year surplus, an additional \$15,000.00 The ETF Committee has done a good job with recommendations and has been prudent, which will result in an approximate \$100,000 balance (anticipated) for emergency matters.

**Expendable Trust
Project Update**

Master Plan Update

Nancy Head reported the architects for the Master Plan have reviewed Clark, Wilkins and Middle Schools. They are currently concentrating on the Brick School in terms of research regarding input from the historic and heritage commissions. They will also look at the Baboosic Road land. Nancy is looking for copies of tests completed by the previous companies that worked with the last architect. The Advisory Committee, which will be comprised of five people, will be finalized this week. There was a question as to whether grade configurations would be part of the educational assessment, to which Nancy reported grade configurations are part of the educational needs assessment.

Howard Colter noted Mont Vernon School Board is interested in the long range planning for schools and suggested the board consider have a Mont Vernon board member sit in on the Master Plan Committee meetings as a non-voting member. There was also a suggestion that if a member was not available to attend, the committee minutes might be sent to the Mont Vernon board. It was agreed Leo White would be contacted regarding this matter.

Dwight Brew noted the board is not required to hold a public hearing for donations less than \$5,000.00.

ACTION ITEMS

**Acceptance of \$1,000
Donation from Lowes**

Nancy Head moved to graciously accept the generous \$1,000 donation from Lowes for the playground equipment to be placed at the Brick School. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

There was a brief discussion regarding the issue of not over expending the budget and receiving donations for expenditures, to which Howard suggested, for future consideration, donations be made in the form of gifts (e.g., playground equipment) rather than cash.

It was agreed the board should send a thank you note to Lowes.

Jim O'Mara moved to accept the minutes of the May 1, 2006 meeting. Deborah Cort seconded the motion. The minutes were approved with the following amendments:

**APPROVAL OF
MINUTES OF MAY
1, 2006 MEETING**

Page 1452, 5th paragraph, 5th line, change to read: "...to which Deborah requested Susan Ward look into the RSA regarding..."

Page 1452, 5th paragraph, 1st line, change to read: "Jim Miner noted he was concerned..."

The motion passed.

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Dwight Brew noted Jim O'Mara is the school board representative to the Recreation Commission. The Recreation Commission has established an executive committee and has asked the board for a board representative. Jim O'Mara agreed to serve on the Recreation Executive Committee. The board agreed that Jim would serve on that committee and thanked Jim for his willingness to do so.

**SCHOOL BOARD
REPRESENTATIVE
TO THE
RECREATION
EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

Pam Dudoff moved to enter into a Non-Public Session, under the provision of RSA 91:A-3,II(a). 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, and Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board went into a Non-Public Session at 7:12 p.m.

**NON-PUBLIC
SESSION**

The Board discussed personnel matters.

Deborah Cort 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, and Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board came out of Non-Public at 7:20 p.m.

Superintendent Howard Colter nominated Stephen Opre as a probation teacher for the 2006-2007 school year.

PERSONNEL

Pam Dudoff moved to approve the Superintendent's nomination recommendation. Jim O'Mara seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Superintendent Howard Colter nominated Franna Eaton as a probation teacher for the 2006-2007 school year.

Jim O'Mara moved to approve the Superintendent's nomination recommendation. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Pam Dudoff reported a question had been presented at the Youth Risk Behavior Forum regarding the level of supervision for overnight events, such as the environmental camps, and the co-habitation of students on overnight stays. The board agreed the concern should be added to the list of questions presented to the Environmental Camps Committee for their review.

OTHER

Deborah Cort noted some of the ETF content on the school board

website is out of date, to which Susan reported all board sites need maintenance and continuity. The technology department will address this matter over the summer and there is a plan to enhance the SAU site as well as the school board sites. Deborah added she would send the ETF materials to Susan for posting.

Jim O'Mara requested Howard present his opinion regarding the environmental camps prior to his leaving, to which Howard noted he has discussed this matter with Porter at great length, to which Porter added he was fully aware of Howard's stance on the situation. Porter requested the board submit any committee member names, for the Environmental Camps Committee, to him.

Jim O'Mara noted he understood the reasons for the 2-day school closure, and requested that the Superintendent's position on the matter be reflected in the minutes, to which Howard reported he has had many discussions with the authorities concerning the recent floods throughout southern New Hampshire, and in particular the SAU #39 school district. Howard has had extensive discussions with the Director of Public Works, the Amherst Fire Chief and Town Emergency Coordinator, Amherst Police, and Transportation Dispatcher regarding the stability of the roads throughout the district. There has been expressed concern that the structure and condition of the roads will not be known until the floodwaters recede. Upon advisement of the information and counsel from these transportation and emergency authorities, the decision was made to close school for a period of two days. Howard noted he has looked into a waiver, for the two days, with the Commissioner of Education. In terms of what will be done for the remainder of the week, Susan Ward is working closely with bus dispatch service to identify specific roads and routes for consolidated stops. A notice will be distributed via email or phone message to parents regarding future closures, but the plan is to reopen the schools on Wednesday, May 18, 2006.

Jim O'Mara suggested the board discuss known and upcoming items of future SAU board meetings so the ASD board present a consensus on matters if appropriate.

Nancy Head moved and Deborah Cort seconded to adjourn the meeting. All board members voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT