

**MINUTES**  
**AMHERST SCHOOL BOARD**  
**July 17, 2006**  
**Amherst Middle School First Floor Music Room**

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Chairperson Dwight Brew called the board meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Present:

**ATTENDANCE**

Amherst School Board: Deborah Cort, Dwight Brew, Pam Dudoff, Nancy Head, and Jim O'Mara (left at 7:15 p.m. and returned at 7:18 p.m.)

Administrative Team: Mary Jennings, Gerry St. Amand, Jim Miner, Lisa Ambrosio, Nicole Heimarck, and Porter Dodge

Minutes Recorder: Terri Connolly

Dwight Brew welcomed Dr. Mary Jennings as SAU #39 Superintendent.

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

**PUBLIC TIME**

Gerry St. Amand highlighted events from Clark and Wilkins Schools, and noted the in-service days conducted on June 21<sup>st</sup> and June 22<sup>nd</sup> received extremely favorable reviews from the attendees who completed and submitted their professional development paperwork; interviews are underway for the fourth grade vacancy that occurred as a result of Eric Kidder's transfer to the Amherst Middle School (AMS); the drainage project at Wilkins is complete and the paving project will begin this week; teacher letters and report cards were sent home with students on the final day of school; and there are twenty-two (22) new students registered for Wilkins for the upcoming school year.

**REPORTS**

**Administration**

Porter Dodge reported on highlights from AMS and noted the end of the year Eighth Grade Celebration took place on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Porter thanked Dwight Brew for his comments and thanked the board members for attending the celebratory event. Step Up Day was held on the final day of school with students from the Mont Vernon Village School and the Wilkins School bussed to AMS to meet teachers and students they will be teamed up within the fall. Porter reported parental concerns regarding student placement must be presented to administrators prior to April vacation so the

administration team is not faced with a large amount of concerns after teams have been announced and schedules distributed. Porter also noted sixth grade teachers presented a block-schedule proposal a year ago. The teachers have spent a great deal of time this year improving the proposal and have met with Porter several times regarding the subject. Porter reported he has agreed to allow the sixth grade staff model a modified form of the proposal for block scheduling beginning in the fall. This schedule does not change the amount of time teachers are in front of the students, but it greatly improves their ability to deliver programs because of its design. A committee has been established for this year to look at this trial program and into similar successful programs at other districts. The program will then be assessed to determine if changes will be made. Part of the assessment will be for future implementation in other classes, such as seventh and eighth grades. Dwight Brew noted he thought the board should have discussed the program before it was approved for implementation. Dwight questioned if there was low attendance on the last day of school, to which Porter reported there was low attendance and that he is looking into the matter.

Deborah Cort questioned if the issue has been resolved with Camp Invention in terms of the organization paying for AMS facility use, in accordance with the facility use policy, to which Lisa Ambrosio noted she would follow up on the matter.

Nancy Head and Jim Miner presented a Master Plan update. Nancy reported the Master Plan Committee (MPC), faced with having to encumber funds to finish the Master Plan, has requested Marinace Architects, in conjunction with Jim Miner, to generate a list of additional studies and items, and estimated costs, that would be needed to complete a comprehensive plan. The following list has been generated and submitted:

#### **Master Plan Update**

- Updated asbestos reports for AMS, Wilkins and Clark. RPF Associates estimated the cost to be \$500 per building. RPF has been the vendor of this service since 1996. Jim Miner noted he did not go out for bid on this item and recommends the current vendor because of the history, experience and it would be more costly with a new vendor.
- Cavity inspection of brick walls at AMS, estimated at \$1,500.00. Jim reported he would go out for bid with three vendors on this item.
- Perform air quality testing at AMS in affected areas to determine impact of exterior wall problems with regard to

indoor air quality. This item is in conjunction with the ventilating work and Jim Miner projected the costs, of \$6,500.00, will be under the estimate.

- Perform structural engineering review of existing sloped roof at Wilkins to provide a firm basis for recommendations for remedial measures regarding snow slides; cost estimated for this item is approximately \$2,500.00.
- Topographical survey of rear section of property at Wilkins; estimated survey costs: \$6,000.00.
- Traffic study update; cost estimate: \$5,000.00.
- Scanning of building drawings to disc; cost estimate: \$200.00.
- Appraisal of the property; cost estimate: \$1,000.00 (this item was passed by the Amherst School Board in June 5, 2006).
- Printing and media mailings; cost estimate: \$5,125.00 for two mailings—this item will be put out for more bids and estimates.
- Display boards; cost estimate: \$1,241.00.

Nancy Head noted an analysis of existing data would be necessary to recreate some of the wetlands information for the Baboosic Lake Road land site. The cost estimate for this item is \$1,000.00 and was reviewed and approved by the Amherst School Board on June 5, 2006.

Dwight Brew questioned if the board would be comfortable with MPC following the purchasing policy and applying costs to the approved MP budget, to which Jim O'Mara questioned if the board can delegate fiscal responsibility to a sub-committee established as its own. Superintendent Jennings noted the matter would be worth a legal review.

Dwight noted the board is slow to ramp up on some items, to which Jim noted he wants to make sure some public record exists for accountability purposes. There was additional discussion regarding delegating responsibility to a sub-committee for sole-sourced bids.

Jim O'Mara moved to award RPF Associates \$500.00 per building for a total of \$1,500.00, to conduct asbestos testing and reporting in

accordance with state requirements and perform testing of the indoor air quality at AMS, after drainage and ventilator repair, for an amount not to exceed \$6,500.00. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Jim O'Mara moved Jim Miner be authorized to spend an amount up to \$1,500.00 for cavity inspection, with no current vendor identified. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Jim O'Mara moved to authorize Joel Fisher an amount not to exceed \$2,500.00 for structural engineering services on the Wilkins roof. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

There was a recommendation to check with the attorney regarding the possibility of delegating responsibility to the subcommittee for the master plan budget expenditures, to which Jim O'Mara noted regardless of what information is found out in the delegation review, he is still comfortable with the format of reviewing these items in this environment for public record purposes.

Deborah Cort noted if Frank Marinace is contracted to do work, the firm must follow the district purchasing policy because the monies are district funds, to which Mary Jennings noted subcontractors are not typically subject to purchasing policies. It was also noted these funds are in addition to the approved funds for this project.

Mary Jennings reported Dr. Mark Joyce, of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association, is available to facilitate a goal-setting workshop for the Amherst School Board. The cost for the goal setting session is \$600.00. Dr. Joyce has recommended a goal setting workshop for the SAU-board to address commonly identified areas and issues; this session would be held during a SAU-wide board meeting.

**Proposed School  
Board Workshops**

Pam Dudoff moved to authorize payment of \$600.00 for the purpose of facilitating a goal-setting workshop for the Amherst School Board. Nancy Head seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Mary Jennings requested the board authorize the Superintendent and Business Office Coordinator, Lisa Ambrosio, to sign purchase order and final manifests. The legal advisors and auditors have recommended this request.

**Authorization for  
Signing Purchase  
Orders/Manifests**

Jim O'Mara moved the Business Office Coordinator and Superintendent be authorized to sign final manifests and purchase orders in the absence of the district's business manager. Deborah Cort seconded the motion. The board unanimously voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Lisa Ambrosio reported she has been in recent contact with Valic regarding the 401A insurance plan. Lisa presented forms to the board that required signatures in order for the plan to be compliant with IRS rules and regulations. Lisa explained the IRS rules require a transfer of the 401A plan to a 403b plan; the process includes closing and freezing the 401A. Lisa also noted she received a notice from Penco/Bencor that it is ending the record keeping agreement with Valic. Lisa presented forms regarding closing and freezing the 401A, transferring the 401A plan to a 403b plan, a good faith statement, and acknowledging the record keeping change.

**Transfer of 401A  
Insurance Plan**

Jim O'Mara moved to authorize Amherst School District Chair, Dwight Brew, sign the forms requiring the district to close out the 401A plan, in order to be compliant with IRS regulations, freeze the funds and roll funds over to a 403b compliant plan, a good faith statement, and approve the record keeping for Valic. Pam Dudoff seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Pam Dudoff moved to enter into a Non-Public Session, under the provision of RSA 91:A-3,II(a). Deborah Cort 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 7:16 p.m.

**NON-PUBLIC  
SESSION**

The Board discussed personnel matters.

Nancy Head 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, and Head-yes. The motion passed. The Board came out of Non-Public at 7:18 p.m.

Superintendent Mary Jennings nominated Sean Crotty for the **PERSONNEL** position of Custodian at AMS.

Pam Dudoff moved to approve the Superintendent's nomination and recommendation. Nancy Head seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Superintendent Mary Jennings recommended the board approve Taryn Hanson for the position of Special Education 1:1 Paraprofessional at Clark School.

Nancy Head moved to approve the Superintendent's nomination and recommendation. Deborah Cort seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Superintendent Mary Jennings recommended the board approve Pam Twitchell-Gross for the Special Education Coordinator at AMS.

Pam Dudoff moved to approve the Superintendent's nomination and recommendation. Deborah Cort seconded the motion. All board members voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Nancy Head moved and Pam Dudoff seconded to adjourn the meeting. **ADJOURNMENT** All board members voted in favor and the meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.