

MINUTES
AMHERST SCHOOL BOARD
January 15, 2007
Souhegan High School Conference Room

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Chair Dwight Brew called the Board Meeting to order at 8:45 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER

Present:

ATTENDANCE

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

Administrative Team: Porter Dodge, Dr. Mary Jennings, Elizabeth Shankel, and Gerry St. Amand.

Ways and Means: CJ Butler, Jay Hennessey, Jim Jacobs and Dana Redmond

Minutes Recorder: Lyn Jennings

- I. Vote on Warrant Articles - A motion was made by Pam Dudoff and seconded by Nancy Head to place Article 36 on the Warrant as presented at the Public Hearing.

ACTION ITEMS

To see if the school district will raise and appropriate \$5,009,000 (Gross Budget) for renovations and equipment for Clark School, Wilkins School and Amherst Middle School, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$4,884,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Chapter 33) and authorize the school board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms and conditions thereof, with the remaining \$125,000 to come from interest earnings on the invested bond proceeds for said project; and to take any other action necessary to carry out the additional sum of \$139,737 for the first interest payment on the aforesaid bonds. Three-fifths ballot vote required.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

Betty Shankel asked the School Board for direction on whether or not they wanted to record their position as well as Ways and Means position on each Warrant Article. It was agreed; the board wanted their position of each article recorded.

A motion was made by Deborah Cort and seconded by Nancy Head to place Article 37 on the Warrant as presented at the Public

Hearing.

To see if the school district will raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$21,661,801. (Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be \$21,133,915, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Amherst School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.) Majority ballot vote required.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Jim O’Mara and seconded by Deborah Cort to place Article 38 on the Warrant as presented at the Public Hearing.

To see if the school district will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Amherst School Board and the Amherst Education Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2007-2008	\$462,014
2008-2009	\$502,008
2009-2010	\$531,253

And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$462,014 for the 2008-2008 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year. Majority ballot vote required.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Nancy Head and seconded by Pam Dudoff to place Article 39 on the Warrant as presented at the Public

Hearing.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Deborah Cort and seconded by Pam Dudoff to place Article 35 on the Warrant as presented at the Public Hearing.

To elect all necessary school district officers for the ensuing terms by official ballot vote on March 13, 2007, Souhegan High School, 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

- Election of two (2) members of the School Board for the ensuing three (3) years.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Deborah Cort and seconded by Jim O'Mara to amend Article 40 to read as follows:

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$30,000 to be added to the Capital Facilities Repair, Maintenance, and Improvement Trust Fund (established March, 2003) with up to \$30,000 of this amount to be funded from the year-end undesignated fund balance (surplus) if available on July 1, 2007.

Discussion amongst board members followed:

Jim O'Mara said he recognized the position of the Ways and Means Committee to stay within the expected surplus of \$100,000 and by amending the article from \$80,000 to \$30,000 they would be accomplishing the recommendation of the Ways and Means, which he agreed with.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion as amended and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Pam Dudoff and seconded by Nancy Head to adopt the wording of Article 41 as presented at the Public Hearing.

Discussion amongst board members followed:

Jim O'Mara urged his colleagues to defeat this motion. He said the voters have a lot on their plate this year and he doesn't think this is

the year for this article to go forward. Jim said if issues arise next year and more money is needed, they can go before the voters to request it.

Jim O'Mara asked for Ways and Means position on Article 41 and Jim Jacobs said they voted 6-0, unanimously opposed to this article.

Pam Dudoff said she was a little concerned if this article is not presented on the Warrant should they not have enough funds should an unplanned issue arise, they will not be left with too many options.

Nancy Head said she wonders if \$20,000 would really make a difference.

Deborah Cort said \$20,000 isn't going to do anything but it will get the fund started.

Dwight Brew said if a problem arises, it is more than likely not going to be a \$20,000 problem.

All members of the board voted against Article 41 and the motion failed unanimously.

A motion was made by Deborah Cort and seconded by Jim O'Mara to place the wording of Article 42 as presented at the Public Hearing on the Warrant as Article 41.

To see if the school district will vote to authorize the school board to accept \$450,000 from the Town of Amherst to develop three multi-purpose athletic fields and a baseball/softball field on the Bean Property located on the east side of Boston Post Road, so called more particularly shown on town tax map # 2 as lots 142 and 144, and further to authorize the school board to appropriate the \$450,000 for the District. This is a non-lapsing article under RSA 32:7 and will not laps until the athletic fields are completed or by June 30, 2012, whichever is earlier. Majority ballot vote required.

Board members agreed they could not determine what the Selectmen would do tonight so they decided to hold off on their voting of this article.

Deborah Cort withdrew her motion. Four members of the board voted in favor of the motion and one was opposed, Nancy Head.

A motion was made by Pam Dudoff and seconded by Deborah Cort to authorize the SAU Administration to insert the position of the School Board as well as Ways and Means on the Ballot.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

A motion was made by Jim O'Mara and seconded by Deborah Cort to reconsider Article 42 and to place the alternate wording of Article 42 on the Warrant as Article 41.

All members of the board voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

The board voted unanimously for all Warrant Articles except Article 41. Four board members voted in favor of Article 41 and one was opposed, Nancy Head.

Nancy said she thinks they should wait a year before they present Article 41 to the voters.

A motion was made by Pam Dudoff and seconded by Nancy Head to adjourn the meeting. All board members voted in favor of the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT