

1 **Amherst School Board**  
2 **January 15, 2014**

3  
4 **ATTENDANCE**

5  
6 Amherst School Board

7 Peg Bennett, Lucienne Foulks, Amy Facey, James Manning, and Paul Prescott

8  
9 Administrative Team

10 Peter Warburton, Gerry St. Amand, Porter Dodge, and Betty Shankel

11  
12 Minute Taker

13 Beth Penney

14  
15 **PUBLIC HEARING**

16  
17 Ms. Bennett called the public hearing to order at 7:01pm. She reminded the public  
18 that the Deliberative Session is on February 1<sup>st</sup> and the vote is on March 11<sup>th</sup>.

19  
20 Ms. Bennett introduced the other board members and Superintendent Peter  
21 Warburton

22  
23 Mr. Warburton introduced the administration and minute taker on stage and the  
24 SAU personnel in the audience.

25  
26 Ms. Bennett discussed the commitments determined by the board. Ms. Bennett  
27 discussed each commitment and how they are included in the budget and warrant  
28 articles.

29  
30 Ms. Bennett discussed Article 11, the election of two board members.

31  
32 Ms. Bennett discussed Article 12 the operating budget of \$24,327,452 dollars.  
33 This is a decrease of \$31,120 or 0.13% decrease from the FY14 voted budget.

34  
35 Ms. Bennett discussed the budget initiatives included on slide 5 in the presentation.  
36 She explained the facility and maintenance initiatives as shown on slide 6 in the  
37 presentation.

38  
39 Ms. Bennett explained the budget summary and where costs show decreases and  
40 increases. She gave reasoning for each increase and decrease. The Expendable Trust  
41 Fund is at its balance of \$100,000 so the trust does not need to be added to in FY15.  
42 The operating budget was developed with the help of the superintendent, building  
43 administration, and SAU department heads. The board and the Ways and Means  
44 Committee looked at all the lines of the budget and changes were made based on  
45 recommendations from the Ways and Means. This budget represents diligent fiscal

46 oversight and supports our commitments to elementary and middle school  
47 excellence and strategic planning.

48

49 Ms. Foulks discussed balancing enrollments and staffing. FY15 shows continued  
50 decreasing enrollments. She discussed the expansion of the pre-K program, the  
51 addition of a staff member, and the success of the program. AMS has a declining  
52 enrollment because of the large graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. In FY15, the number of  
53 classes in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be reduced and this will be accomplished through  
54 attrition of staff.

55

56 Ms. Foulks discussed the SAU 39 budget, which is shared with the three school  
57 districts: Mont Vernon, Amherst, and Souhegan. Each district gets a piece of the SAU  
58 budget. She discussed the functions of the SAU and how one person directs the  
59 function across the districts rather than having one person at each building. The  
60 SAU provides greater efficiency and a lower cost to the taxpayers. The declining  
61 enrollments have no impact on the SAU budget. She discussed the increases and  
62 decreases in the SAU budget.

63

64 Mr. Prescott discussed the revenue summary. He explained how the tax rate is  
65 calculated. The expenditures are down, but the revenue is down also which means  
66 that the tax rate will increase. He discussed the changes in revenue from FY14. A  
67 large portion of this was a payment from the LGC refund. The tax rate impact will be  
68 \$12.24 per \$1,000, which is an increase of \$0.08 over FY14.

69

70 Mr. Manning discussed what a default budget is and how it is calculated as described  
71 in the presentation on slides 19 and 20. If the budget does not pass, the default  
72 budget is lower by \$360,252 and many items are at risk. These items at risk include  
73 the literacy and math textbooks and resources, the ability to conduct the Smarter  
74 Balance exam which is the test for the new state standards, new telephones at  
75 Clark/Wilkins, technology infrastructure, salary increases to non-union personnel,  
76 repairs of the gym roof at AMS, and the removal of the portables. The default budget  
77 amounts to \$23,967,200.

78

79 Mark Vincent introduced the Ways and Means Committee. The committee worked  
80 through the budget line by line, they asked questions, and made suggestions that  
81 were incorporated into the budget. The committee supports the FY15 Operating  
82 Budget unanimously.

83

84 Mr. Manning thanked the Ways and Means Committee for all of their hard work.

85

86 Ms. Bennett discussed Article 13, the Amherst Education Association Agreement  
87 (AEA). Last year there was no agreement and teachers are working this year  
88 without a contract. She discussed the increases as on slide 25 in the presentation.  
89 This is a two-year agreement. The agreement allows for several changes as shown  
90 on slide 26 in the presentation. She discussed cost items with the new agreement in  
91 year 1 as in the presentation on slide 27. Teachers are not receiving back pay for

92 this non-contract year. She discussed the cost of the second year of the agreement as  
93 shown on slide 28 in the presentation. The tax impact for Article 13 is \$0.21 per  
94 \$1000. She stated that she is very happy to have reached an agreement with the  
95 teachers. The agreement supports the school, the students, and the board. Amherst  
96 has some of the best teachers in the state and the board values them greatly.

97  
98  
99

Ms. Bennett discussed Article 14.

100 Mark Vincent stated that the Ways and Means Committee unanimously supports the  
101 agreement in Article 13. They agree that this contract is fair for the AEA and the  
102 taxpayers. It is very important to have these agreements.

103

104 Ms. Facey discussed Article 15, to establish and fund a Capital Reserve for Special  
105 Education. The goal is to add \$50,000 a year till \$250,000 is reached. She discussed  
106 the reasoning for this fund to support unanticipated costs, which can have adverse  
107 effects on the budget. The tax impact of Article 15 will be \$0.03 per \$1,000.

108

109 Mark Vincent stated that the Ways and Means Committee unanimously supports  
110 this article and support Capital Reserves for unexpected expenses.

111

112 Ms. Facey discussed Article 16.

113

114 Ms. Facey summarized the board commitments and expressed that the budget and  
115 warrant articles support these commitments. She asked the audience for questions  
116 and comments. There were none.

117

118 Ms. Facey closed the Public Hearing at 7:39pm.

119

## 120 **REGULAR MEETING**

121

122 **Mr. Manning made a motion to put Article 12 on the FY15 Warrant. Mr.**  
123 **Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

124

125 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to put Article 13 on the FY15 Warrant. Ms. Bennett**  
126 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

127

128 **Mr. Manning made a motion to put Article 14 on the FY15 Warrant. Mr.**  
129 **Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

130

131 **Ms. Facey made a motion to put Article 15 on the FY15 Warrant. Mr. Prescott**  
132 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

133

134 **Mr. Manning made a motion to support the passage of Article 12 as presented**  
135 **at the Public Hearing. Ms. Foulks seconded the motion and the vote was**  
136 **unanimous.**

137

138 **Ms. Bennett made a motion to support the passing of Article 13 as presented at**  
139 **the Public Hearing. Ms. Foulks seconded the motion and the vote was**  
140 **unanimous.**

141  
142 **Mr. Manning made a motion to support the passing of Article 14 as presented**  
143 **at the Public Hearing. Ms. Facey seconded the motion and the vote was**  
144 **unanimous.**

145  
146 **Ms. Facey made a motion to support the passing of Article 15 as presented at**  
147 **the Public Hearing. Mr. Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was**  
148 **unanimous.**

149  
150 Ms. Heimarck discussed the dilemma of the postponed in-service days, which were  
151 in the middle of a strategic plan for the year to support the Common Core State  
152 Standards in Literacy. The cancelation of these days impacts work that is going to  
153 happen in March. They can not make up the two days for before end of year, but  
154 propose making up one by using February 17<sup>th</sup>, Presidents day. This is a change in  
155 the student calendar. The leadership team agreed this is a better day to keep  
156 learning intact and may have the smallest impact on families because many people  
157 have the day off since it is a federal holiday. The Souhegan board voted and agreed  
158 to use February 17<sup>th</sup> to make up an in-service day. The chairs of all of the boards  
159 have agreed also. A day will be added for students at the end of the school year.

160  
161 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to approve the proposed in-service day on February**  
162 **17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

163  
164 **Ms. Facey made a motion adjourn the meeting at 7:51pm. Mr. Prescott**  
165 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

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