

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

3
4 **ATTENDANCE**

5
6 Amherst School Board

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

8
9 Administrative Team

10 Peter Warburton, Gerry St. Amand, Porter Dodge, Betty Shankel, Nicole Heimarck, Meg
11 Beauchamp, Christine Landwehrle, Bruce Charkin

12
13 Minute Taker

14 Beth Penney (till 7:02pm and editing of minutes); Amy Facey (7:02 pm-9:05pm)

15
16 **CALL TO ORDER**

17 Ms. Foulks called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

18 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

19 Principals' reports

20 Mr. St. Amand stated that 1st grade teacher Amanda Eaton is up for Teacher of the Year
21 and she donated a kidney to her father recently also. The Ellen Show was contacted about
22 her and they came to the school on Wednesday. He thinks this will be posted on the blog
23 and not on the show. He is not sure when it will be on the blog, but it could be tomorrow
24 or next week. He is very proud of Amanda and the donation of the kidney is significant.

25 Mr. Prescott asked about the technology training and how well it was attended.

26 Mr. Charkin stated that there were about 20 attendees for both sessions. There has been a
27 lot of positive response for one happening next week.

28 Mr. Dodge thanked Mr. Charkin for doing the trainings.

29 Mr. Prescott asked a question about how the integration of technology by each teacher is
30 going.

31 Mr. Dodge stated that the expectation is by years end and he will check in to get the
32 information. The administration offered the teachers 15 sample things they could do to
33 integrate technology.

34 Mr. Prescott stated that this is a great expectation and way to let teachers decide what
35 they want to do.

36 Mr. Dodge stated that the computer labs are being used and teachers are speaking with

37 others to better understand if the work is true integration of the technology.
38 Mr. Manning asked about the Wilkins to AMS transition.
39 Mr. St. Amand stated there is a new video and it is excellent and well done.
40 Mr. Dodge stated the video is shorter and set the tone for the evening. It was a much
41 smoother evening and the feedback was great. There were more kids in the panels, also.
42 Mr. Warburton asked to have the video shown at the next meeting.

43 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

44 No public present.

45 **CONSENT AGENDA**

46 Ms. Bennett asked to pull the April minutes.

47 Ms. Bennett stated that Line 92 and 97 should be deleted

48 Mr. Manning asked to change Line 38: change all to many

49 **Mr. Prescott made motion to accept the Consent Agenda containing the amended**
50 **minutes for April 17, 2014, Treasurer's report for April 2014, Donation to Student**
51 **Activities \$325.54 from BAE Systems Program, Donation to General Fund \$1,000.00**
52 **from E & R Dutile Family Fund/Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, and Leave of**
53 **Absence request. Mr. Manning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

54 **ACTION ITEMS**

55 AEA agreement signing

56 Ms. Bennett made a motion to authorize the board chair and the superintendent to sign
57 the agreement between the board and the Amherst Education Association. Ms. Facey
58 seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

59 Mr. Warburton passed around paintings from Ms. Zahl's students. The painting represent
60 their and responses to the symphony trip.

61 Diligent Fiscal Oversight: Current Year Budget Savings request

62 Ms. Foulks stated that this is a security updates request.

63 Ms. Shankel stated that when the cameras were bought at AMS they did not buy the best
64 cameras. The cameras have not lasted as long and do not have great performance. The
65 school has been band-aiding the system. Officer Knox worked with Mr. Miner and Mr.
66 Dodge to determine what the school really needs. The old analog system needs to be

67 updated and is currently not reliable. This is a request for a whole new system, which will
68 improve range and coverage. She discussed other items that needed to be updated for
69 security, including replacing the phone system in both Clark and Wilkins. This is already
70 in the budget. The phone system at AMS was going to be put in for next years budget.
71 The replacement of the cameras at AMS is a priority. There is a large surplus and all of
72 this work could be done. The total cost would be \$177,500.

73 Ms. Facey asked if this was put out to bid and if there is cost saving from doing the three
74 schools at once.

75 Ms. Shankel stated that they looked at the vendor they have and got quotes. They will
76 put this out to bid, because they always get 3 bids unless they cannot get appropriate
77 vendors.

78 Officer Knox stated that there are other vendors, but the timing could be an issue. The
79 vendor discussed that there could be cost savings if the school used other equipment.

80 Ms. Foulks stated that there are different lens and the cameras at Clark Wilkins could be
81 maintained.

82 Officer Knox stated that the new system would get rid of the analog signals. He
83 discussed the cost of replacing the current DVR and how the equipment is failing. AMS
84 has over 75% of the building that is not covered by any camera. The new system would
85 reduce the number of domes. The 180 degree cameras are very expensive. There are
86 special lenses, which cover 132 degrees. The 132 degree cameras would be the cost
87 savings and this system can be built upon in the future. The current DVR runs on XP,
88 which is no longer supported.

89 Ms. Facey asked if it was necessary to have 100% of the building under camera view.
90 She asked if the new system is being designed to look at the areas that need to be looked
91 at.

92 Officer Knox stated that they do not need surveillance for the entire building. The
93 thresholds, common areas, cafeteria, and a few other spaces are the most important. He
94 does not recommend changing the coverage at this time. The change is not an expansion
95 of the current system. The view of some of the current cameras is subpar. The number of
96 camera heads will go down and the coverage will be same or slightly higher.

97 Mr. Prescott stated that the cost is for technology not coverage. He asked if the 132
98 degree lenses impede the ability for Officer Knox to do his job.

99 Officer Knox stated that he no experience with that lens, which is a fish eye. This lens
100 would be comparable to what the current cameras offer, but would be digital.

101 Ms. Foulks stated that the cost of \$177,000 is for the phones and 180 degree cameras.

102 She asked if the board was willing to spend \$100,000 for 130 degree cameras if the
103 cameras are only marginally better. If the board uses the surplus this will help with next
104 year's budget.

105 Ms. Shankel stated that this will not increase the budget next year and will be able to give
106 back the surplus and not negatively impact the taxes in future years when comparing
107 surpluses. She stated that the Clark/Wilkins phones could be done this year and the
108 following year put in the phone system at AMS. Those phone systems have been in the
109 schools for a long time.

110 Ms. Bennett stated that the technology is not supported for the phones and this is also a
111 security issue.

112 Ms. Shankel stated that there is a large surplus going back to the taxpayers even if the
113 board chooses to do this system upgrade. If the district did not have such a large surplus
114 the administration would only ask for one or two of the items.

115 Ms. Bennett stated that the board is in a situation to take care of these items.

116

117 Ms. Shankel stated that this plan comprehensive.

118

119 **Mr. Prescott made a motion to provide the funds from the budget savings to**
120 **upgrade the cameras in both Clark/Wilkins and AMS and the phone system at AMS**
121 **for the amount not to exceed \$177,500. Ms. Bennett seconded the motion and the**
122 **vote was unanimous.**

123

124 Commitment Reports

125

126 Ms. Bennett discussed the Diligent Fiscal Oversight and the work on the budget manual.
127 It has been a great experience. There has been lots of turnover and the board had not
128 memorialized the procedures. Beth has had a big part in this and the process is now in
129 place. There are a few areas to make better, because the board has to tighten the
130 procedures. The board is very fortunate that the only change has been the director of
131 finance.

132

133 Ms. Facey discussed that the survey that is being used to gather data from the pilot
134 participants went out to the observed and the observers last week and is due tomorrow.
135 On the 27th, a subcommittee will collect and analyze the data from the surveys. The
136 Writing Subcommittee has completed a cross walk of the Standards for Effective
137 Teaching and the observation tool, Thoughtful Classroom. The subcommittee found this
138 tool to be well aligned with the school's standards. The tool actually alerted the
139 subcommittee to some gaps in the standards that need to be adjusted. An additional
140 survey called a Needs Assessment was sent out to all staff asking for their experience
141 with evaluation prior to this pilot. The data from this survey will provide the committee
142 with information on what the needs are in the area of observation and assist with the
143 implementation plan.

144

145 In June, the committee will hear the presentations on the survey results, cross walk, as
146 well as the results of a book study group who has reviewed 2 text resources for
147 Thoughtful Classroom.

148

149 Ms. Facey discussed the State Standards for Literacy. K-8 teachers met and did lesson
150 planning on close reading lessons and developed text dependent questions. Their work is
151 being sent to David Pook who will provide the teachers with feedback including
152 recommendations for improvement. Linda Farrington presented a close reading activity
153 where she gave students a complex text and used the text dependent questions to support
154 the students in deeply examining the text. She was very happy to see the perseverance
155 and engagement from her students in this activity. Linda is actually continuing this great
156 work with Liz Manolis to develop additional lessons that integrate subjects.

158 There is a professional development day June 20 for all teachers in CCSS literacy and
159 grades 7-12 for math resource training. The Literacy Institute k-12 will be this summer
160 on June 23-26. This is optional but teachers will be compensated to develop lessons for
161 next year.

162

163 Ms. Bennett asked how the subcommittee identified gaps in the standards.

164

165 Ms. Landwehrle noted that these are the teacher standards and not the common core state
standards.

166

167 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

168 Regional SPED Report

169

170 Mr. Warburton spoke about the Comparison of Selected Educational Expenditures
171 revenues and Services for the Bow District. The administration will do an analysis of the
172 report and the numbers. Once this is done they will give a presentation to the Board.

173

174 Ms. Beauchamp stated that the administration needs time to go through the report in
175 depth and verify the data for reliability and make sure it is not misrepresented.

176

177 Mr. Warburton stated that the report is posted on the Bow website.

178

179 Mr. Prescott stated the numbers are from the SAU posts. The board needs to make sure
180 our numbers are reliable and valid.

181

182 Mr. Warburton stated that the analysis would provide reliable and valid numbers.

183 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

184 LGC Surplus

185
186 Ms. Shankel reminded the Board that that the LGC did not go up by the estimated 4.4%,
187 it going to be reduced by 3.1%. A conservative calculation will result in a \$275,000
188 savings for FY15. There will also be a \$15,000 savings with the removal of the portables
189 at the start of the year. Later in the agenda there are extra-curricular costs totaling
190 \$100,000.
191
192 Ms. Landwehrle spoke about having a STEM or STEAM coordinator for 1 year to
193 support professional development (PD) and explore curriculum costs to implement this
194 program.
195
196 Ms. Bennett asked if there is enough PD time to implement this.
197
198 Ms. Landwehrle stated that it depends how the PD is structured. The focus of the PD
199 would be to support the shift in thinking and curriculum that is involved in implementing
200 STEM or STEAM.
201
202 Mr. Prescott asked how effective this plan would be in only one year. The goals are
203 materials needed, costs assessments, how curriculum would change, pre package or
204 teachers develop, training through PD, research, and the next steps what needs to be done
205 to make this happen.
206
207 Ms. Landwehrle said that the first year would be 1 person dedicated to this to move this
208 project more quickly.
209
210 Mr. Warburton said that the schools need someone who has lots of knowledge to
211 implement this. The Board and the administration need to have lots of conversations
212 about this. That can be done in a month.
213
214 Ms. Landwehrle stated that a September hire would be great.
215
216 Ms. Shankel stated that the funding would start July 1. At a minimum the SAU would put
217 an anticipated opening out soon. The salary and benefits would be in the vicinity of
218 \$100,000. This position needs a real self-starter.
219
220 Mr. Warburton stated that they are looking for someone outside the district, preferably.
221
222 Ms. Facey asked to tell the SAU Strategic Planning Committee that the Board is looking
223 at asking the team to look at STEM or STEAM for Amherst District.
224
225 The Board and the administration discussed their concerns including the time frame for
226 the hire, asking staff to figure out how to make this happen, and having the bandwidth
227 after this new STEAM/STEM person leaves. The board discussed the need to do this to
228 help the students be productive in the world. Sometimes there is a need to take a risk.
229 This is a leadership opportunity. The schools are ready to lead the way with
230 STEM/STEAM.

231
232 Mr. Manning discussed if the administration has any ideas on personnel.
233
234 Mr. Warburton stated that they have some potential ideas.
235
236 Ms. Foulks stated that there is a non-public session at the end of the meeting.

237 **ACTION ITEMS**

238 Elementary and Middle School Excellence: 2014-15 proposed co-curricular & athletic
239 activities

240
241 The presentation was on co-curricular activities and given by Mr. Dodge and Mr. St.
242 Amand. The presentation was included in the agenda packet.

243
244 Mr. Dodge and Mr. St. Amand acknowledged all of the hard work and proposals by the
245 staff and the staff who worked on this proposal. They discussed former AMS teachers
246 who have a good grasp of the after school activities and want to recognize these teachers
247 who are leading the way at the elementary level.

248
249 Ms. Foulks asked for questions and said that the board needs to discuss approving this
250 spending.

251
252 Ms. Shankel stated that \$27,520 would be spent from this year's budget and the
253 remainder would come from next year's budget.

254
255 Ms. Bennett asked if there are too many clubs or activities and if the proposal is too
256 aggressive. She asked to find out by the next board meeting, which clubs would be a go.

257
258 Ms. Bennett made a motion to add extra-curricular activities at Clark/Wilkins and AMS
259 starting in the fiscal year 14 and to not to exceed \$27,520 in spending this year and to not
260 exceed \$95,109 in FY15. Mr. Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

261
262 The board thanked Mr. Dodge and Mr. St. Amand for all of their hard work.

263 **At 8:55 the board went into a Non-Public Session under NON-PUBLIC SESSION**
264 **under RSA 91-A:3 II. (a)(b)(c). Manning yes, Prescott yes, Bennett yes, Foulks yes,**
265 **Facey yes**

266
267 The Non-public session was to discuss a student matter.

268
269 **Mr. Manning made a motion to come out of non-public session. Mr. Prescott**
270 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

271
272 **Mr. Prescott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05pm. Mr. Manning**
273 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

274