

1 **Amherst School Board**  
2 **Tuesday, June 18, 2013**

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, Pam Gross, Renea Sparks

11  
12 Minute Taker

13 Beth Penney  
14

15 **CALL TO ORDER**

16 Ms. Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

17 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

18 Clark/Wilkins Writing Festival

19 Mr. St. Amand introduced Ms. McIntyre, who explained this annual event where grades  
20 1-4 each student produces a book and pre-k and kindergarten produce class books.

21 Ms. Niland explained picture writing in 1<sup>st</sup> grade and Marjorie Vincent read her  
22 watercolor poem to the board. She also read her image-making book “Mouse and Dog  
23 Get Stuck in a Tree” by Marjorie Vincent to the board and shared About the Author.

24 Ms. Bevilacqua explained how picture writing is different in second grade and how  
25 students use watercolors to create things in Nature and to explain how the sky and time of  
26 day affects weather. The students wrote a collection of poems or descriptive writings.

27 Hadley Harris and Aiden Eastlane each shared two of their descriptive writings and  
28 About the Author.

29 Ms. Kelndorfer explained realistic fiction, personal narrative, and creative writing in 3<sup>rd</sup>  
30 grade. Some of the work was tied to work in World Peace Day Pinwheels from Art. The  
31 students created Poems to go along with Peace.

32 Kristen Ledoux-Jodice shared her Peace Poem and Jasmine Carwellos shared her poem  
33 about snow.

34 Mr. Kidder’s 4<sup>th</sup> grade class used a program to make electronic books called Story  
35 Jumper. For the writing festival the students did authentic writing with no prompts.

36 Ethan Ramm read his book “Steve vs. King Piggy”.

37 Khyriana Fairbanks read her book “Couture Key”.

38 Ms. McIntyre stated that 30 years ago was the first writing festival, which use to be 2  
39 hours long now the festival is 2 days long. The festival celebrates the reading and writing  
40 that our students do.

41 Ms. Foulks thanked the students and teachers for sharing. She stated that the writing  
42 festival is her favorite part of the year and a good way to celebrate spring. She was  
43 impressed by the fantastic vocabulary of 1<sup>st</sup> graders. She stated that the individual voices  
44 are wonderful and she hopes all of the students continue writing. She thanked the  
45 teachers for the various ways and types of writing they offer the kids.

46 The board thanked the students.

47 Mr. Warburton introduced Jim Hendrix, who came to the board with a request to name  
48 the diamond at Spaulding Field. They met and put a committee together by policy. The  
49 committee met and voted unanimously to recommend to the board that the diamond be  
50 named after Bill Johnson. Nancy Head, Tom Grella, and Rick Katsinburg were also on  
51 the committee. There will be a plaque and a dedication where his family can come.  
52 They would also like to have a pick up game for an inning.

53 Jim Hendrix stated that he grew up in Amherst and knew Bill and his 6 kids. There was a  
54 method to everything Bill did and it was all about community and family. He started and  
55 funded the town’s Little League and he started the Amherst Recreation Commission.  
56 This was a good choice for the town to start Little League to help kids make good healthy  
57 life style choices. The kids who played sports all went on to high school and college.

58 **Mr. Prescott made the motion to name the diamond of Spaulding Field after Bill**  
59 **Johnson. Ms. Foulks seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

60 Mr. Manning suggested asking the Eagle Scouts to update the Spaulding Field sign.

61 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

62 Principals’ reports

63 The board and the administrators discussed that Greek week was going well besides the  
64 weather and that the outdoor classroom will be the new venue for the plays. They also  
65 discussed that there were over 100 students recognized during the Academic Recognition  
66 night and more students than ever with straight A’s. They discussed the 6<sup>th</sup> grade DARE  
67 graduation and how it was a great night with a Canine Unit show and the show also  
68 explained how work with forensics is done. Sarah Arnold is the new DARE officer and  
69 she did a great job and the kids liked her.

70 The board discussed transition changes with the principals. Small groups of students

71 visited AMS before step-up day and Mr. Dodge went to every 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom to  
72 meet the students and answer questions. The students loved the visit. The AMS band  
73 and chorus also went to Wilkins to perform. They would like to look at a shadow day for  
74 next year and have listened to parent feedback about how to change the evening program.  
75 There is also lots of other stuff happening in the background and with Special Education,  
76 Mont Vernon 6<sup>th</sup> graders, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders to the high school. They discussed how they  
77 have seen more AMS teachers at SHS, which is good to see.

78 The board discussed the enrollment in kindergarten as being 97 students this year and  
79 there are already 94 students for next year and 108 projected to start the year. First grade  
80 has about 118 and pre-school has a waiting list. The Preschool has not hurt The  
81 Preschool in the Village because they have lots of enrollments and need more room. The  
82 board also discussed how The Preschool in the Village has helped to support the Clark  
83 Preschool by providing care after the Clark school day ends.

84 **PUBLIC TIME**

85 No public present.

86 **CONSENT AGENDA**

87 Ms. Foulks asked to pull the minutes.

88 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda containing Unanticipated**  
89 **Revenue- Donation to the AMS Student Activity Fund-Ahold Financial-\$18.86,**  
90 **Budget transfer, Occupational Therapy Services RFP, and the Auditor's Award-**  
91 **Vachon Clukay & Company PC-\$33,150. Ms. Facey seconded the motion and the**  
92 **vote was unanimous.**

93 Ms. Foulks asked to change the spelling of Ms. McIntyre's name to Kathi on line 51 and  
94 52.

95 Ms. Bennett stated that the presentation on the test results last meeting was one of the  
96 best the board had ever had. The Board agreed.

97 Ms. Sparks stated that she recommend the use of Boothbee Therapy Services for the RFP.

98 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept the minutes for May 23, 2013 as amended. Mr.**  
99 **Prescott seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

100 **DISCUSSION ITEM**

101 Baboosic Lake property

102 Mr. Warburton stated that constituents from the school and the town have met. There is a

103 ways to go for work and research. There is another meeting planned. He will have more  
104 information at the August meeting and many of the conversations will be in Non-public  
105 because of contractual items and people's names will be involved. Mr. Warburton has a  
106 meeting with Dwight Brew and Jim O'Mara to discuss next steps.

107 Dress Code

108 Mr. Dodge stated that this is a proposed dress code. AMS has had a struggle with he  
109 current dress code and many principals are also struggling. Some schools have strict  
110 dress codes, but AMS is trying to present something that is actionable and fair. This  
111 proposal was brought forward to the Parent Partnership and for 2 meetings they had a  
112 lively discussion to come up with the current draft proposal. This dress code allows the  
113 school to hold kids accountable and have the parents support from home. A lot of work  
114 has gone into this proposal with parent involvement. This is a fair and appropriate  
115 document. What everyone feels is inappropriate dress is different and most of the issues  
116 are with girls showing mid-riffs and cleavage, short shorts and short skirts.

117 Ms. Gross stated that the old policy was very wordy. The goal is to not have clothing that  
118 distracts students in the classroom and in the cafeteria. The administration went to every  
119 website where kids shop and found there are short shorts, mid shorts, and long shorts.  
120 The short shorts are the issue.

121 Mr. Dodge stated that there was lots of push back on the previous version of the dress  
122 code by parents and all parents agreed to this version of the dress code.

123 The board discussed the proposed Dress Code at length including what is considered tight  
124 clothing, how middle school students are developmentally different than high school  
125 students, the dress code is discussed with all of the students 4 times per year, how  
126 students are helped to understand that the code is about self respect and dignity and not  
127 about punishment, and about whether this was a policy or procedure and it is a procedure.

128 The board also discussed how teachers approach students who violate the dress code and  
129 discussed creating a procedure on how to do that. They also discussed professional  
130 development for teachers around approaching students about the dress code, how the goal  
131 is never to embarrass students, and to give teachers the confidence to address Dress Code  
132 violations.

133 Ms. Gross stated that they would meet with kids, discuss with teachers, and have a  
134 uniform way to address Dress Code violations next year.

135 Mr. Dodge stated that the goal is to enforce this so there is less distraction and less issues.  
136 Some boys are even going to guidance about the dress of girls because they are  
137 distracted. If the proposed Dress Code does not work they can address it again with the  
138 Parent Partnership.

139 Mr. Warburton stated that the school needs confidence in the procedure, the staff will be  
140 educated in what it means, and the board will be updated next year.

141 The board and Mr. Dodge discussed the possibility of uniforms in future years. Mr.  
142 Dodge would never like to see that happen and thinks the community would have a huge  
143 push back on that idea.

144 Mr. Prescott stated that the administration did a great job facilitating the discussion with  
145 the parents.

146 Mr. Dodge stated that there was great feedback from parents and discussed how  
147 important the feedback was.

148 **INFORMATIONAL**

149 Mike Akillian - Town Liaison to Amherst School Board

150 Mr. Warburton stated that he would give Mr. Akillian minutes and agendas from the  
151 board.

152 Mr. Akillian thanked the board for having him. The past liaison had little connection and  
153 collaboration with the board. Now the board and the selectman are already looking at  
154 strategic planning and working with the CIP team. He would like to see more  
155 collaboration. The town is undertaking bold initiatives and a press release will go out  
156 next week about them. The first is to build engagement between the town government  
157 and everyone else in the town. There are 3 goals: ensure citizens feel informed of  
158 decisions, engage citizens more regularly than at the deliberative sessions, and to identify  
159 service citizens would like to draw from online for transactions. The town has 5 websites  
160 and all of the sites need a lot of work. The selectman are putting together a survey using  
161 Survey Monkey to get feedback about the sites and to measure what the town is already  
162 doing that is engaging people. They would also like to use social media more often. The  
163 other initiative is Strategic Planning for FY15. The town departments are working on lists  
164 of new initiative for many years out and the initial plans and line item impacts will be  
165 done by the end of August. By October all departments will offer a number of budget  
166 scenarios to the selectman. The selectmen are trying to identify 5 or 6 strategic filters to  
167 use to look at the budget scenarios. An example filters could be the quality of life. They  
168 will also look back over the last 10 years for investments and where there have not been  
169 many investments.

170 Mr. Warburton stated that these initiatives have not been presented to the board and it is  
171 very helpful to know where the town is. The school district is looking at all their  
172 websites also and the selectmen should sit down with Bruce Chakrin to discuss the  
173 websites.

174 The board and Mr. Akillian discussed the sharing ideas about filters because some of  
175 them may over lap and then each group will better understand how the other's budget is  
176 put together. They can also use this connection between the selectmen and the board to  
177 have more touch points and be visibly more collaborative to the citizens.

178 Mr. Warburton stated that in other districts, once a year, the board of selectmen and the  
179 school boards meet together. Mr. Akillian will come back in August to give an update.

180 Mr. Warburton stated that Bruce Chakrin needs a vote on the technology plan presented  
181 last meeting to get eRate funds. Bruce will present changes to that plan to the board 3  
182 times a year, starting in September.

183 **Mr. Manning made a motion to approve the Technology plan as presented last**  
184 **meeting and allow that plan to be posted on the website. Ms. Facey seconded the**  
185 **motion and the vote was unanimous.**

186 Ms. Bennett asked the board for moment of silence for George Infanti who was amazing  
187 and gave a lot to the community.

188 **Mr. Manning made a motion to go into NON-PUBLIC SESSION – RSA 91-A:3 II.**  
189 **(a) (b) (c) at 8:25pm. Ms. Facey seconded the motion and the roll call was all yes.**

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