

1 **AMHERST SCHOOL BOARD**
2 **TUESDAY, AUGUST 23, 2011**

3
4 **ATTENDANCE**

5
6 Amherst School Board:

7 Peter Maresco, Peg Bennett, Lucienne Foulks, Nancy Head, James Manning

8
9 Administrative Team:

10 Peter Warburton, Porter Dodge, Gerry St. Amand, Nicole Heimarck, Renea Sparks

11
12 Minutes Taker

13 Beth Penney

Call to Order

14
15 **CALL TO ORDER**

16
17 Ms. Bennett called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

18
19 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Announcements

20
21 Introduction of new Superintendent and School Board Member

22
23 Ms. Bennett introduced the new Superintendent, Peter Warburton.

24
25 Ms. Bennett also introduced, Nancy Head, who is filling a 7-month seat for Drew Zell
26 who moved out of town. In March the seat will open.

27
28 Superintendent's Report

29
30 Mr. Warburton stated this is his 6th week in the district. He was at AMS this morning
31 meeting with the kitchen and wellness staff. He has also met with a number of groups
32 and has enjoyed everyone.

33
34 Principals' Reports

35
36 Mr. Maresco asked if the preschool would begin on the 29th.

37
38 Ms. Sparks stated yes, they have 18 students with more than 50% being same age peers.
39 The SAU has received state approval for both the setting for pre k-8 district and the
40 special education approval in case the numbers dip down, but this is not expected. People
41 are becoming more and more interested in the program. She thanked the board for their
42 support and the staff has been wonderful and generous with their time. She also thanked
43 Jim Miner and Tara April in the office. It has been a nice effort on everyone's part.

44
45 Mr. Maresco asked if their had been some work over the summer to discuss Core and
46 More.

47 Mr. Dodge stated yes, the Core and More committee met this summer and will present to
48 the board when they are ready. They are starting school with a much more structured
49 program.

50
51 Mr. Maresco and Mr. Dodge discussed why there are so many more students in the 2 year
52 advanced math in 7th grade. Mr. Dodge and Ms. Heimarck clarified that the evaluation to
53 get into the class had not changed nor had the standards been lowered. Mr. Dodge said
54 he would get specific numbers and have a better understanding for the next meeting.

55
56 Ms. Head and Mr. St. Amand discussed the number of students enrolled at Clark and
57 Wilkins and that it is what was expected.

58
59 Ms. Bennett thanked to the two teachers who organized and ran the Chinese exchange
60 program this summer. The board and Mr. Warburton discussed some of their experiences
61 and how great a program it was.

62
63 Update on Clark Elementary School Re-roofing

64
65 Mr. St. Amand stated that the project is close to being completed.

66
67 SAU #39 Summer Mathematics Institute

68
69 Ms. Heimarck stated that the Institute kicked off yesterday with 58 teachers. Monday
70 was a K-12 day, working on vocabulary in Mathematics. Today's focus was curriculum
71 and pedagogy for K-2. The workshop explored non-negotiable expectations. Ms.
72 Heimarck read some teachers reflections from the end of the today. She stated that
73 tomorrow's focus is on grades through 3-6 looking at fractions, multiplication, and
74 division. Thursday's workshop is focused on grades 7- 12th looking at algebra and
75 helping to fill gaps for students. The day will end with a discussion about a 5th-12th
76 grade integrated math program. Friday is a work session day. Professor Sharma's next
77 steps, as Mathematician in residence for the year, are to come for four days at the end of
78 September, December and February to work directly with teachers in a coaching capacity
79 and work with administrators and math coaches to help build a support structure.

80
81 Mr. Maresco asked how the board could help to get the word out to parents.

82
83 Ms. Heimarck stated that she has developed a road map for change and is giving it to
84 faculty on Friday. She will also give it to the school board and post it on the website. She
85 is also working on articles for the Amherst Citizen. She stated that Dr. Sharma's
86 presentation on June 1st would be on the cable access channel sometime in September.

87
88 Committee Assignment – Expendable Trust

89
90 Ms. Bennett stated that the board needs another person to be on the Expendable Trust,
91 and she asked Nancy Head to be the second member till her term is up in March.

92

93 Ms. Shankel reminded the board that they also need 5 community members and 2
94 alternative community members for this committee. These positions need to be filled
95 between now and March. She asked the board to lobby the community to be part of the
96 committee. She stated there is about \$30,000 left in the trust after using the money to
97 help fix the roof at Clark. She stated they would be looking at adding money to it in the
98 next budget.

99
100 **PUBLIC TIME**

Public Time

101
102 No public present.

103
104 **CONSENT AGENDA**

Consent Agenda

105
106 **Ms. Head made a motion to accept the consent agenda containing the Minutes for**
107 **June 16, 2011& July 22, 2011, Treasurer’s Report for June 2011 & July 2011, 457**
108 **Plan Amendments, Unanticipated Revenue: Special Revenue Fund Donation from**
109 **Junior Women's Club for AMS stage lighting \$1496.49 and Grant from United Way**
110 **for Reading Plus Program \$3000, Budget transfer, and Request for Leave of**
111 **Absence. Mr. Maresco seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous, except**
112 **Ms. Head abstained**

113
114 **PRESENTATIONS**

Presentations

115
116 Italian Exchange – Suzanne Haldane

117
118 Mr. Dodge introduced Ms. Haldane, AMS’s library specialist, to the board.

119
120 Ms. Haldane introduced two students Meghan and Rosey.

121
122 Ms. Haldane stated that they are asking for the board’s blessing for this project. She
123 started communicating using Angel four or five years ago with a teacher and students in
124 Italy. They use Angel because it is a safe method because it is locked. They started by
125 having students conversing with each other. The students live 17 miles Northwest of
126 Florence in Tuscany and Ms. Haldane would like to take students there. Ms. Haldane
127 discussed what they have done with the Italian students over the years including surveys
128 about food, how their school day is run, and reading the same books. They found
129 similarities and differences. Our students even inspired a Thanksgiving dinner. They
130 have lots of conversations; have learned some Italian and the AMS students were helping
131 them to learn English. Ms. Haldane stated that if they go they would attend school on
132 Friday and half the day on Saturday. She is not asking the district for money and will
133 want to fundraise. Ms. Haldane explained what they would do while in Italy. She is
134 looking at taking 15 students and 5 adults during April vacation.

135
136 The board and Ms. Haldane discussed how they students were chosen to go and if anyone
137 would be excluded. She said that there are 15, 8th graders interested in going and that she
138 could take more if others were interested. They also discussed the adult to student ratio

139 and determined 5:1 was a good ratio for traveling internationally.
140
141 Meghan stated that she started with the Cultural Exchange program and loved it. She
142 stated that her peer in Italy and herself have a lot in common.
143
144 Rosey stated that it is a lot different to learn about a country from book than to go there
145 and experience it.
146
147 Ms. Bennett stated that if all regulations are met and insurances are in place, the board
148 approves of this trip.

149
150 Types of Presentations for 2011-12

151
152 The board discussed ideas for presentations they would like to hear this year including:

- 153
154 -Thoughts on 21st century learning
155 -Hear from teachers to get their perspectives on things like Math changes, and Literacy
156 going to the Scott Foresman
157 -Hear more from students
158 -Explore 4th grade NEWA scores also looking at 3rd through 5th grade scores
159 -Preschool presentation
160 -Full day Kindergarten
161 -Restructure of Core and More
162 -World Language Program
163 -Instructional Time, extended day, extended year
164 -Professional Development focused on goals of school/ SAU
165

166 Ms. Bennett stated that the board had a discussion about goals for the school board. The
167 board would like a work session at next meeting with the principals to have the school
168 goals aligned with the board's goals.

169
170 Mr. St. Amand stated he would bring school goals for the next meeting.

171
172 Mr. Warburton stated the idea is to have everyone involved in the process and move
173 forward as a whole SAU.

174
175 Mr. Manning discussed how things are presented. He would like to get a better sense on
176 a consistent basis where things are going, what miles stones were set and hit, and what
177 resources were used and needed. He wants to be able to see what we have achieved.

178
179 Ms. Sparks stated that the board should consider how it all relates to the FY13 budget
180 season because everything is tied to the allocation of resources. Timing of each
181 presentation should be looked at.

182
183 Mr. Dodge stated that the budget we build should reflect the goals set.
184

185 Mr. Manning, the board, and the administration discussed a strategic plan. They
186 determined they were in year five of a Literacy initiative. They discussed how there are
187 many elements of a strategic plan, but not a specific plan. Mr. Manning would like to see
188 a strategic plan established in order to prioritize goals and presentations.
189

190 **ACTION ITEMS**

Action Items

191

192 **DOE/MS 25**

193

194 Ms. Shankel explained the DOE/MS 25. She stated that this is un-audited and auditors
195 come in next month. These forms must be done now because the town needs to know the
196 surplus to set the tax rate. The forms must be in as of Sept. 1st. Ms. Shankel explained
197 the numbers, including the surplus of \$127,543, which is just over 0.5% of the budget.
198 She explained how the pension impacted the numbers and explained process of planning
199 for the pension costs. She also explained that the schools purchased \$207,000 worth of
200 items out of the FY12 budget and paid for them using the FY11 budget.
201

202

202 Ms. Shankel and the board discussed the high cost per student at Wilkins. She stated that
203 the figure is high because all of the retiring teachers were elementary teachers and the
204 SAU does not normally experience this. Also a lower number of students could attribute.
205 She stated that the per-student cost should go down next year.
206

207

207 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to authorize the school board chair and the**
208 **superintendent to sign the DOE/ MS 25. Mr. Maresco seconded the motion and the**
209 **vote was unanimous.**
210

211

211 Ms. Shankel thanked the director of finance and staff for getting the forms done on time.
212

213

213 **Late Resignation**

214

215 Mr. St. Amand told the board of two late resignations, the Technology teacher, Mary
216 Elizabeth Cregan, and the Clark Music teacher, Rachel Jackson. The school will be
217 interviewing tomorrow for these positions.
218

219

219 **Ms. Head made a motion to accept the resignations of Mary Elizabeth Cregan and**
220 **Rachel Jackson. Mr. Manning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**
221

222

222 **NOMINATIONS**

223

224 Mr. St. Amand introduced Barbra Carpenter as a superior choice for the preschool
225 program. She has experience establishing preschool programs. She has given advice and
226 asked for things already. She will be great. She welcomes the board to visit, because she
227 is open to having people in the classroom.
228

229

229 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept the nomination of Barbara Carpenter. Mr.**
230 **Manning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

231

232 **ADJOURN**

Adjourn

233

234 **Ms. Head made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:25pm. Mr. Manning seconded**
235 **the motion and the vote was unanimous.**