

1 **Amherst School Board**
2 **Thursday, January 5th, 2012**

3
4 **ATTENDANCE**

5
6 Amherst School Board

7 Peg Bennett, Lucienne Foulks, James Manning, Peter Maresco, and Nancy Head (arrived
8 at 6:42pm)

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10 Administrative Team

11 Peter Warburton, Porter Dodge, Gerry St. Amand, Renea Sparks, and Betty Shankel

12
13 Minutes Taker

14 Beth Penney

15
16 **CALL TO ORDER**

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

18 **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

19 Principals' Reports

20 Ms. Bennett asked about the staff and students making a smooth transition to the new
21 demands in 2012.

22 Mr. St. Amand stated that there were no new demands, but the perception is that the week
23 before and after break are hard, and this year they were easy.

24 Ms. Bennett asked about the text rendering protocol.

25 Mr. St. Amand stated that the staff read an article and looked for words, phrases, or
26 sentences that answered specific questions. The article they read was about the topic of
27 retention. This protocol allows for input from individuals in the school who would not
28 always be part of the conversation and allows everyone to contribute to the discussion.

29 Mr. St. Amand discussed that the professional development 14 of the staff has taken
30 about facilitated leadership allowing for fully trained people to facilitate small groups.

31 Ms. Bennett asked if there are going to be any trips to PMEC for the 2nd grade.

32 Mr. St. Amand stated that not for this month.

33 Mr. St. Amand announced the Geography Bee winners from the 4th grade. He stated that
34 eight 4th graders competed and the bee happens just in the 4th grade because the contest is
35 for 4th – 8th graders. The students do prepare and are given material over break to look at.
36 There is not a specific unit, but it is an activity for all 4th graders. There is a class
37 competition and a finalist is sent from every classroom. He stated he would invite the 8

38 runner-ups to come to the next meeting.

39 Ms. Bennett asked about the Culinary Arts Program.

40 Mr. St. Amand stated that Cathy Dushane runs it. There is a PTA grant to have the
41 program come to the school. There will be a whole school assembly incorporating food
42 and healthy lifestyles. Ms. Dushane has also gone into different classrooms by grade
43 level. Mr. St. Amand gave examples of what had been done last year. She also offers a
44 culinary class for middle school students through the recreation department.

45 Mr. Warburton stated that Cathy and Beth Lambert have written a book about nutrition
46 and are working on a curriculum about nutrition and healthy eating. The administrators
47 are hoping to get her to talk about this statewide and they will be meeting with the
48 administration next week.

49 Mr. Manning asked when the principals are going to report out about the goals.

50 Mr. Warburton stated that they would report out in February.

51 Mr. Manning asked about teacher evaluations.

52 Mr. St. Amand stated that the three administrators have done at least one formal or
53 informal evaluation of every staff member. The plan is to get to everyone three times.
54 The evaluations provide feedback and they are working to improve the forms they use.
55 The process has been well received. The teachers value the feedback and the evaluations
56 give value to the work they are doing. He stated that he would have a report for he
57 February meeting about the other school goals.

58 Mr. Dodge stated that at AMS they have done an informal evaluation with every teacher,
59 but they are not as far along as Clark/ Wilkins. When they do an evaluation they are
60 looking specifically at RTI involvement and Differentiated Instruction. The staff meeting
61 yesterday focused on the school goals and the SAU goals and the expectations from the
62 board. At the meeting they discussed how the school goals and SAU goals were related.
63 They also discussed how the administrators are getting evaluated.

64 Mr. St. Amand stated that his staff is aware of the SAU goals, but they have not discussed
65 the goals yet.

66 Mr. Dodge stated that the board would be pleased at what is already being done to
67 address the goal about transitions.

68 Mr. Warburton stated that he would like teachers to come give a presentation to the board
69 about Differentiated Instruction to show how it works. He thanked the principals for their
70 commitment to the goals. He discussed the administrative evaluations and that they are
71 looking at 12 levels of competencies for principals. The administration will be talking
72 more about this to the board soon.

73 The board and Mr. Dodge discussed the good reception of the SAU goals with the AMS

74 staff.

75 Mr. Warburton asked to change the February meeting to Tuesday the 21st because of a
76 presentation on February 16th at Clark/ Wilkins.

77 Mr. St. Amand stated he would confirm the date of the presentation get back to the board.

78 Ms. Shankel stated that all of the paper work for the Bond refunding is complete. The rate
79 is 1.62%. The gain will be 12% and \$41,000 will be saved this year.

80 The board thanked Ms. Shankel for this hard work.

81 **PUBLIC TIME**

82 No public present.

83 **CONSENT AGENDA**

84 Ms. Foulks asked to pull the December minutes.

85 **Mr. Maresco made a motion to accept the consent agenda containing the November**
86 **treasures report. Mr. Manning seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

87 Ms. Foulks made the following changes to the December minutes: line 73, goals to
88 introduce two menus a month – added items; line 79, students must express.

89 Ms. Bennett asked to make the following changes to the December minutes: line 25,
90 change spelling to chorale holiday; line 48, pass/ fail for first not firsts; line 50, extra S on
91 middle; line 67, worked to find creative ways; line 76, they are hiding ingredients; line
92 93, the stage renovations will be paid for out of the operating budget; line 142, the money
93 not they.

94 **Ms. Foulks made a motion to accept the minutes as amended. Mr. Manning**
95 **seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

96 **PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS**

97 **FY13 Budget Draft 3**

98 Ms. Shankel stated that Draft 3 was on page 17 of the agenda packet. She discussed the
99 budget changes from draft 2 to draft 3 including the non-union support staff increases
100 now that there is a tentative agreement with ASSA, the Administrators merit pay pool,
101 and a health supplies transcription error. The savings from the principle for FY13 is
102 \$33,987, because they have to pay \$12,000 for amortization and will have a new
103 schedule. The bulk of the bond savings is in the first two years.

104 Ms. Shankel stated that the budget increase is 2.21%. Ms. Shankel discussed the revenue

105 projection. The tax rate increase is only \$0.13 and because the revenues have increased so
106 the tax rate is only a 1.1% increase.

107 Default Budget

108 Ms. Shankel passed out a sheet describing the updated default budget, which is
109 \$24,245,571. She described how a default budget is created and gave examples of how it
110 worked. Attached to the default budget is a form that shows what will be taken out of the
111 budget if the default budget is passed including all of the new equipment and money for
112 buildings and grounds. If the default budget is passed the board can make budget
113 transfers later to prioritize where the money is spent.

114 The board thanked Ms. Shankel for the budget changes summary.

115 Warrant Articles

116 Ms. Shankel stated that the only change was for the amount of the default budget, which
117 should be \$24,245,571.

118 ASB Ways & Means Committee Report Out

119 Andy Rowe stated that the Ways and Means Committee unanimously approves of the
120 budget for FY13. The budget both balances the needs of the schools and the financial
121 status of country. The committee also unanimously approves of the warrant articles.

122 Ms. Shankel thanked the Ways and Means Committee because they met with all of the
123 administration, checked every line of the budget, and made recommendations.

124 The board thanked the Ways and Means Committee for all of their hard work.

125 **Ms. Head made a motion to present warrant articles 12, 13, 14, and 15 at the public**
126 **hearing. Ms. Foulks seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.**

127 FY13 Public Hearing Preparation

128 Tabled to the end of the meeting.

129 **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

130 Grading/trimester

131 Mr. Dodge stated that at the staff meeting yesterday they also discussed grade inflation.
132 He stated that he explained the questions the board had. He asked staff to volunteer to be
133 on a grading committee to discuss what they are currently doing for grading and
134 evaluation. Based on the discussion at the meeting they found within the school there are
135 inconsistencies about retakes and how homework is counted. He has 5 volunteers so far.

136 The staff will present to the board at a future meeting. At the meeting they also started a
137 discussion about how letter grades do not tie into Differentiated Instruction and the use of
138 rubrics. He would like teachers to present to the board and public why some grades are
139 higher and discuss the many methods of evaluating.

140 The board, Mr. Dodge, and Mr. Warburton discussed possible issues with rubrics and if
141 they really show what a student knows. They discussed how the board would be able to
142 ask questions when the staff presents in March or April and that this is a starting point.

143 Ms. Bennett asked the board to discuss changing to trimesters at Clark/Wilkins because
144 they are the only schools in the district not on trimesters.

145 Mr. St. Amand stated that they have had this conversation for multiple years and also
146 about revising the report card format. The plan is to bring the report card through the
147 program review process. Teachers are receptive to the idea of trimesters. They could
148 easily shift the report card document from four quarters to trimesters. The only question
149 is that they have targeted parent teacher conference dates in November to coordinate with
150 the end of the quarter, so how would conferences prior to the trimester end work. Maybe
151 there is a better time for conferences.

152 The board discussed that AMS and SHS have conferences at the end of October and early
153 November, so that would not be a big shift. They also discussed changing AMS to
154 quarters. Mr. Dodge stated that trimesters work best because they include the mid-term
155 progress report.

156 Mr. Warbruton discussed the pilot of trimesters in Mont Vernon this year.

157 The board discussed the need to take time to research this idea to ensure it is done right.
158 They also discussed how Clark/Wilkins have not previously discussed doing a mid-term
159 progress report.

160 Mr. Warburton stated that the administration needs time to research and then pilot the
161 idea for next year. They will begin to have conversations and leave it on the agenda to
162 give the board an update at future meetings. This idea meets one of the SAU goals.

163 The board discussed having parents involved in the process. They also discussed
164 changing the format of the report card. They determined that a full year was needed to
165 research what is out there and to determine what is best for a new report card format.

166 Paperless school board meetings

167 Mr. Warburton discussed that the agenda packet would now be put on a website that the
168 board could access and past agendas would be archived. During the meeting there will be
169 a computer screen with the packet so that the public could see the agenda and supporting
170 materials. He also discussed how the layout of the meeting space would change. He
171 stated this would save paper and time in the office.

172 The board agreed to pilot the idea at the next meeting.

173 Ms. Foulks asked if there was a way to electronically attach notes ahead of time.

174 Mr. Warburton asked her to come to the SAU and get help from Bruce. He discussed
175 how this idea has a lot of opportunities and that the board no longer would have to worry
176 about saving or losing agenda packets.

177 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

178 Mr. Manning made a motion to go into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II. (a) (b)
179 (c) at 7:20pm. Ms. Foulks seconded the motion and the roll call was all yes.

180 Ms. Bennett stated that no decisions were made in the non public session.

181

182 Jim Manning made a motion to exit non-public session. Motion seconded by
183 Peter Maresco. Unanimously accepted by roll call vote: Peg Bennett: yes, Nancy Head:
184 yes, Peter Maresco: yes, Jim Manning: yes and Lucienne Foulks: yes.

185

186 At 7:49 Lucienne Foulks made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion seconded by
187 Nancy Head and was unanimously accepted.