

MINUTES

AMITY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Julie Altman, William Blake, Patricia Cardozo, Sue Cohen, Diane Crocco, Steven DeMaio, Rita Gedansky, John A. Grasso, Jr., James Horwitz, Thomas Hurley, Tracey Lane Russo, James Stirling

AMITY BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Browe

Staff Members Present: John Brady, Charles Britton, Richard Dellinger, Kathleen Fuller Cutler, Jack Levine, Marianne Lippard, Terry Lumas, Marie McPadden, Mary Raiola

Also Present: Angela Booth, Marie Credeski, Eliza Dilaway, Chrissy Jones; other members of the Public

A regular meeting of the Amity Regional Board of Education was held on Monday, April 8, 2013 at 6:30 p.m. in the Presentation Room at the District Offices.

1. Call to Order: William Blake called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited by those present.

3. Acceptance of Gift

Dr. Brady noted that the Robotics Club at the High School is thriving and recently earned third place in a regional competition. Vincent Gentile, the father of a member of the Robotics Club, has generously offered to donate \$2,000 to support this club.

Motion to accept with gratitude the gift of \$2,000 to the Amity Regional High School Robotics Club (Mr. Hurley, 2d Ms. Cardozo).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

4. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting, March 11, 2013

Motion to approve the minutes as presented (Mr. Hurley, 2d Ms. Gedansky).

Vote in favor: Julie Altman, Sue Cohen, Diane Crocco, Steven DeMaio, Rita Gedansky, John A. Grasso, Jr., James Horwitz, Thomas Hurley, Tracey Lane Russo, James Stirling

Vote opposed: none

Abstain: Patricia Cardozo

Motion passed.

5. Student Report

Eliza Dilaway, president of Student Government, said that the musical, 'Sweeney Todd,' was a success. There were 40 student cast members and 40 participants from the student orchestra. She expressed thanks to the Kennedys for the support. The recent food drive surpassed the students' goal. Dr. Michael Fowlin recently

presented ‘You Don’t Know Me Until You Know Me,’ a valuable presentation about diversity. Last week, over 177 new voter registrations were processed at the High School. She thanked the registrars for reaching out to a new generation of voters. A college fair is set to take place tomorrow night. Representatives from over 100 colleges will be there. The Southern Connecticut Science and Engineering Fair will take place on Saturday, April 27th. She invited the Board to see the talent and innovation of Amity students.

6. Principal’s Reports

High School Campus – Dr. Britton said that the musical production ‘Sweeney Todd,’ was tastefully done. He expressed congratulations to the cast and crew. He acknowledged the recent retirement of Secretary Elizabeth Raucci. He is looking to fill the secretarial position and two other key positions at the High School. The chairpersons of both science and language are retiring. These positions were posted early and he expects to have recommendations soon. Dr. Britton said that he brought electronic cigarettes to pass out tonight to give Board members an idea of a new problem that is surfacing. Electronic cigarettes are becoming a popular form of delivery for nicotine. There was an article in the New Haven Register, and Channel 3, Fox News, Channel 8 and Channel 12 featured news reports on these cigarettes. Dr. Britton noted that he looked into this issue and the school would view these cigarettes as a tobacco product. While these don’t create smoke and offend other people the way cigarettes do, there is still concern for students choosing to use these. Since these are still new, there are no laws on the books about them, but they are still tobacco products. Dr. Britton said that we are still learning about these and how they can be modified. In other news, Dr. Britton noted that we are six weeks away from senior internships. If there is a business that would like an intern, let us know. The High School is organizing scholarships for students and students. He looks forward to celebrating student accomplishments with scholarships.

Bethany Middle School Campus – Dr. Dellinger said that a school climate survey was performed recently. He has the results and will share them once a report is ready. An assembly about empowerment took place recently. This week, students traveled to Ivorytown, CT for Nature’s Classroom. The students are staying for several days and will return on Friday. Plans are in place to have all the students in the school see a film about Jackie Robinson. An internet safety program will be held soon. The marking period will end on April 24th.

Orange Middle School Campus – Ms. Fuller Cutler said that the 6th grade parent Step Up event was a success. Student tour guides are planned for the upcoming Amity in Action. In recognition of the school’s success with a reading challenge, the students got to enjoy a performance by Magic Mike last Friday. On April 1st, the school had a surprise lockdown drill. It was the first lockdown since the Newtown tragedy and the kids and staff did a great job.

Every teacher now has a master key so they can go into any room and they feel safer having that. The volleyball tournament for St. Baldwick has raised a lot of money so far, and in response the energy is high in Orange tonight. The school is trying to plan special things to look forward to despite losing almost all of April vacation. A long overdue spirit week took place recently. The school selected a new reading teacher from three strong internal candidates. Ms. Fuller Cutler acknowledged students Emily Rose Martino and Genevieve Ingram for their athletic achievements.

7. Public Comment

Angela Booth of Orange said that she is a parent of a freshman student who goes to ECA. She said that the guidance department recommended she talk to the Board. She is finding that with the current credit requirements, it is impossible for ECA students to earn enough credits. The parents are asking the administration to work with them. The students have study halls during the week. There is a question as to whether credits can be earned online. She said that it is important for everyone to work together, as these children deserve as much support as any others.

Marie Credeski said that her daughter is a freshman who attends ECA. Although she had a meeting with Mr. Schumann, she wasn't able to get answers. There are questions about whether Oddeseyware is an option. She requested help from the Board. These kids don't want to just meet the requirements. They want to take on a full course load, not the minimum requirements. She asked that this topic be put on a future agenda.

Chrissy Jones of Orange also wanted to speak to the Board about ECA. She said that she met with Mr. Schumann and Dr. Brady. There was a lot she didn't know and just learned today. An idea was proposed that if ECA started 15 minutes later, the students could get in another course. The parents need to get educated and the students want to know what their options are.

Mr. Blake thanked the parents for coming out to speak. He said that the parents can refer to Policy 1312(a) regarding public complaints. There is a process in place to have a complaint heard. The Board follows that process. This is a way to get an answer. The policy is on the District website.

8. Discussion and Possible Action on Schedule C of the Teachers' Contract

Dr. Brady noted that during the last round of negotiations with the Amity Education Association, the parties agreed to convene an administrative committee to recommend a revision to stipends in Schedule C of the contract. A more appropriate compensation scheme was needed. The committee was chaired by Dr. Britton and worked from early fall until just recently. The union supported the changes to Schedule C. The Personnel Committee and Finance Committee supported this. The stipends for some positions are going down, while others are

going up. In some cases, stipends were added for positions that previously didn't offer them. Compensation should depend on the work involved.

Motion to accept the recommendation of the Personnel Committee and Finance Committee to adopt the revision of Schedule C beginning with the 2013-2014 budget year (Ms. Cohen, 2d Ms. Cardozo).

Discussion:

Ms. Cohen questioned whether gate receipts for theater productions would be given to the budget. She questioned whether the program breaks even.

Dr. Brady said that it was decided to do a self-funded program. Enhancements have been added to the space. Everything is accounted for. The program is audited as a student activity.

Ms. Cardozo questioned whether every club is accounted for.

Dr. Brady said that every club that we are aware of and approve of made it onto the list.

Ms. Altman said that when she sees the list on Club Day, the list is bigger than what she sees here.

Dr. Britton said that a club may start small and grow. Some we don't sustain.

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

9. Discuss and Take Final Action on the 2013-2014 Amity Board of Education Operating Budget to be Submitted to Referendum on Wednesday, May 8, 2013

Dr. Brady referenced a memo dated April 3, 2013, which discusses the budget. The District has successfully negotiated with Anthem, and as a result, he recommend the Medical & Dental Insurance account be lowered by \$410,652 and the OPEB Trust account be increased by \$166,767. The net impact is a reduction in operating expenditures of \$243,885. In doing this, we will be budgeting the Actual Required Contribution for the OPEB Trust, which will be well-received by the Bond Rating Agencies and have a positive effect on future contributions to the OPEB Trust.

A spreadsheet entitled "Medical and Dental Self-Insurance" shows the projected reserve balance as of June 30, 2014 is \$829,629, or 20.6 percent of annual expected claims. Dr. Brady pointed out that the District also saved on diesel fuel.

Dr. Brady noted that if the Board accepts this recommendation, there will be a 1.98 percent budget increase.

Move that the Amity Board of Education approve the 2013-2014 Budget with total operating expenditures of \$44,478,455 and total member town allocations of \$43,260,053 (Ms. Gedansky, 2d Ms. Crocco).

Discussion: Mr. Stirling said that there is an opportunity to add to the reserve balance for the self-funded health insurance plan. The consensus among members of the Finance Committee was that the reserve was adequate and to go with the Superintendent's recommendation.

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

10. Resolution to Authorize Amity Regional School District No. 5 to Prepare an Explanatory Text for the Budget Referendum Question:

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education of Amity Regional School District No. 5 is authorized to prepare, print and distribute a concise explanatory text of the budget referendum question, which, by vote of the Board of Education, has been submitted to a referendum vote on the voting machines of each of the member towns, which text shall not advocate either the approval or disapproval of the question and shall otherwise be prepared in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes Section 9-369b.

Move the Public District Meeting of Amity Regional School District No. 5 be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2013, at 5:30 p.m. in the Presentation Room at Amity Regional District Offices. Once convened, the meeting will adjourn to a referendum vote to be held on Wednesday, May 8, 2013 (Mr. Stirling, 2d Mr. Hurley).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

11. Announcements from the Board and Administration

Dr. Brady noted that Amity in Action will take place soon. Karen Shinkman, a retired High School math teacher, passed away last weekend. She was remembered as being an advocate for teachers and having the interests of students at heart. Memorial services will take place on April 21st at 1 p.m.

12. Correspondence

No correspondence was discussed.

13. Superintendent's Report

- a. Personnel Report
There was no discussion.

14. Chairman's Report

- a. Committee Reports
 1. ACES – There was no report.

2. CABE – Mr. Stirling noted that webinars are available.
3. Curriculum – There was no report.
4. Facilities – There was no report.
5. Finance
 - a. Discussion of Monthly Financial Statements
There were no questions.
 - b. Director of Finance and Administration Approved Transfers Under \$3,000
There were no questions.
 - c. Discussion and Possible Action on Budget Transfers of \$3,000 or More
In a memo dated March 25, 2013 to Dr. Brady, Mr. Levine recommends that the Board approve a budget transfer of over \$3,000. The Board of Education 2013-2014 Approved Budget does not include funding for a Long Range Planning study. The original bids for this study ranged from \$21,696 to \$65,000. The Board decided to wait until a new Superintendent of Schools is named so that the new person can review and possibly revise the bid specifications. A recommendation was made by a Board member to purchase in this fiscal year some technology equipment which is in the 2013-2014 budget. This will free up \$21,850 in the 2013-2014 budget for the Long Range Planning study.

Mr. Levine’s forecast shows that funds will be available. He recommends that the purchase not be made until he can confirm that there are sufficient yearend funds available. A specific account is not noted.

Move to make the following budget transfer of \$21,850.00 to pay for technology equipment to replace Megabit network switches with Gigabit switches (Mr. Hurley, 2d Mr. DeMaio):

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
TBA	To Be Determined	\$21,850	
05-14-2350-5731	Equipment – Replacement		\$21,850

Discussion:

Mr. Hurley said that we have all experienced getting on and off networks and the problems that this presents. The school network can’t always respond in a timely manner.

Dr. Brady noted that more information will need to be passed back and forth, particularly with new testing when a large number of students will be taking state tests at the same time.

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

d. Discussion and Possible Action on New Funding Requests

In a memo dated March 21, 2013, Mr. Levine recommended that the Board approve funding for snow removal and sanding. According to the memo, the cost for snow removal, sanding, and hauling away the excess snow from the blizzard was \$65,000 (negotiated down from \$92,000). There were two other smaller snow storms, which brought the total expenditures to \$97,600 for the fiscal year. The budget is \$47,000. A budget transfer is needed to pay the outstanding invoices.

Discussion:

Move to make the following budget transfer of \$50,600 to pay P & S Paving, Inc., for snow removal, hauling away the excess snow after the blizzard, and sanding (Ms. Gedansky, 2d Ms. Crocco):

<u>Account Number</u>	<u>Account Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
05-15-0000-5850	Contingency Account	\$50,600	
01-14-2600-5420	Repairs, Maint., Cleaning		\$12,735
02-14-2600-5420	Repairs, Maint., Cleaning		\$8,120
03-14-2600-5420	Repairs, Maint., Cleaning		\$29,745

Discussion: Mr. Levine was acknowledged for his excellent negotiations.

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

6. Policy – Policy 1312 was discussed. It was decided that nothing needed to be changed. Ms. Russo said that Dr. Brady explained that the school play is selected by Mr. Kennedy. The High School Principal and Superintendent must approve the selection. The procedure in place is sufficient.

7. Personnel

This discussion took place under Item #8.

Dr. Brady said that the Board needs to set a graduation date. This item was accidentally left off the agenda.

Motion to add to the agenda consider and take action on a date for the graduation ceremony (Ms. Cohen, 2d Ms. Gedansky).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

15. Graduation Date

Motion to hold graduation on June 21, 2013, the last day of school (Ms. Gedansky, 2d Mr. Hurley).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

16. Items for the Next Agenda

Mr. Horwitz would like the administration to report back on the questions raised tonight about ECA.

17. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 p.m. (Mr. DeMaio, 2d Mr. Hurley).

Motion passed; meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Lippard, recording clerk
Rita Gedansky, secretary

References/Attachments:

Minutes: Board of Education Regular Meeting, 3/11/13
Finance Committee Regular Meeting, 3/11/13

Reports: Personnel Report, 4/8/13
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Revenues and Expenditures Board
of Education 2013-2014 Approved Budget
Amity Regional School District No. 5 Revenues and Expenditures for FY
2012-2013
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Budget Transfers 2012-2013

Memos: John J. Brady to Members of the Amity Board of Education (4/1/13) re:
Recommendation to Accept Gift
John J. Brady to Members of the Amity Finance Committee and Amity
Board of Education (4/1/13) re: Recommended Revision to Schedule C of
the Teacher's Contract
John J. Brady to Members of the Amity Finance Committee and Amity
Board of Education (4/3/13) re: Proposed Revisions to Board of
Education 2013-2014 Approved Budget
Jack B. Levine to John J. Brady (3/25/13) re: Budget Transfers of \$3,000
or More
Jack B. Levine to John J. Brady (3/21/13) re: New Funding Requests for
Fiscal Year 2012-2013