

MINUTES

AMITY BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: William Blake, Patricia Cardozo, Sue Cohen, Diane Crocco, Philip Grande, James Horwitz, Thomas Hurley, Angela McNabola, James Stirling

AMITY BOARD MEMBER ABSENT: Joseph Abbatiello, Julie Altman, Steven DeMaio, Rita Gedansky

Staff Members Present: John Brady, Charles Britton, Kathleen Fuller-Cutler, Richard Dellinger, Jack Levine, Marianne Lippard, Mary Raiola, James Saisa, Sheila Wycinowski

Also Present: Thomas Falcigno, other members of the Public

A regular meeting of the Amity Regional Board of Education was held on Monday, November 14, 2011, 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. **Recognition of CAPSS Award Recipients**

Dr. Brady said that each November he has the pleasure of recognizing 10 outstanding young people for their accomplishments. Kathleen Fuller-Cutler, Richard Dellinger and Charles Britton talked about each student receiving a certificate.

From Amity Middle School in Orange, Ms. Fuller-Cutler introduced recipients Julia Wilde and Matthew Schmidt. Dr. Dellinger of Amity Middle School in Bethany presented certificates to Gabrielle Miller and Nicholas Beckwith. He described Gabrielle and Nicholas as outstanding eighth graders. Dr. Britton, principal at Amity High School, presented certificates to Hannah Cho, Anapriva Nagarathnam, Katrina Camerato, Alex DeAngelo, Simon Moore, and Jason Rothberg.

Mr. Blake congratulated all the award recipients and the parents. He said that it makes the Board proud to see them achieve.

4. **Recognition of Board Members Leaving the Amity Board**

Mr. Blake said that he wanted to formally say goodbye to Board members Joseph Abbatiello, Philip Grande and Angela McNabola, whose terms are soon coming to an end. Mr. Abbatiello has been devoted to the work of the Board for a number of years. He noted that Ms. McNabola and Mr. Grande have made significant positive contributions.

5. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular BOE Meeting, October 17, 2011

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

Discussion: none

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

- b. Special BOE Meeting, November 3, 2011

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

Discussion: none

Vote in favor: Patricia Cardozo, Sue Cohen, Diane Crocco, Philip Grande, James Horwitz, Thomas Hurley, James Stirling

Vote opposed: none

Abstain: Angela McNabola

Motion passed.

6. Discussion and Possible Action on 2012 Board of Education Meeting Calendar

Regular meetings of the Amity Regional School District No. 5 Board of Education take place on the second Monday of every month, unless noted on the calendar. October 15, 2012 and November 19, 2012 are listed as exceptions. Meetings are held at 25 Newton Road, Woodbridge, and begin at 6:30 p.m.

Motion to approve the 2012 Board of Education Meeting Calendar as presented (Mr. Hurley, Mr. Stirling).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

7. Information on 2011 Facilities Report

Jim Saisa said that he was very pleased with the results of the lighting project at the High School. Three months of data show a considerable savings for electricity due to the new lighting, averaging at about 25 percent. The Field House water heater is also working out well. The center core science project is nearing completion. The security cameras are helping the building principals as the High School to perform investigations into problem behavior. Mr. Saisa also reported that the custodians did a fantastic job getting the schools ready over the summer. Planned roof restoration work will be further examined in the near future.

Discussion:

Mr. Stirling questioned what other big repairs would be needed going forward besides the roof.

Mr. Saisa said that parking lot repaving will be needed, along with a new air handling unit. High-efficiency motors have already been installed in the air handling unit and the unit has been kept running. Another anticipated expense will involve the phone system, which will cost approximately \$100,000 to replace. The software will no longer support the current system.

a. Information on Possible Project at Bethany

Dr. Brady said that there is a proposal to install solar panels at Amity Middle School in Bethany. The panels would be installed on all areas that have exposure to the sun. The panels won't be visible from the street. The administration views the project favorably, as it is environmentally responsible and would save money. A new Facilities Committee isn't seated yet, so that is why the proposal is being presented to the full Board. If the proposal is agreed upon, Ross Solar Group would do the permit work. The schools would need to ensure that there is still access to the air handling units.

Mr. Saisa said that the solar panels will not be visible from the road and the company would maintain the equipment.

8. Discussion and Possible Action to Authorize the Administration to pursue Solar Project at Bethany and Enter into an Agreement with Ross Solar Group if Conditions Favorable to Amity are Negotiated

Mr. Blake said that as he understood the deal, rent would not be paid, but Amity would benefit from reduced electrical rates.

Mr. Hurley questioned how heavy snow removal would be handled. He expressed concern about damage to the roof of the building. A plan would be needed for dealing with this problem.

Mr. Saisa said that negotiations would be needed on how to handle snow removal.

Mr. Blake questioned the experience that Ross Solar Group has had with other schools and municipalities.

Mr. Saisa said that the company has always had the proper paperwork and has been good to work with thus far.

Mr. Grande asked what the remaining useful life is for the roof and what happens when that time is up. He questioned whether they would remove the panels at that point.

Mr. Saisa said that there are 15 years left. The agreement could address what happens when the roof needs replacement. The panels sit on the roof; they aren't bolted on.

Mr. Stirling asked Mr. Saisa to tell the Board what the benefits of the deal would be.

Mr. Saisa said power would cost about one-third less, a savings of \$9,600 a year.

Mr. Horwitz questioned whether any other solar vendors were questioned.

Mr. Saisa said that vendors had not been approached. The company was referred to Amity.

Mr. Grande questioned the cost of the system. Mr. Saisa said that the cost isn't known, but the system is considered high quality.

Dr. Brady said that the project must be complete by December 1, 2011 and it would not be possible to go through the process of an RFP.

Ms. Cohen said that the Board would like more information before making a decision. She asked whether the Facilities Committee could meet.

Mr. Grande said it won't be possible to get the group together. The deal doesn't represent an urgent situation.

Mr. Saisa said that if the project is completed by December 1st, the project is less costly because the company can pursue federal money.

Mr. Horwitz questioned if other vendors who could qualify for grant funds could be contacted.

Mr. Hurley said that if the project makes sense for Amity Middle School in Bethany, then it might make sense to consider it for the other two schools.

Mr. Blake said that the Board has been looking for ways to be more energy efficient, but the project sounds like a big commitment for what does not appear to be a compelling amount of money.

Dr. Brady said that with so many questions, it would make sense to hold off on the project for now so that the questions raised by the Board can be answered. No action was taken.

9. Principal's Report

Orange Campus: Kathleen Fuller-Cutler said that in October, the school had the iPad rollout for the pilot program. Dr. Brady was the keynote speaker that day. Since then, the kids have been doing a lot of work with the technology. In social studies, the students used the iPad to help with a collage. It seems to be more difficult to use the technology with math, but the pilot is off to a great start. On October 19th, students participated in Government Day. The PTSA provided a luncheon for students. Seventh graders have participated in some bullying discussions. Student Council recently raised money with a Yankee Candle fundraiser. Student Council also sponsored a Halloween dance attended by 220 students. The courtyard became a haunted courtyard. The October snowfall caused students to miss a day of school and have two late start times. For Veterans' Day, two veterans visited and shared their experiences. The students came away with a

clear understanding of how important our freedoms are. An army sergeant also visited the school to speak to students. He had a wonderful way of interacting with students. The first marking period has ended.

Bethany Campus: Dr. Dellinger said that there were two special activities in October: Career Day and the iPad rollout. Career Day is a day when members of the community and parents come in to speak to students. A great variety of professions were represented. The iPad rollout was exciting and there will be more to report about the new technology at the December Board of Education meeting. The October snow storm caused school to close for four days. Once power was restored, nearly all the staff members were in attendance and it was very productive time. Students attended a full week of classes the following week, making up one day on Election Day and one on Veterans' Day. The school held a wonderful celebration for Veteran's Day. Veterans visited throughout the day. Although students attended school on Veterans' Day, the school made a point of recognizing Veterans. The marking period closed and conferences are planned to take place over the next few weeks. The school has a sister school in China and have been using Skype to communicate. Parents have expressed interest in having their children travel to China for a 10 day trip. The principal from the sister school will visit this winter.

Discussion:

Mr. Hurley asked what effects the snow storm had, since it occurred at the end of the marking period. He also questioned if extra insurance would be needed for he China trip.

Dr. Dellinger said that a slight extension was needed for processing grades. Some of the work missed during the first marking period will be added during the second marking period.

Dr. Brady said that the students are covered for the trip.

High School: Dr. Britton said that he wanted to recognize Athletic Director Paul Mengold for his achievement. Mr. Mengold will be receiving a National Federation Citation for contributions to interscholastic athletics. Parent- Teacher conferences will take place on November 16. The first marking period is over and grades will be posted on iParent. About 125 parents have requested paper copies of report cards. Dr. Britton said that he would like to highlight two successful programs. Peer tutors are running Homework Help on Tuesdays. Amity students finished in first place in the Sikorsky Stem Challenge. There are 50 new members of the National Honor Society. He praised the quality of this year's senior class. The High School's National Art Honor Society was recently recognized. The celebration rededicating the sports facility will take place at the Thanksgiving game.

10. Student Report

Thomas Falcigno said that the Homecoming Dance will be held Friday, November 18th from 7 p.m. – 10 p.m. Tickets are \$10. The American Red Cross collected 84 pints of blood during the recent blood drive. The Theater Department will be selling all types of items at an Estate sale on

Saturday, November 19th at the High School. Spirit Week will begin Monday with Black and Gold Day and other themes will take place on different days. Amity took JSA best speaker at a recent event and a number of students won gavels for their participation. The Girls' Soccer team lost to Cheshire, but had a good year.

James Stirling asked what topics are discussed at JSA.

Thomas said that there were questions about FEMA and the euro, among others.

11. Public Comment

Laurence P. Czajkowski said that he had the honor of being part of Dr. Dellinger's presentations in recognition of Veterans' Day. He found the presentation by one of the guests to be extraordinary. Everyone at the High School should have participated. While he was impressed by the Bethany and Orange programs, he was disappointed with the lack of opportunity to interact with veterans at the High School. Veterans' Day activities should not stop at the middle schools. He had reached out to Dr. Brady's staff to have the veterans speak. A leadership award was given to one of the students recommended by the Board. His post is waiting for a thank you. It's time to start Veterans' Day recognition. The time for corrective action is now. Veterans' Day is every day for veterans. He doesn't think many of the students knew why they were off Friday because it wasn't mentioned at school. Post 127 would like wide participation for future awards. It's time for the Board to fight for the veterans.

Mr. Blake thanked Mr. Czajkowski for coming and for this service as well.

12. Announcements from the Board and Administration

Dr. Brady reminded the Board about the Board of Education Retreat on Wednesday, November 16th at 5:30 p.m. in the Presentation Room. New members have been invited. The retreat will cover the roles of Board members. There will also be a non-posted Executive Session meeting.

13. Report on November 8th Professional Development Day – Sheila Wycinowski

Ms. Wycinowski said that Tuesday, November 8th was a very productive day. The PTSA hosted a wonderful luncheon. Twenty-five workshops took place that morning and the same number of workshops were held that afternoon. Mandatory refresher training took place. Two of our teachers are in-house trainers. One great workshop was entitled Risk to Resilience, which is aimed to assist students in navigating the waters from high school to college. Ten technology workshops were offered, including applications training. Intermediate and advanced Smartboard training also was offered. Teachers of English and social studies are working on their five-year plans. There have been many curriculum projects. Science and math teachers are looking at ways to use Study Island. A joint meeting was held with English, reading and social studies teachers, where there was discussion concerning how to work on reading strategies and techniques. Health-related workshops have been offered. Teachers have also worked on common formative assessments.

14. Correspondence

There was no correspondence to discuss.

15. Superintendent's Report

- a. Personnel Report – Dr. Brady noted that an assistant Boys Swimming coach was hired. This did not appear on the report.
- b. Special Education Burden of Proof – Dr. Brady said that change is being requested of the legislature. In Connecticut, the Board must prove that they are doing the right thing. In all other states, the person bringing action has the burden of proof. CAFE and others are representing the boards.

16. Chairman's Report

- a. Committee Reports
 1. ACES – There was no report.
 2. CAFE- The convention is this Friday. Mr. Stirling said that there will be workshops on creating efficiencies, trends in education and other topics.
 3. Curriculum – There will be a meeting is on Thursday, November 17th at 5:30 p.m.
 4. Facilities – There has been no meeting.
 5. Finance

- a. Discussion and Possible Action on One-Year Extension of Contract with CCR Audit Firm

Dr. Brady said that the administration is recommending extending the contract with the audit firm CCR. The fee will be the same, \$34,500. CCR has performed the audit for the past three years. The bid specifications provided for two optional years at the Board's sole discretion. Rob Howard, Partner of CCR, has proposed the same price if the Board chooses to extend the contract. Mr. Levine said that the work can be put out to bid at this point. If satisfied with the services, the Board can continue with CCR until June 2012 for the quoted price.

Move the Superintendent of Schools be authorized to sign a letter of engagement with CCR of Glastonbury to perform the audit for the year ending June 30, 2012, at the quoted price of \$34,500 (Mr. Stirling, 2d Ms. Cardozo).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

- b. Discussion and Possible Action on Contract over \$35,000
Both UI and CL&P have monies available to be spent by the end of the year on incentives for energy conservation projects. Power Point Energy is a State Contract vendor and vendor who recently did the lighting retrofit at Amity High School. The savings for the lighting project at the High School are exceeding expectations. Mr. Saisa asked Power Point Energy to do an energy audit on both middle schools to determine whether or not a lighting retrofit would make sense at those buildings. Mike Stein, a UI engineer, worked to identify incentives. Both projects would have positive budget impacts. End of the year monies are available, however, to take

advantage of these incentives, the projects must be substantially completed by 12/31/11.

The Orange project will entail upgrading all interior and exterior fixtures to higher efficiency technology. The project cost is \$190,335. The incentive from UI will be approximately \$50,000, bringing the net cost to \$140,335. This cost would be paid off via a 0% interest loan over a four-year period. Annual financing would be an estimated \$35,084. Annual energy savings are estimated at \$41,498. This would make the project cash positive in the first year of approximately \$6,400.

The Bethany project would also entail upgrading all interior and exterior fixtures to high efficiency technology. The project cost is \$187,575. Although actual incentive amounts weren't yet available from CL&P, a conservative estimate on the incentives expected is \$39,820, bringing the net cost to \$147,755. This cost will be paid off via a 0% interest loan over a four-year period. Annual financing will be an estimated \$36,939. Annual energy savings are estimated at \$35,838. These numbers indicate a cash negative situation of approximately \$1,100 the first year, however John Carbone of Power Point Energy stated that they took a very conservative approach in their calculations and is 100% sure the project will come in neutral or cash positive during the loan period.

Mr. Saisa noted that the budget comparisons only deal with energy costs. Since everything is new and under warranty, there is an estimated maintenance savings of over \$6,000 per school for lamps, ballasts, emergency ballasts, and associated labor.

The lighting work at the High School was recently completed. Mr. Saisa would like to extend the project to both middle schools. All interior and exterior lighting would be retrofitted. The energy savings are significant. A thorough analysis was performed. The District would break even during years one through four, after that there would be a financial benefit.

Discussion:

Mr. Blake asked whether the savings at the High School have been in line with the projections.

Mr. Saisa said that the savings have been better than the projections.

Mr. Blake said that this project has more financial incentive than the solar project.

Mr. Hurley said that he has reservations about the proposal.

Motion to act on the contract (Ms. Cohen, 2d James Horwitz).

Mr. Hurley said that when the contract was awarded for the High School, there were problems. He said that he would like to go with a competitive bid by at least three bidders. He said that the project does not need to be pushed forward. The funds are available every year for these types of projects. Numbers were being moved around last time.

Mr. Blake questioned why this issue wasn't raised before.

Mr. Hurley said that he recused himself. For a project of this cost it does not make sense to use a sole source.

Mr. Levine said that during the last bid process every vendor that met the criteria would go to the Request for Proposal. When the numbers came back, they were evaluated.

Mr. Hurley said that for a project of this size, he would like more vendors. There was a problem.

Dr. Brady said that the administration isn't aware of anything done incorrectly, the law was completely followed.

Mr. Levine said that he is very concerned about following the bid process properly. One of the bidders was lower, but there were things missing in the bid. Everything was done properly. All information was provided so that vendors could see it.

Mr. Blake reminded the Board of the motion that was made.

Mr. Stirling questioned how long the bid process would take.

Mr. Levine said that if the motion is rejected, it would take a month and a half.

Mr. Grande asked if the process used before would be duplicated.

Mr. Levine said that he takes pride in doing this the right way and the process was reviewed by an attorney.

Mr. Blake said it is not uncommon to have bidders who feel they weren't treated fairly.

Mr. Hurley said that he does not feel the selection was perfect the last time. This is a \$370,000 sole source award based on a prior award that had problems.

Mr. Blake said that he has problems with Mr. Hurley claiming to have information that other members aren't privy to.

Mr. Hurley said that there was a mistake in how the second run was handled. . The numbers presented were not accurate. There was a fundamental flaw with how the bidding was done.

Mr. Saisa said that one company had problems, but the proper submittals were in. The company was called in the best interest of the District. With the adjustments, the price was lower.

Vote in favor: Patricia Cardozo, Sue Cohen, Diane Crocco, Philip Grande, James Horwitz, Angela McNabola, James Stirling

Vote opposed: Thomas Hurley

Abstain: none

Motion passed.

c. Discussion of Monthly Financial Statements

Mr. Levine noted that the monthly financial statements show a reduction of \$100,000 in transportation costs and an additional \$20,000 in legal costs. Line item 20 on page 3 shows net \$80,000. He noted that special education costs are always changing, so the number represents an estimate. Tropical Storm Irene caused over \$7,000 in damage.

There is a \$1,000 deductible for damage from a lightning strike at Amity Middle School in Bethany. The lightning strike occurred on July 31, 2011. Multiple vendors were needed to repair extensive damage to the Building Management and Life Safety systems. The approximate cost is \$44,500. Vendors have been paid out of the Bethany Middle School repair account. Currently, a transfer of \$13,000 is needed to pay the remaining invoices. Reimbursement will be sought through insurance. There is a \$1,000 deductible. When the insurance funds are received, the account will be credited and the budget transfer will be reversed. It is unclear what the reimbursement will be from the insurance company.

Motion to make the following budget transfer of \$13,000 to pay vendors for work related to the damage caused by the lightning strike at Bethany Middle School. The budget transfer will be reversed upon receipt of the insurance funds (Mr. Stirling, 2d Ms. McNabola):

ACCOUNT NUMBER	ACCOUNT NAME	FROM	TO
03-14-2600-5420	Repairs, Maintenance and Cleaning	\$13,000	
01-14-2600-5420	Repairs, Maintenance and Cleaning		\$13,000

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

d. Director of Finance and Administration Approved Transfers Under \$3,000

e. Discussion and Possible Action on Budget Transfers

f. Status Report on Financial Audit

Dr. Brady said that the Financial Audit will be available by the January meeting, possibly as early as the December meeting.

6. Policy

a. Second Reading – Anti-Bullying Policy

Motion to approve Student Hazing and Safe School Planning (Mr. Hurley, 2d Ms. Cohen).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

Motion to approve Safe School Climate Plan (Mr. Hurley, 2d Ms. Cohen).

Discussion: Mr. Stirling said that this will be an ongoing discussion. There will be opportunities to modify this in the future. Mr. Hurley said that administrative corrections can be made. Dr. Brady said that the state provided an insert and mandated that it be in every student handbook. It is not nearly as wordy.

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

7. Personnel

Mr. Blake said that collective bargaining has begun with teachers. It will be necessary to appoint an interim Treasurer.

Motion to appoint James Horwitz as interim Treasurer (Mr. Stirling, 2d Ms. McNabola).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed.

17. Items for the Next Agenda

The Board was reminded that a meeting will take place on Wednesday, November 16 to go over school board members' roles and responsibilities and there would also be an informal discussion about the superintendent search.

18. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:07 p.m. (Ms. Cardozo, 2d Mr. Hurley).

Vote in favor unanimous.

Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Rita Gedansky, secretary
Marianne Lippard, recording clerk

**Amity Regional School District No. 5
Regular Meeting**

**Board of Education
November 14, 2011**

Attachments/References:

- Minutes: Regular Board Meeting, 10/17/11
Finance Committee, 10/17/11
Board of Education Special Meeting, 11/3/11
Policy Committee, 10/13/11
- Memos: John J. Brady to Members of the Board of Education (11/14/11) re...Personnel Report
Jack B. Levine to John J. Brady (11/7/11) re...Proposed One-Year Extension of Contract
with CCR Audit Firm
Jack B. Levine to John J. Brady (11/7/11) re...Budget Transfers of \$3,000 or More for
Fiscal Year 2011-2012
- Misc: Recommendation to Award Bethany and Orange Middle Schools Lighting Retrofit
Regular Board of Education Meetings 2012
- Reports: Amity Regional School District No. 5, Audit Status Report, June 30, 2011
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Budget Transfers 2011-2012
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Year-to-Date Budget Report, printed 11/7/11
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Revenues and Expenditures for FY 2011-2012,
printed 11/7/11
Amity Regional School District No. 5, Audit Status Report June 30, 2011