

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
AMESBURY HIGH SCHOOL  
January 6, 2020**

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Present at 7:00 p.m. were Mayor Gove, Chair; Peter Hoyt, Kate Currie, Jana deBeer, Mel Webster, Maryann Welch, Alice Dragnea, Joan Liporto, and Jared Fulgoni, Superintendent of Schools. Absent due to recent resignation: Tim Kisielewski

**Amesbury Public Schools Mission Statement**

*The Amesbury School District is unconditionally committed to every child, ensuring that all students experience success through the development of attitudes and skills necessary for lifelong learning by providing the highest quality staff, meaningful learning experiences, and a vitally involved community.*

*This meeting will be broadcast live on ACTV and will also be recorded.*

**I. Call to Order**

Mayor Gove called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Mr. Hoyt asked the committee to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of David Shaw, a former Amesbury educator and principal of Amesbury Elementary School. Mayor Gove led the committee in the Pledge of Allegiance and read the Mission Statement aloud.

**II. Organizational Meeting**

**A. Election of Vice Chair and Secretary**

*Mr. Hoyt was nominated by Ms. Currie to serve as Vice Chair; seconded by Ms. deBeer. Vote: Yes, Unanimous*

*Ms. Welch was nominated by Mr. Webster to serve as Secretary; seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Yes, Unanimous*

**B. Meeting Days and Times**

Superintendent Fulgoni informed the committee that school committee meetings were typically held on the first Monday of the month. Mr. Webster questioned whether meeting once a month was sufficient and voiced his opposition to the time limit currently imposed on meetings. Mr. Fulgoni indicated the school committee could hold additional meetings as needed. Mr. Hoyt added that historically the school committee met twice a month but that schedule became problematic for members of the committee.

*Mayor Gove moved to maintain the current schedule of first Monday of the month at 7pm. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

### **C. Subcommittee Appointments**

Mayor Gove offered the following appointments:

- **Budget and Finance:** Mr. Webster (Chair), Ms. Welch, Ms. Currie. *Ms. deBeer moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **Personnel:** Mr. Webster (Chair), Ms. Currie, Ms. DeBeer. *Mr. Hoyt moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Webster. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **Policy:** Ms. Currie (Chair), Mr. Hoyt. *Mr. Webster moved to accept, seconded by Ms. Welch. Vote: Yes, Unanimous*
- **Building/Grounds:** Ms. deBeer (Chair), Mr. Webster, Mr. Hoyt. *Ms. deBeer moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **Curriculum:** Ms. Welch (Chair), Ms. deBeer, Mr. Hoyt. *Mr. Hoyt moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Webster. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **Joint Education:** Mr. Webster, Mr. Hoyt, Ms. deBeer. *Mr. Webster moved to accept, seconded by Ms. Welch. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*

### **D. Other Appointments**

Mayor Gove offered the following appointments:

- **Legislative Liaison:** Mr. Webster. *Ms. deBeer moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Hoyt. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **Parliamentarian:** Ms. Currie. *Mr. Hoyt moved to accept, seconded by Ms. Welch. Vote: Yes, Unanimous*
- **School Handbook Liaison:** Ms. Currie. *Mr. Webster moved to accept, seconded by Ms. deBeer. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.*
- **School Building Committee Liaison:** Re-appoint Mr. Hoyt. *Ms. deBeer moved to accept, seconded by Mr. Webster.*

Mr. Webster questioned whether the re-appointment was necessary at this time considering Mr. Hoyt was previously appointed to a term to expire in June of 2020. **Vote: Yes, Unanimous**

Mayor Gove recognized Ms. Welch for a motion. **Ms. Welch moved that the SEPAC liaison position be opened up to the current SEPAC voting members, and that Amesbury SEPAC be instructed to report a liaison recommendation at our February School Committee meeting; seconded by Mr. Webster. Vote: Yes, Unanimous.**

## **III. Comments by Visitors and Delegations**

- Greg Noyes, 8 Clarks Rd – Mr. Noyes congratulated the new committee members on their election. With budget meetings coming up Mr. Noyes wondered if they would be televised. He is in favor if this. Mr. Noyes spoke in favor of teachers and administrators having data to back up their budget requests. He asked if the elementary schools will be getting data training like the middle school. Finally, Mr. Noyes stated he does not believe that meeting once a month is enough time for the committee to get all work done.
- Gretchen Marinopoulos, 12 Sanborn Ter – Ms. Marinopoulos welcomes the committee members and thanked them for their service. Echoing the words of

Tom McGee she encouraged the committee to not be afraid to have difficult discussions or make difficult decisions. She asked the committee to hold an executive session regarding a privacy matter concerning her family. Ms. Marinopoulos paid \$560 for completion of a FOIA request regarding this matter but it was heavily redacted.

- Cindy Yetman, 6 Newton Rd – Ms. Yetman also welcomed the newly elected members. Stated that AFT (American Federation of Teachers) Amesbury looks forward to working with the committee. She congratulates the committee on the Student Opportunity Act being passed and says to expect some additional money for out-of-district transportation. Ms. Yetman stated that AFT Amesbury would like to be a participant in how we use the additional funds. A report will be due to the Department of Ed. by April 1<sup>st</sup>. AFT Members will be attending city meetings going forward to stay better informed and assist in ways they can.
- Steve Stanganelli, 12 Amidon Ave - Mr. Stanganelli, a city councilor, spoke in favor of additional financial literacy courses in the schools. He shared concerns about a possible lack of curriculum involving World War II and Holocaust history. He mentioned the possible use of [facinghistory.org](http://facinghistory.org) program. As a parent, he is concerned about the lack of capital improvements at the AES while the new school is being built. What is the plan to keep students safe? Mr. Stanganelli noted that in reviewing policies of other school districts the superintendent is required to have a mentorship with a peer, strategic goals and evaluations. He encourages the committee to follow up on those requirements. Mr. Stanganelli is also concerned with the school building committee possibly holding meetings and taking votes without a quorum. He is an advocate for a larger membership on the committee.

Mr. Webster noted that he shares some of the concerns shared. Notably the condition of the AES. He sees nothing on the capital improvement plan for AES.

#### **IV. Presentations and Administrative Reports**

##### **A. Superintendent's Report:**

- Stated that many were working hard at the schools despite the two week winter break. Floors and walls were painted in buildings. Jared thanked the following staff members: Norm Fredette, Ryan Leblanc, Kevin Ward, Michael DeNuzzio, Mike Tanzella, David Proulx, Mike Feters, Shawn Foley, Rich Papa, Jeremy Faucher, and Director of Facilities Matt Bennett.
- AES building is safe. Amesbury FD has inspected it and air quality tests completed.
- Mr. Bennett will attend future meeting to discuss building maintenance.

Ms. Welch asked what faculty will be doing over upcoming "PRT" day. Ms. Lynn Catarius, Director of Student Services, responded that the elementary staff will be combining to discuss adding social studies curriculum and breaking up into workgroups for various small group sessions. Amesbury Middle School has

an outside consultant presenting on professional learning communities, to support their turnaround plan Amesbury High School is working on the transition to next year's new schedule.

Mr. Webster asked that the Amesbury High School principal attend an upcoming meeting to explain the new block schedule to the committee. Many people are asking questions about the change.

Mr. Webster also asked about the turnaround plan at the Middle School. The Superintendent stated it is a continuous improvement model. MCAS scores are up, work still continues with the support and monitoring of the state. The state funding support has been pulled back.

## **V. Communications**

### **A. Student Advisory Council**

Ms. Dragnea spoke about the new schedule and the possibility of changing the flex block in conjunction with the new schedule. A survey was sent to students and teachers on the issue. Responses from students and teachers showed that flex was believed to be beneficial to both students and teachers. Question is whether a two day or five day flex schedule is more beneficial. New schedule next year may add flexibility.

Mr. Webster asked if start times were changing due to new schedule. Superintendent responded that they are not.

### **B. Other**

Mayor Gove asked who is responsible for updating the school committee page on the website. Superintendent responded that Daniel is working on updating the site.

Mayor Gove stated that City Council had accepted the resignation of School Committee member Kisielecki; however, the School Committee did not receive a copy to act on. Mr. Webster indicated the charter stated the action by the council had effectively created the vacancy. Mayor Gove indicated the appropriate course of action for filling of the vacancy was being determined.

Mr. Webster commented that the policy manual was very outdated with last review appearing to be from 2010. Some newly approved policies have not been added to the manual. Updating is a lengthy process.

The Superintendent suggested contracting with MASC for review and updating of policy manual.

Mr. Webster also requested that district contracts be posted on the website.

Mr. Webster additionally asked when capital plans would be available to the committee. These will begin to be addressed at upcoming budget workshops.

Mr. Webster requested a goals workshop for the committee as he sees no goals listed on the website, MASC can provide guidance on this as well.

Mr. Webster asked about the state requirement for a report to be submitted by April 1 concerning new money the district will be receiving even though we do

not know the amount we are receiving until June/July. How does that process work? Finance office has not received the promised template yet.

## **VI. Items for Approval or Early Consideration**

### **A. Approval of Minutes: 12/9/2019**

Mayor Gove questioned whether or not members of the committee could vote to approve since they were not members at the time of the December meeting in question. Mr. Hoyt would be able to approve as he was a member.

***Motion by My. Hoyt to approve the minutes from 12/9/19, seconded by Ms. deBeer. Vote: 1 yes (Hoyt), 5 abstentions (Currie, deBeer, Gove, Webster, Welch). Motion Passes.***

### **B. Approval of Warrants: 12/13/2019 - \$427,781.00**

**01/03/2020 - \$336,722.46**

Mayor Gove stated there was a discrepancy between the agenda and meeting packet concerning the December 13 warrant amount. Wrong attachment was included in meeting packet and Ms. Liporto stated she would send the correct one to vote on in February.

***Mr. Hoyt moved to approve the warrant dated 01/03/2020, seconded by Ms. Currie. Vote: Yes, Unanimous***

## **VII. Informational Items**

### **A. School Building Committee**

Mr. Hoyt provided a report on the AES project. The Building Committee last met on December 19<sup>th</sup> and discussed design development updates. Minutes and invoices for Dinisco and NV5 were approved. Meetings have been held with multiple departments and boards including Police, Fire, Energy, Building, and Con-Com. A ground survey has been completed. Various aspects of the design are being tweaked as the plan progresses including the inclusion of an interactive Amesbury mural. The next meeting is 2/6/20.

## **VIII. Future Meetings and Agenda Items**

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the School Committee will be held on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

The following dates and schedule for initial budget workshops will be:

1. January 13: Amesbury Elementary, Cashman Elementary
2. January 21: Amesbury Middle, Amesbury High, Amesbury Innovation, Athletics
3. January 23: Central, Maintenance, Curriculum, Technology, SPED
4. January 27: TBD (snow date)

The workshops have not been televised in the past and will not be this year.

Mr. Webster asked about the process for adding items to the agenda. Items should be recommended to the chair.

Mayor Gove stated she has several items to include on future agendas including:

- A report from Matt Bennett on building maintenance

- A report from Principal McAndrews on the new Amesbury High School Schedule
- Joint meeting with Student Advisory Council in February/March
- Approval of School Calendar
- Report on full day kindergarten

Mayor Gove asked about the Middle School Principal search committee.

Superintendent Fulgoni stated that the position would be posted soon at which time a search committee will be formed and a school committee member will be included.

Mayor Gove requested an update from Principal Curry on the progress of the Middle School turnaround, as well as, the scheduling of a MASC workshop and tour of school facilities.

**IX. Adjournment**

**Ms. deBeer moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Webster. Vote: Yes, Unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.**