

**AMESBURY SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

**March 24, 2025**

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Present were Mayor Gove, Chair, Maryann Welch, Kurt Mansperger, Abigail Jurist Levy, Greg Noyes, Brock Omohundro, Kate Slater, and Elizabeth McAndrews.

A recording of this meeting can be viewed here: <https://imd0mxanj2.execute-api.us-west-2.amazonaws.com/ssr/watch/67e703cf78101b0008089e86>

- I. Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Mission Statement/Pledge of Allegiance (0:15)
- II. Comment by Visitors and Delegations (1:32)
  - Jim Montanari read a letter on behalf of the APS leadership team in support of the Superintendent's level services budget.
  - Cindy Yetman spoke in favor of the Superintendent's level services budget
  - Jim Sweeney - Aubin St, Mr. Sweeney spoke in favor of using free cash to fund the budget and a potential override.
  - A Facebook comment from Lindsay Pappas was read
  - Evan Melanson spoke in favor of the Superintendent's budget.
  - Susan Woodsom – Lions Mouth Rd, spoke in favor of a level services budget.
  - Jon Kezer spoke in favor of a level services budget
  - Julie Bender spoke in favor of a level services budget
  - A facebook comment from Michelle Leblanc was read asking for transparency in the process
  - A Facebook comment from Karyn Bern was read asking the committee to support the students
- III. Executive Session (17:18) Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, Section 21 (a) (3) for the purpose of discussing strategy as it relates to collective bargaining with the AFT Amesbury, Paraprofessionals Unit, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Committee, as declared by the Chair.  
*Mr. Noyes moved to enter executive session, second by Mr. Omohundro. Approved unanimously.*
- IV. FY26 Budget Deliberation (18:17)

The Superintendent began the deliberations by sharing with the committee the process that was used to arrive at the budget that was proposed to the committee. The mayor outlined the process that would be used to vote on each cost center. The committee then began voting on the FY26 budget as follows:

- Administration in the amount of \$1,374,838. Objection by Mr. Omohundro.
- Transportation in the amount of \$756,200. *Dr. Slater moved to approve, second by Mr. Noyes.* Superintendent McAndrews confirmed this number did not reflect an increase in fees. *Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*
- Shay Memorial in the amount of \$6,070,944. Objection.
- Cashman Elementary in the amount of \$4,308,705. Objection.
- Amesbury Middle in the amount of \$5,974,993. Objection.
- Amesbury High in the amount of \$6,016,708. Objection.
- Amesbury Innovation in the amount of \$920,685. Objection.
- District Technology in the amount of \$205,919. Objection.
- District Maintenance in the amount of \$2,745,211. *Dr. Slater moved to approve, seconded by Mr. Mansperger. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*
- Curriculum & Professional Development in the amount of \$529,382. *Dr. Slater moved to approve as presented, second by Mr. Noyes. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*
- Special Education in the amount of \$4,913,976. Objection.
- Employee Benefits in the amount of \$7,331,739. *Dr. Slater moved to approve as presented, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

The mayor then returned to the district administration cost center. Mr. Omohundro stated he wanted to reinstate the paraprofessional days. The mayor noted they were not removed in the budget that was before the committee.

*Dr. Slater moved to approve District Administration in the amount of \$1,374,838, second by Ms. Welch. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Mr. Noyes moved to reduce the Shay cost center by \$74,000.* Ms. Welch asked for clarification surrounding the proposal in relation to class size. *No second on the motion.*

*Dr. Slater moved to approve the Shay budget in the amount of 6,070,944, second by Mr. Omohundro. Vote: 5 Yes, 1 No (Noyes), 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Mr. Omohundro withdrew his objection to the Cashman budget.*

*Mr. Noyes moved to cut \$49,000 from the budget (Chromebooks), second by Ms. Welch. Vote: 2 Yes (Noyes, Jurist Levy), 4 No, 1 Abstention (Gove). Fails.*

*Dr. Slater moved to approve the Cashman budget in the amount of \$4,308,705, second by, Ms. Welch. Vote: 4 Yes, 2 No (Noyes, Jurist Levy), 1 Abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Mr. Noyes moved to reduce the AMS budget by \$108,000, second by Ms. Welch.*

Mr. Omohundro and Dr. Slater spoke in opposition to the proposal. Mr. Noyes noted both elementary schools had larger enrollment and fewer administrators. *Vote: 3 Yes, 2 No (Slater, Mansperger), 2 Abstentions (Omohundro, Gove). Passes.*

*Mr. Noyes moved to approve the Middle School budget in the amount of \$5,794,993, second by Ms. Welch.*

Ms. Welch stated the committee only votes on the bottom-line number and Mr. Omohundro urged the committee to vote no. Mr. Noyes noted that the committee needed to find \$2,000,000 in savings. *Vote: 3 Yes, 2 No (Slater, Mansperger), 2 Abstentions (Omohundro, Gove). Passes.*

*Mr. Noyes moved to reduce the AHS budget by \$37,800. No second.*

Mr. Mansperger stated he wanted the committee to increase the school choice offset by \$100,000.

*Mr. Mansperger then moved to increase the school choice offset by \$100,000 and reduce the overall AHS budget by \$100,000, second by Dr. Slater. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Ms. Welch moved to approve the AHS budget in the amount of \$5,916,708, second by Dr. Slater. Vote: 4 Yes, 2 No (Noyes, Omohundro), 1 Abstention (Gove). Passes.*

Mr. Noyes asked what offsets were included in the AIHS budget. Previous balances and 1 tuition-in student were included.

*Mr. Noyes moved to reduce the AIHS budget by \$41,832, second by Ms. Welch.*

Dr. Jurist Levy asked about further reducing the budget to reflect an increase in tuition-in students. The committee discussed the result of this possibility.

*The vote on the Noyes motion was: 3 Yes, 2 No (Omohundro, Slater), 2 abstentions (Mansperger, Gove). Passes.*

*Ms. Welch moved to approve the AIHS budget in the amount of \$878,853, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Mr. Mansperger asked for clarification on the role of the MPFT at AIHS. Superintendent McAndrews shared about his role and the committee discussed. The committee then discussed the possible addition of a part time secretary. Vote: 2 Yes (Noyes, Jurist Levy), 4 No, 1 abstention (Gove). Fails.*

*Dr. Slater moved to approve the AIHS budget in the amount of \$920,685, second by Ms. Welch. Vote: 4 Yes, 2 No (Noyes, Jurist Levy), 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Dr. Jurist Levy moved to approve the District Technology budget in the amount of \$205,919, second by Mr. Omohundro. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

In regard to the Special Education budget Mr. Noyes asked about the reason behind the proposed increase. The budget is based on current students enrolled.

*Dr. Slater moved to approve the Special Education budget in the amount of \$4,913,976, second by Ms. Welch. Vote: 6 Yes, 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

*Ms. Welch moved to approve the FY26 budget in the amount of \$40,869,300, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Vote: 5 Yes, 1 No (Slater), 1 abstention (Gove). Passes.*

Mayor Gove thanked the administration and committee for their work and explained the rationale for her abstentions.

Mr. Noyes noted the committee should expect revenues to fall \$2,000,000 short of meeting the increases reflected in the *passed* budget.

*Dr. Slater moved to adjourn, second by Dr. Jurist Levy. Passes unanimously.*

DRAFT