

REGULAR MEETING

March 09, 2015

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. William Blake, Mr. Christopher Browe, Ms. Patricia Cardozo, Ms. Sue Cohen, Ms. Diane Crocco, Mr. Steven Demaio, Ms. Rita Gedansky, Mr. James Horowitz, Mr. Thomas Hurley, Ms. Tracey Lane Russo, Ms. Sheila McCreven and Mr. James Stirling.

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff members present: Dr. Charles Dumais, Mr. Jack Levine, Ms. Terry Lumas, Mr. Jim Saisa, Mr. Kevin Keller, Mr. Shawn Derosa, Dr. Marie McPadden, Ms. Mary Raiola, Dr. Charles Britton, Dr. Richard Dellinger and Ms. Cathy Cutler-Fuller.

Also present: Mrs. Ruth Natzel, Mr. Jim Leahy (vice-chairman of the Orange Board of Finance), Mr. George Grotheer, Woodbridge Board of Selectmen and other members of the public.

A regular meeting of the Amity Regional Board of Education (BOE) was held on Monday, March 09,, 2015 at 5:30 pm in the cafeteria at Amity High School.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman William Blake called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by those present.
3. **Presentation of plaques to Boys Cross Country State Champions**
Mr. Ernie Goodwin, Athletic Director, and cross country team captain Alex Bunnell presented the state championship plaque to the Board of Education. Mr. Goodwin gave a recap of the cross country season; the team was the Southern Connecticut Conference (SCC) regular season champion, Class LL and State Champions. The team was 5th at the State Open Championship which qualified the team for the All New England Meet. Coach Orgovan was named (SCC Coach of the Year, sophomore Kyle Bodett named SCC runner of the year. Assistant Coach Thom Jacobs could not be present but sent his congratulations. Plaques were awarded to each team member by Coach Orgovan, Dr. Britton, Mr. Blake and Dr. Dumais.
Coach Orgovan spoke and thanked the Board, the Athletic Director and Dr. Dumais for their support. The team and their coaches were congratulated by the Board and by all those present.
4. **Recognition of 2015 Southern Connecticut Area Superintendents Association (SCASA) Award Recipients -**
Mr. Blake introduced Dr. Britton to present the two high school awards to Arpdit Jajoo and Anthony Coscia. Ms. Cutler-Fuller presented the award to Cailey Esposito and Cole Bova for Amity Middle School Orange. Dr. Dellinger presented the award to Willow Smith and Joe Benedetti for Amity Middle School Bethany School. The students were congratulated by the Board and by all those present.

Mr. Blake announced a 10-minute break at 6:50 pm to allow visitors to depart. The Board reconvened at 7:00 pm. Mr. Blake stated the Board would move to item 8, Student Report to allow Mr. Grotheer to get to a rehearsal.

8. **Student Report** – Mr. George Grotheer gave an update on events at Amity High School over the past month.

Motion by Ms. Cohen, second by Ms. Crocco to move to item #7, public comment.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried.

7. Public comment

Mr. Tom Handler, Woodbridge – spoke regarding the policy change for the grading policy 6146.1.

Mr. Bruce Marion – Woodbridge- Mr. Marion spoke in favor of renaming the Amity gym after Mr. Mengold.

Ms. Jenna Derosa – former student, current Amity coach and Amity staff member spoke in favor of renaming the gym after Mr. Mengold.

Ms. Beth Young, Bethany, read a statement on behalf of Mr. Jim Ronay from Orange, former Amity student class of 1984 and Amity Hall of Fame member, who could not be present; his statement was in favor of renaming the gym for Mr. Mengold.

Ms. Young, former student, former Amity coach and now parent of students, spoke in favor of renaming the gym for Mr. Mengold.

Mr. Gary Lindgren, West Haven, Amity hockey coach. He spoke in favor of renaming the gym for Mr. Mengold.

Mr. Paul Davis, Orange, former Amity swim coach – Mr. Davis thanked the Board for their hard work. He spoke in favor of renaming the gym for Mr. Mengold.

5. Update on Adult and Continuing Education Program – Mr. Seth Davis gave an update on the fall semester of adult and continuing education.

Motion by Mr. Demaio, second by Mr. Browe to move to item 11.A.4.a.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried.

11. A. Committee reports**4. Facilities****a. Discussion and possible action on naming of Amity Facility**

Mr. Blake and Dr. Dumais stated that according to Board policy, this item cannot be voted upon until after two public meetings are held, this being the first. Mr. Blake thanked all those who spoke for their comments and that the Board very much appreciated all the information given. A vote on naming the gym after Mr. Paul Mengold will take place at next month's Board meeting.

6. Approval of minutes.

A. Special BOE meeting, February 11, 2015

Motion by Ms. Crocco, second by Ms. Gedansky to accept the minutes as submitted.

Corrections were made to: regular meeting not special; Mr. not Ms. Demaio page 2 ; page 1, #4 public comment cost per student up to 20,000 per, not an increase of that amount; Board members present Cardoza/Cardozo. (corrections were made and the minutes were re-submitted)

Vote unanimous (Mr. Hurley abstained)

Motion carried

9. Correspondence – None.**10. Superintendent's report**

A. Personnel Report – (attached). New coaching staff, one coach resignation.

B. Other (enclosure)

United Illuminating (UI) was purchased by a Spanish company but Amity's agreement with them is not affected. Our attorneys are looking at the lease proposed by UI.

Update on sewage backup – The cost of repair was \$16,700 and \$15,700 is covered by insurance.

Update on scheduling committee meetings – Karen Wade uses Doodle to be sure that there are enough responses to make a quorum. Committee members were reminded to be sure to respond.

Dr. McPadden was a presenter recently at the State Department of Education.

Two retirements have taken place; Director of Pupil Services is researching how to best replace these positions.

Universal assessment may help coherence K-12. Goal is to reduce redundant assessments and coordinate assessment in K-12

Friday March 20th is a full day of professional development. Foreign language consultant will be coming in for that day. Adjunct staff is included (secretaries) in this day.

Amity In Action is almost done and will be sent out ahead of schedule.

Goal development for 2016. Draft will be presented at the Board meeting in May. The three to five year plans are being worked on currently.

11. Chairman's Report -

A. Committee Reports

1. **ACES** – Ms. Cohen stated that the State legislature is proposing to decentralize special education which might mean less money to the towns.
2. **CABE** – Ms. McCreven is going to CABE's Day On The Hill on March 25th and all encouraged to attend. The Education Committee and Environmental Committee issues might be of particular interest to Amity, in particular a proposed extended pesticide ban.
3. **Curriculum** – no meeting.
4. **Facilities**
 - b. **Facilities Department – Monthly report, February 2015 (enclosure).** There was a presentation and an update on the UI project at the last meeting. There were some questions raised regarding placement of the fuel cell and the Committee is awaiting an answer from UI.
5. **Finance**
 - a. **Discussion and possible action on Superintendent's proposed 2015-2016 budget (enclosure).**

Dr. Dumais reported an enrollment change, a 2.5% decrease, smaller decrease than anticipated in the number of students and in the budget. Amity's DRG group averages a 3% increase. We have balanced the risk in the medical reserve fund and have re-evaluated this; we are currently under budget for 2015 (claims and fees for January and February 2015) by \$122,000. Dr. Dumais recommended that this amount be applied to the budget and everything goes according to the budget for the year, Amity will be at 20% in the medical reserve fund by June 2016. Overall increase in the budget is now 1.86%, as opposed to 2.12% presented in February.

Motion by Mr. Horwitz and second by Ms. Gedansky to adopt the budget for Amity Regional District #5 as presented, gross amount of \$46,902,342 and net amount of \$45,348,694.

Mr. Stirling reported that the Finance Committee voted 5 to 1 in favor of recommending this budget to the full Board. Mr. Blake stated that for the record the 1 vote against was the member of the Finance Committee from Orange.

Dr. Dumais reported the budget increases for the towns now stand at: Bethany \$236,000/2.57%, Orange \$643,000/2.95 %, Woodbridge \$261,000/1.97 %. Total member town allocation is 2.58% This information just came in to the superintendent today.

Mr. Blake reported that Dr. Dumais has met with the Finance Committees from Orange and Woodbridge and will meet with Bethany tomorrow night.

There was discussion, questions and answers regarding some budget items.

Vote 11 in favor, 1 against (Mr. Demaio)

Motion carried

b. Update on State of Connecticut administrative review of the school lunch program (enclosure) –
Ms. Lumas updated the Board on the review of the lunch program. It will now occur every 3 years, was previously every 5 years, done by the State of Connecticut as required by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The review is now much more involved. In general they were very happy with what Amity is doing and the review was exceptional. The recommendation was to increase the promotion of the breakfast program and to have increased training on production records.

There were a few questions from Board members regarding particular points of Ms. Lumas' report.

Dr. Dumais made the board aware that the governor's proposed budget for the State of Connecticut may result in a loss of \$12,000 to \$15,000 from the school lunch budget.

c. Discussion of monthly financial statements (enclosure) – None.

d. Director of Finance and Administration approved transfers under \$3,000. (enclosure, for information only)

e. Discussion and possible action on budget transfers of \$3,000 or more. Budget transfer is needed to pay special education expenditures.

Motion by Mr. Stirling, second by Mr. Browe, to make the budget transfer in the amount of \$7,425 from account number 04-12-6130-5560, tuition expense, to 04-12-6110-5560 tuition expense.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

f. Discussion and possible action on new funding requests. Budget transfer is needed to pay for sanding and snow removal. This budget transfer of \$10,000 will be split between the high school and middle schools based on actual invoices.

Motion by Mr. Stirling, second by Ms. Cohen to make a budget transfer of \$10,000 from account number 05-15-0000-5850, contingency account to account number xx-14-2600-5420 repairs, maintenance and cleaning to pay for sanding and snow removal.

Mr. Stirling stated that this will leave \$125,040 in the contingency account.

There were some questions and discussion regarding the snow removal budget and the budget for heating oil.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Mr. Blake and Ms. Cohen stated it was time to let everyone know that Dr. Dumais has completed the requirements for his doctorate and the Board congratulated him heartily.

6. Policy

a. Discussion and possible action on Policy 6146.1 (enclosure). Mr. Blake asked Dr. Dumais to highlight the changes that were made to the policy since the last meeting. (see packet).

Lengthy, lively discussion, questions and answered ensued.

Motion by Ms. McCreven, second by Ms. Cardozo to postpone consideration of this policy for a vote until the next Board meeting.

Further discussion and questions took place.

Mr. Blake called the question.

Votes in favor 4 (Mr. Browe, Ms. Cardozo, Ms. McCreven and Mr. Stirling); vote against (Ms. Cohen, Ms. Crocco, Mr. Horwitz, Ms. Gedansky and Ms. Russo) 2 abstentions (Mr. Demaio and Mr. Hurley) MOTION DEFEATED

Motion by Ms. Cohen, second by Ms. Crocco to adopt the policy 6146.1 as presented.

Discussion followed with further, clear explanation by Dr. Britton that this will not adversely affect our seniors who have already applied to college and stated that if he thought this was going to be harmful to students he would not even consider this. If a scholarship or college acceptance is called into question because of this change, which is unlikely, Dr. Britton himself would do what was necessary to remedy that situation. Any retroactive change to grades will be positive because of the change to weighting of A and A+. Dr. Britton stated that Mr. Baretta (math department chair) explained this at the last policy meeting. He stated that this policy is the best effort by the administration to adversely affect the least amount of students.

Motion by Ms Cohen, second by Ms. Crocco to call the question.

**Vote in favor 8 (Mr. Demaio, Mr. Stirling, Ms. Russo, Ms. Crocco, Ms. Gedansky, Ms. Cohen, Mr. Horwitz, Mr. Hurley),
vote opposed 3 (Ms. McCreven, Ms. Cardozo and Mr. Browe) Motion carried**

Mr. Blake called the motion to adopt Policy 6146.1.

**In favor 5 (Ms. Russo, Ms. Crocco, Ms. Gedansky, Ms. Cohen, Mr. Horwitz), opposed 5 (Ms. McCreven, Ms. Cardozo,
Mr. Stirling and Mr. Browe) abstention (Mr. Demaio). Chairman Blake voted in favor Motion carried**

***Motion by Mr. Hurley, second by Ms. Cohen that the Policy Committee revisit policy 6146.1 to include the class of
2019 and beyond.***

Vote favor 10, 1 opposed (Ms. McCreven) Motion carried.

7. Personnel – covered in the superintendent's report, agenda item 10.A

12. Items for next agenda - please forward to Dr. Dumais or to Mr. Blake.

13. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:05 pm by Ms. McCreven, second by Ms. Crocco.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk

Thomas Hurley, Secretary