

REGULAR MEETING

April 13, 2015

MINUTES

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

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: None

Staff members present: Dr. Charles Dumais, Ms. Terry Lumas, Mr. Ernie Goodwin, Mr. Shawn DeRosa, Dr. Marie McPadden, Ms. Mary Raiola, and Dr. Charles Britton.

Also present: Mrs. Ruth Natzel, Mr. Jim Leahy (vice-chairman of the Orange Board of Finance), Mr. Laurence 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, April 13, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the presentation room at the Amity District Offices.

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman William Blake called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance** was recited by those present.

Mr. Hurley moved that item 12.A.4.a. be moved to after item 6 (student report) on the agenda, 2nd by Mr. Browe.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Chairman Blake stated that Mr. Grasso tendered his resignation as a member of the Board of Education due to the increased demands of his job. Mr. Blake thanked Mr. Grasso for his years of service and wished him well. Mr. John Belfonti was then sworn in as a new Board of Education member to take Mr. Grasso's place.

3. **Presentation of Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) Aware of Excellence for Educational Communications for the 2014-2015 Amity District Calendar.**

Presentation of the CABE award was made by area director John Prins to the Amity Board of Education.

4. **Approval of minutes.**

- A. **Regular BOE meeting, March 09, 2015 (enclosure)**

Motion by Mr. Demaio, 2nd by Mr. Stirling, to approve the minutes as submitted.

Correction on page 4, item 6.a. should be "Lengthy, lively discussion ensued and questions were answered."

Correction on page 5, add Mr. Hurley's name to those voting opposed to the motion.

(Corrections were made and minutes were re-submitted)

Mr. Blake asked for a vote on the minutes as submitted and amended.

Vote unanimous with 3 abstentions (Mr. Demaio, Ms. Russo and Mr. Belfonti)

Motion carried

- B. **Special BOE meeting, March 24, 2014 (enclosure)**

Motion by Ms. Russo, 2nd by Mr. Hurley to accept the minutes as submitted

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

C. Public District Hearing, April 06, 2015 (enclosure)

Motion by Mr. Stirling, 2nd by Ms. McCreven to approve the minutes as submitted

Vote unanimous with 5 abstentions (Mr. Browe, Mr. Hurley, Ms. Russo, Mr. Demaio and Mr. Belfonti) Motion carried

5. Public Comment

Ms. Tasha Turkalo, Amity High School, Class of 1984, spoke in favor of naming the gymnasium after Mr. Paul Mengold.

6. Student Report

Mr. George Grotheer gave an update on events at Amity High School over the past month as well as informing the Board of upcoming events. Mr. Blake thanked Mr. Grotheer for his report and congratulated him on his work in the play "Tarzan", along with all the other students that were in the play.

12.A.4.a Chairman's report, committee reports, facilities, naming of the gymnasium

Motion made by Ms. Gedansky, 2nd by Mr. Hurley, upon recommendation by the Facilities Committee, to name the Amity High School Gymnasium The Paul Mengold Gymnasium.

Several Board members spoke in favor or against the motion for various reasons.

Votes in favor 8, votes against 2 (Mr. Demaio, Mr. Stirling), abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

7. Correspondence

Mr. Blake received a thank you note from the captain of the Amity High School cross-country team.

8. Discussion and possible action on District Technology Plan – Second reading (enclosures)

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Mr. Demaio to accept the Technology Plan as presented at a previous Board meeting.

Vote unanimous (abstention Mr. Belfonti)

Motion carried

9. Discussion and possible action on setting graduation date – June 22, 2015

Dr. Dumais recommended that the date for Graduation coincide with the date for the last day of school (June 22, 2015) and that the date of the last day of school not be adjusted. He noted that it was adjusted last year in order to avoid having to hold school during a single day of the April Vacation due to excessive weather-related cancellations.

There was some discussion regarding the last day of school and the date of graduation in previous years. Point of order was called by Mr. Hurley that a motion was needed to amend the agenda first.

Motion by Ms. McCreven, 2nd by Mr. Browe to amend the agenda to consider changing the last day of school.

In favor 9, against 2 (Ms. Cohen, Mr. Horwitz), abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Mr. Browe to remove one day from the school calendar to make 181 days and to finish on Friday, June 19, 2015.

Much discussion followed regarding several possibilities for adjusting the calendar including shortening the year by one day, changing graduation to a Friday, with Monday as the last day of school.

More discussion took place regarding changing the school calendar and setting a graduation date and the possibilities and logistics of both. Dr. Dumais and Dr. Britton answered questions regarding the pros and cons of taking away a day from the school year and making Friday, June 19, 2015 graduation day.

In favor 6 (Mr. Browe, Mr. Demaio, Mr. Hurley, Russo, Crocco, Gedansky) opposed 6 (Mr. Blake, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Cardozo, Mr. Horwitz, Mr. Stirling, Ms. McCreven) abstention Mr. Belfonti **MOTION FAILED**

Motion by Ms. McCreven, 2nd by Mr. Browe, to move graduation to Friday, June 19, 2015.

In favor (Demaio, Browe, Russo, McCreven, Crocco, Gedansky, Stirling, Cardozo) 8, opposed 2 (Ms. Cohen, Mr. Horwitz) abstention 2 (Mr. Hurley, Mr. Belfonti) **Motion carried**

Mr. Blake asked for a motion for a 10-minute recess.

Motion by Mr. Browe, by for a 10-minute recess at 7:35 pm.

Vote unanimous **Motion carried**

Mr. Blake called the meeting back to order at 7:47 pm.

10. Accept donation of \$550.00 from Bethany Lions Club for an electronic device charging station for Amity Regional High School.

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Ms. Crocco to accept the donation of \$550.00 from the Bethany Lions Club for purchase of an electronic device charging station for Amity High School.

Vote unanimous **Motion carried**

Mr. Blake thanked the Bethany Lions Club for their generous donation.

11. Superintendent's Report

A. Personnel Report – (enclosure)

Dr. Britton will be taking a position as assistant professor at Sacred Heart University at the end of this school year. Mr. Demaio thanked Dr. Britton for his service to Amity and pointed out that there were three superintendents during Dr. Britton's tenure but only one principal at Amity High School, a Blue Ribbon School.

B. Other (enclosure)

United Illuminating lease agreement is still being negotiated and is narrowed down to 5 possible areas. Gas contracts for Orange and the high school are in place at zero cost to the district.

Next policy meetings are on May 7th, June 4th and June 25th.

The hours for the budget referendum were discussed with Town Officials and will remain 6am-8pm.

12. Chairman's Report -

A. Committee Reports

1. ACES

Ms. Cohen stated that ACES will advertise both remedial and accelerated summer academies. There will be a lunch on Friday May 8th from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at Amaranti's to introduce the programs.

2. CAFE

Ms. McCreven attended Day On The Hill on March 25th. Points of interest were the definition of dyslexia and the possible expansion of a pesticide ban to include high schools. The Minimum Budget Requirement will also be taken up by the legislature.

3. **Curriculum** – The Curriculum Committee has not met.
4. **Facilities** – The Facilities Committee has not met.
 - a. **Discussion and possible action on naming of gymnasium**
 - b. **Facilities Department monthly report, March 2015 (enclosure)**
 - c. **United Illuminating (UI)** – These items were covered in the Superintendent’s Report.
 1. **Lease**
 2. **Gas contract – Orange**
 3. **Gas contract – High school**
5. **Finance**
 - a. **Budget**
 1. **Discuss and take final action on the 2015-2016 Amity Board of Education operating budget to be submitted to referendum on Wednesday, May 6, 2015.**

Motion by Ms. Cohen, 2nd by Ms. Crocco to send the Superintendent’s proposed budget in the gross amount of \$46,902,342/net amount of \$ 45,348,694 to referendum on Wednesday, May 6, 2015.

Vote 10 in favor, 1 opposed (Mr. Demaio) Mr. Belfonti abstained

Motion carried

2. **Resolution to authorize Amity Regional School District No. 5 to prepare an explanatory text for the budget referendum question:**

Motion by Mr. Horwitz, 2nd by Ms. Cardozo that it BE RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Board of Education of Amity Regional School District No 5 be 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.

Vote unanimous, abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

- b. **Discussion and possible action on contracts of \$35,000 or more (attached)**

Mr. Blake asked for one motion was made to award all the contracts, numbers 1-9 as written in the memo of March 26, 2015 from Mr. Levine to Dr. Dumais and as recommended by the Finance Committee. Mr. Hurley stated that he would need to recuse himself from voting on item numbers 1, 7 and 9.

Motion made by Mr. Stirling, 2nd by Mr. Horwitz to award the contracts for item numbers 2, 3,4,5, 6, and 8 as written in the memo of March 26, 2015 from Mr. Levine to Dr. Dumais and as recommended by the Finance Committee and as listed below:

2. *Substitute teacher services*
3. *Site-based grounds maintenance program*
4. *Snow removal, ice control and sanding services*
5. *Safety service program*
6. *District chiller maintenance contract*
8. *Athletic training contract*

Vote unanimous, abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

Motion made by Mr. Browe, 2nd by Mr. Horwitz to award the contracts for item numbers 1,7 and 9 as written in the memo of March 26, 2015 from Mr. Levine to Dr. Dumais and as recommended by the Finance Committee and as listed below:

1. *Professional auditing services*
7. *Investment consulting services*
9. *Health and welfare benefits consultants for medical and dental Insurances*

Vote unanimous with Mr. Hurley recused and Mr. Belfonti abstaining

Motion carried

c. Discussion of monthly financial statements (attached)

Ms. Cardozo commended Mr. Levine, Ms. Lumas and Dr. McPadden for their continued efforts in aggressively looking for cost savings.

d. Director of Finance and Administration approved transfers under \$3,000 (attached) no questions.

e. Discussion and possible action on budget transfers of \$3,000 or more (attached)

f. Discussion and possible action on new funding requests

Motion by Mr. Browe, 2nd by Mr. Horwitz to make the budget transfer of \$25,000 from account 04-12-6130-5560, tuition expense, to account number 04-12-6110-5560, tuition expense, to pay special education expenses and that we make a budget transfer to purchase a golf cart for \$6,400.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Motion by Ms. Crocco, 2nd by Mr. Horwitz to make a budget transfer of \$19,780 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.

Vote unanimous, abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

6. Policy

a. First reading – ByLaw 9325 meeting conduct (enclosure)

There was much discussion regarding the fine points of this ByLaw. The ByLaw will go back to the Policy Committee when they meet on May 7th and Mr. Blake suggested that any Board member with suggestions for revision make them know to the Committee.

b. Second reading – Policy 3435.1 – Unexpended class funds (enclosure)

Motion by Ms. Russo, 2nd by Ms. Cohen to adopt Policy 3435.1

Vote unanimous, abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

c. Second reading – Policy 3524.1 - Hazardous material in schools.

Motion by Ms. Cohen, 2nd by Mr. Browe to adopt Policy 3524.1

Vote unanimous, abstention Mr. Belfonti

Motion carried

7. Personnel – Covered in the Superintendent’s Report

13. Items for next agenda – please forward any items to Dr. Dumais or Mr. Blake.

14. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Hurley, 2nd by Ms. Crocco to adjourn at 8:44 pm.

Vote unanimous

Motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth E. Natzel, Recording Clerk

Thomas Hurley, Secretary