

Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee Meeting
May 26, 2016
Library, Amherst Regional High School

IN ATTENDANCE:

Trevor Baptiste, Chair
Stephen Sullivan
Phoebe Hazzard
Katherine Appy
Emily Marriott
Vira Douangmany Cage
Laura Kent
Sarah Dolven
Anastasia Ordonez

Maria Geryk, Superintendent
Michael Morris, Assistant Superintendent
Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Mark Jackson, ARHS Principal
Marisa Mendonsa, ARMS Principal
Sasha Figueroa, Recorder
Public and Press

1. Welcome and Reorganize

6:02 p.m.

Ms. Geryk called the meeting to order at 6:35 and noted that it is time to reorganize the Committee. Mr. Baptiste noted that district policy states that elections at the other towns need to be completed and the town's school committee's reorganized before the Regional committee reorganizes. Policy BDA was read and discussion followed. Ms. Dolven noted that she would not disapprove of voting now, but the policy is difficult to interpret. She suggested that the Policy Subcommittee review it. Ms. Geryk stated that MA General Law requires that a Regional School Committee reorganize within 10 days after the last member town's election. Ms. Marriott expressed her discomfort in reorganizing when the Pelham School Committee has not done so yet. Ms. Douangmany Cage recommended keeping Mr. Baptiste as Chair until the retreat and reorganizing then. She also mentioned avoiding reorganizing prior to the superintendent's evaluation. Ms. Appy noted that the Regional committee has been reorganizing after town elections for some time now. Ms. Geryk requested that the committee vote on whether to reorganize or not. Mr. Baptist made a motion not to reorganize and wait until the retreat. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and discussion followed. Ms. Dolven asked to amend the motion to reorganize at the next Regional meeting on June 14 since Pelham will have met and reorganized by then. After further discussion, Ms. Geryk called the question. The amended motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Baptiste reviewed the agenda and asked for a motion to approve the minutes of April 12 and May 10, 2016. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that her name was misspelled in both sets of minutes and asked that it be corrected. Discussion followed regarding the minutes of April 12, particularly regarding the public comments portion. It was agreed that Ms. Westmoreland will be asked to review the meeting and add more detail to the minutes. Both sets of minutes were table until the June 14 meeting.

2. Announcements and Public Comments

Denise Boyd, ARMS Counselor, and Talib Sadiq, ARMS School Climate Coordinator, read a letter signed by 25 staff members recognizing the contributions made by Principal Marisa Mendonsa to the Middle School in the past two years. They noted her skills, openness to feedback and supportiveness to her staff. Ms. Boyd and Mr. Sadiq said that students have expressed that they improved due to her leadership and said she will be missed. Mr. Baptiste and other members of the committee thanked Ms. Mendonsa for her excellent work with the district. Ms. Geryk also expressed her appreciation. Ms. Mendonsa said she would like to share where some of the successes have been and plans moving forward with the committee at a future meeting. Maria Lou Conka, community member, spoke about her discomfort with her tax money going toward administration that issues stay away orders. Michael Mangeau, community member, stated that he hopes an apology will be made to the parent who had a stay away issued against her and said he is glad there will be a policy developed around this issue.

3. Superintendent's Update

Ms. Geryk reported on a number of recent and upcoming events including the 10th annual Latino Achievement celebration, the Black Scholars Rising event and the secondary level ELL picnic. She noted that ARHS graduation is June 10 with School Committee members arriving by 5:30 p.m. Other graduations and ceremonies include:

- SEPAC ceremony recognizing special education staff who have made a difference on June 2 at 4:00 p.m.
- South East Campus graduation on June 3 at 9:30 a.m. (Munson Library)
- Employee years of service and retirement event on June 13 at 7:00 p.m.
- Pelham sixth grade graduation on June 16 at 7:00 p.m.
- Crocker Farm sixth grade graduation on June 17 at 9:30 a.m.
- Wildwood sixth grade graduation on June 17 at 9:00 a.m.
- Fort River sixth grade graduation on June 17 at 1:00 p.m.
- ARMS eighth grade moving on ceremony on June 20 at 9:00 a.m.

Ms. Geryk noted that she will have Ms. Westmoreland send a list of the dates to the School Committees. Mr. Sullivan will let the committee know about the date of Shutesbury's sixth grade graduation and Ms. Doven will let the committee know about Leverett. Ms. Douangmany Cage said she would like a better plan to honor Asian American students. Ms. Geryk noted that it is important to find the best way to celebrate diversity in the community and the community in general.

3. New and Continuing Business

A. Business Office Matters

DOCUMENTS: Memo of May 2, 2016 to Maria Geryk, Superintendent, from Sean Mangano, Finance Director, regarding life expectancy of departmental equipment; Memo of May 16, 2016 to Maria Geryk, Superintendent, from Sean Mangano, Finance Director, regarding Disposal of Athletic Apparel

Life Expectancy of Departmental Equipment

Mr. Mangano explained the need to declare a life expectancy for the ARMS intercom system that will be purchased as part of the FY17 capital projects. It is a requirement that the life expectancy of the equipment will exceed the borrowing term. He explained that the intercom equipment has a life expectancy of no less than 15 years and the borrowing term is expected to be 10 years. Ms. Appy moved to declare that the maximum useful life of the departmental equipment to be financed with the proceeds of the \$10,000 Middle School Intercom System borrowing authorized by the vote of the School Committee passed March 8, 2016 is hereby determined to be fifteen (15) years. Ms. Kent seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Disposal of Athletic Apparel

Mr. Mangano noted that several boxes of old athletic apparel (attached list) is no longer useful to the schools and can be donated. Items will be made available to current students. Ms. Hazzard moved to declare the attached list of athletic apparel surplus and to authorize the Director of Finance to auction off, donate or otherwise dispose of this apparel in conjunction with provisions of MGL 30B. Ms. Appy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

B. Approve Clerical/Media Awards

DOCUMENTS: Memo of May 23, 2016 to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Debbie Westmoreland, Assistant to the Superintendent, regarding Clerical/Media Awards

Ms. Appy reviewed the process used in selecting the recipients of the clerical/media awards, noting that there were 17 nominees this year. Those chosen to receive the award are Michaela Tarr, ARHS/ARMS Registrar and the ARMS front office team of Sue Battistoni and Judi DellaMarco. Each recipient will receive an award of \$500 and will be honored at the June 13th event. Ms. Ordonez asked if there are opportunities to recognize other staff members such as maintenance and custodial. Ms. Geryk Maria responded that they are eligible for the Community Building Award. Ms. Appy then moved that, in accordance with the Unit B employee contract, the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee approves clerical/media awards in the amount of \$500 each for Sue Battistoni, Judi DellaMarco and Michaela Tarr. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

C. Orientation of New Members and Retreat

Ms. Dolven reported that the Union 28 School Committee had Dorothy Presser, representative from the MASC, provide a presentation to them regarding school committee roles and responsibilities. She said it was an excellent

presentation, and she asked Ms. Presser if she would be willing to attend the Regional School Committee's retreat to make a similar presentation. She is willing to come if the School Committee wishes to invite her. The committee agreed that they would like her to come and will propose a few possible dates for her consideration. Mr. Baptiste asked that the Superintendent arrange for the usual retreat location at Amherst College if it is available. Mr. Baptiste opened the floor to Ms. Kent and Ms. Ordonez as new members to share their thoughts about what they would like to learn from the retreat. Ms. Kent expressed her interest in building collaboration and unity as a committee. Ms. Hazzard suggested having a small subcommittee work with the MASC presenter to come up with goals for the retreat. Ms. Appy suggested possibly having two retreats, one at the end of the school year and another in August, with the first one focusing on roles and responsibilities. Discussion followed regarding plans and goals of the retreat. Ms. Douangmany Cage suggested that she would like to see Pelham and the Regional School Committees have different attorneys to avoid any conflict of interest. Mr. Baptiste noted that he can provide a list of qualified lawyers for the committee to review at their next meeting if the committee would like for him to do so. Ms. Dolven noted that, as an attorney, she is also willing to help in searching for attorneys who would be qualified. Ms. Geryk noted that attorneys for the districts have distinct roles such as special education law, collective bargaining and personnel matters and work for three separate districts. These are important considerations. Ms. Marriott suggested that having a yearly refresher on public comment and procedures around public comment would also be beneficial. Mr. Baptiste agreed that this would be beneficial. After further discussion about the purpose and function of school committee retreats, the committee discussed potential dates for the retreats. Ms. Geryk mentioned that August 22, 23 or 24 would be best for the administration for the second retreat. For the retreat in June, the 27th is a possibility. Ms. Dolven will contact Ms. Presser to see if she is available for a retreat beginning at about 5:00 p.m. on June 27. It was agreed that a doodle poll will be created to find a date for the second retreat.

D. Policy Update—Stay Away Orders

Ms. Dolven reported on her research regarding establishing policy regarding issuance of stay away orders. She explained that in Massachusetts, stay away orders fall under MGL Chapter 266, Section 120. She explained that it is a question of law and not a question of policy. Ms. Dolven reviewed the case of *Wholey v. Tyrell* 567 F.Supp.2d 279 in which the court upheld the constitutionality of M.G.L c. 266, section 120. Ms. Dolven noted that she also followed up on this question with Glenn Koocher from MASC. There was discussion about the case that was provided as an example. Ms. Douangmany Cage asked if a policy could be created that would have the School Committee be a body that reviews stay away orders against parents since they are so serious. Mr. Baptiste noted that the School Committee authority lies in creation of policy, evaluation of the superintendent and finances.

4. School Committee Planning

Ms. Appy provided a draft resolution against lifting the cap on Commonwealth charter schools that will be considered at the next meeting. Other topics will include a presentation by ARMS Principal Mendonsa, discussion of the process for selecting an attorney(s), a 7-12 update and reorganization.

Mr. Sullivan thanked Ms. Mendonsa and Mr. Jackson for showing up for every meeting, as well as Mr. Mangano, Ms. Faye and Fred Vanderbeck, Pelham community member. He thanked the graduating seniors, as well as the student athletes, club members and students who work in the communities for positively representing the school body. Ms. Douangmany Cage acknowledged the Sojourner Truth Award and asked the committee to support our students and this award.

5. Adjournment

8:26 p.m.

By unanimous vote, the committee adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sasha Figueroa

Retro Hurricane Apparel

Maroon Boys Soccer Nike 5
Maroon Boys Soccer Diadora 5
Maroon Boys Soccer Kleme 8
Maroon and black wind pants 15
Maroon Boys soccer DTI sports 20
Maroon Boys soccer Adidas collared 20
White Boys soccer Adidas collared 13
Maroon Boys soccer no print diadora 4
White Boys soccer no print diadora 14
Maroon Boys soccer Diadora print 4
White Boys soccer Diadora print 13
White Boys soccer rebok 15
White Boys soccer assorted 14
Old Amherst college white soccer 20
Maroon Girls basketball retro jackets 8
Maroon Girls field hockey polos 25+
White Girls field hockey polos 25+
Maroon wrestling jacket 3
Lacrosse pennies old small 2
Retro basketball jersey 28
Retro basketball shorts 35+
Maroon rip off pants 13
Retro basketball jackets 5
White lax 24
Maroon lax 24
Old jvb basketball white 11
Old jvb basketball maroon 10
Assorted basketball jerseys 30
Canes basketball shorts 18
Boys volleyball - 13
Boys volleyball shorts 7
Wrestling uniforms 3