

**Amherst-Pelham Regional and Union 26 School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, November 8, 2016
Library, Amherst Regional High School**

IN ATTENDANCE

Katherine Appy, Region & Union 26
Phoebe Hazzard, Region & Union 26
Anastasia Ordonez, Region & Union 26
Eric Nakajima, Region
Vira Douangmany-Cage, Region
Trevor Baptiste, Region & Union 26
Audra Goscenski, Region
Emily Marriott, Region
Stephen Sullivan, Region
Ron Mannino, Union 26
Cara Castenson, Union 26

Mike Morris, Acting Superintendent
Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Faye Brady, Student Services Director
Kathryn Mazur, HR Director
Rachel Bowen, Assistant HR Director
Paul Wiley, Executive Director of Leadership
Public and Press
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes 5:03 p.m.

Mr. Nakajima called the Regional School Committee to order and Ms. Ordonez called the Union 26 School Committee to order at 5:03 p.m.

2. Announcements and Public Comment 5:09 p.m.

There were no announcements or public comments.

3. Interim Superintendent's Update 5:09 p.m.

Dr. Morris reported on a number of topics including:

- Paul Wiley has been named Executive Director of Leadership for the remainder of this school year;
- Dr. Morris and Mr. Mangano attended the EdSpaces Conference in Cincinnati, Ohio on November 2-4;
- Repairs have been completed on the water fixtures that tested above the action level for lead at ARHS and ARMS and we are awaiting retesting results;
- Today was the Curriculum Day PreK-12, and almost all sessions he attended were being led by staff members sharing their expertise;
- SEPAC is offering a free workshop on Monday, November 14 at 5:30 at ARHS entitled *Supporting Teens with Executive Functioning Challenges*;
- The ARHS girls soccer team played an away game at Holyoke on October 25, and it was a smooth experience for both fans and team members;
- ARMS Principal Patty Bode will be presenting *Urban Young Women Raise Voices Against Violence through Art Education that Magnifies the Lense of Equity* at the National Association for Multicultural Education Conference in Cleveland, Ohio;
- There will be an information session on November 17 at 1:00 p.m. at ARHS regarding the BRYT program; and
- Wildwood students held a Constitutional Convention last Friday to ratify the student-written Wildwood Constitution.

At Mr. Nakajima's request, Ms. Douangmany Cage reported briefly on the MASC/MASS Joint Conference they both attended last week. She noted that the Minority Caucus is something that was new this year and she hopes to find more pathways for people to become involved in school governance in our districts. Mr. Nakajima agreed with Ms. Douangmany Cage that the conference was very beneficial, and he noted the discussions that took place around student poverty and achievement.

A. RFP for Search Firm for Permanent Superintendent***DOCUMENT: Request for Proposal RFP-R-17-02 School Superintendent Executive Search Consultant for Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools, Amherst Public Schools and Pelham School, November 2016***

Mr. Nakajima explained that he worked in consultation with the Superintendent to develop specific motions for each agenda item as a way to guide discussion. He noted that he in no way is trying to determine what the final motion will be and welcomes any changes or comments to the draft motions. Ms. Appy moved to approve RFP document RFP-R-17-02 School Superintendent Executive Search Consultant for Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools, Amherst Public Schools and Pelham School as presented. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and discussion followed. Ms. Douangmany Cage asked if any major changes were made after the initial draft was sent out. Ms. Mazur confirmed that no major changes were made. Ms. Ordonez asked about the topic of community engagement in section six. She asked if it can be a little more specific around engagement regarding equity, possibly by adding a line that refers back to the mission statement. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that it should include linguistically diverse communities, racially diverse communities and socio-economically diverse communities. Ms. Goscenski moved to amend the sentence by adding "including the ability to reach all diverse populations as reflected in our school district mission statement." Mr. Baptiste asked that the motion be amended to include demographics. Ms. Goscenski's motion, as amended by Mr. Baptiste, (Amend the sentence by adding "including the ability to reach all diverse populations as reflected in our school district mission statement" and include district demographics) was unanimously approved. The original motion, as amended, (Approve RFP document RFP-R-17-02 School Superintendent Executive Search Consultant for Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools, Amherst Public Schools and Pelham School as amended) was then unanimously approved by the Regional School Committee. On behalf of the Union 26 School Committee, Ms. Appy moved to approve RFP document RFP-R-17-02 School Superintendent Executive Search Consultant for Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools, Amherst Public Schools and Pelham School as amended. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved

Mr. Baptiste then moved to establish an RFP review committee for the Regional School Committee to review the consultant firms that consists of two members from the Region and two members from Union 26 Mr. Sullivan seconded and discussion followed. Mr. Mangano requested that he be added to the review committee since it is the usual practice for the Finance Director to participate in reviewing RFPs. Ms. Appy made a friendly amendment to reduce the number of school committee members since there is so much crossover between the Regional and Union 26 committees. Mr. Sullivan noted that since Shutesbury and Leverett do not have a part in the elementary schools and the Region and elementary districts may have different interests in the Superintendent, the number should not be reduced. Mr. Nakajima suggested amending the original motion to be to establish a review committee composed of seven members including the Finance Director, Human Resources Director and three members from the Regional School Committee and two members from Union 26 with the appointment to be made in such a way to ensure that no majority of any committee sits on the subcommittee. Discussion followed regarding the proposed amendment to the motion. Mr. Baptiste withdrew his original motion, Mr. Nakajima withdrew his amendment to the motion and Mr. Baptiste moved to establish an RFP review committee that includes three school committee members, the Human Resources Director and the Finance Director. Ms. Appy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved by the Regional School Committee. On behalf of the Union 26 School Committee, Ms. Hazzard then moved to establish an RFP review committee that includes three school committee members, the Human Resources Director and the Finance Director. Ms. Appy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. After discussion, it was agreed that Mr. Sullivan, Ms. Hazzard and Ms. Douangmany Cage will served on the RFP review committee.

B. Establish Screening Committee for Permanent Superintendent Search

Mr. Nakajima noted that he placed this item on the agenda to begin discussion and to have on record that the community will be involved in the process. He asked what the deadline would be for establishing the screening committee. Ms. Mazur noted that there is no urgency to doing it this evening, noting that mid-January would

be the timeline. Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to establish a 12 person screening committee that includes three (3) School Committee members (at least one of color), four (4) community members (at least one of color and with representation from the School Equity Task Force and from the Special Education Advisory Council), and five (5) ARPS staff members (at least one of color and including one [1] District Director, one [1] elementary level administrator, one [1] secondary level administrator, one [1] elementary teacher, and one [1] secondary teacher. Mr. Baptiste seconded and discussion followed. Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to amend her original motion to strike “teacher” and replace it with “educator” at both the elementary and secondary level in order to allow paraeducators to participate. Ms. Ordonez seconded. Discussion then followed. Mr. Baptiste asked what the procedure would be to select interested participants. Ms. Mazur noted that she would ask SEPAC and SETF to assign a representative. She would notify all district educators of the opportunity and ask for a short statement about why they want to serve to help the School Committee select members. It was suggested that a subcommittee of the school committee could screen the interested participants and finalize the membership. Mr. Nakajima noted that it would not be unusual to ask the APEA to appoint their educator representatives. Ms. Mazur asked for clarification of whether “community” in the motion means the school community exclusively or the larger community. Mr. Nakajima noted that he believes it means anyone who lives in one of the four towns. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that the School Governance Councils and the PGOs would be helpful in identifying members. After discussion, the motion, as amended, (establish a 12 person screening committee that includes three (3) School Committee members (at least one of color), four (4) community members (at least one of color and with representation from the School Equity Task Force and from the Special Education Advisory Council), and five (5) ARPS staff members (at least one of color and including one [1] District Director, one [1] elementary level administrator, one [1] secondary level administrator, one [1] elementary educator, and one [1] secondary educator) was unanimously approved by the Regional School Committee. Ms. Appy then made the same motion on behalf of the Union 26 School Committee. Ms. Castenson seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. It was agreed that a decision will be made about how the members of the screening committee will be selected at the next joint Regional and Union 26 School Committee meeting. Mr. Baptiste noted that it would be beneficial to have a discussion of an RFP for selecting an attorney for the School Committee. Discussion followed regarding the process for selecting a law firm and whether an RFP process is the correct method. It was agreed that Ms. Mazur will review the process that was utilized when the committee last considered selecting a new law firm, and she will provide information to the Regional School Committee.

Mr. Baptiste moved to adjourn Union 26 at 6:10 p.m. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

C. High School Gym Floor Repairs

DOCUMENT: Authorization of Expedited Designer Selection Process dated 11/4/16

Dr. Morris and Mr. Mangano explained the need for the School Committee to authorize an expedited procurement process to select a designer to handle the repairs to the ARHS gym floor. Mr. Mangano noted that only one designer applied through the regular process. The expedited procurement process would allow the district to contact designers to request proposals until one additional proposal is received for consideration, rather than having to continue to advertise. After brief clarifying questions, Ms. Goscenski moved to declare the repair of the High School gym an emergency and to authorize expedited designer selection procedures to address the emergency. She further moved to authorize the Director of Facilities to rank the finalists in order of qualifications and select the designer. Ms. Hazzard seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

D. OML Complaint Response

DOCUMENT: Draft Letter from Attorney Tom Colomb regarding Open Meeting Law Complaints—Michael Hootstein v. Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee

Ms. Appy moved to accept the response to OML complaint Michael Hootstein v. Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee as presented. Ms. Hazzard seconded and discussion followed. Mr. Baptiste noted that there are serious errors in the response and reviewed his concerns with the document. Mr. Nakajima asked if there

had been any opportunity for feedback from the committee to the attorney regarding the response. Dr. Morris noted that he shared the attorney's response with the committee in the absence of a Chair. It is his understanding that the attorney is willing to discuss the response with the committee. Ms. Douangmany Cage noted that she is ready to vote on the response and move it forward, noting that she believes it should be made clear to the Attorney General that the response was developed by counsel on behalf of the Regional School Committee. Ms. Appy noted that she is ready to vote on this tonight. She said she is happy to withdraw the motion if the committee wants to sit with the attorney about it; however, as one of the people named specifically she is satisfied with the response for the Attorney General and Mr. Hootstein. Mr. Baptiste again expressed concern with the terminology "ongoing negotiations" in the relevant facts portion of the response. Ms. Ordonez suggested coming up with a process for addressing concerns in order to submit changes to the attorney. Mr. Nakajima suggested that changes could be submitted to the attorney and a vote taken at the November 29 meeting. Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to engage in developing a response with counsel independent from the firm that drafted this response. Mr. Sullivan seconded and Ms. Douangmany Cage spoke to the motion. She noted that Attorney Colombe was part of all of the meetings, and she believes having an attorney who is outside of the process would give an outside perspective. Discussion followed and Ms. Douangmany Cage's motion failed with three in favor (Douangmany Cage, Baptiste and Sullivan); five opposed (Hazzard, Appy, Nakajima, Ordonez, and Marriott) and one abstaining (Goscenski). Discussion followed regarding a process for sharing edits with the attorney. Mr. Nakajima moved to consult with counsel to determine if it is appropriate for revisions to be directly sent to the attorney, and based upon advice, will send revisions to the attorney if the answer is favorable. In the interim a meeting will be scheduled for members to meet with the attorney if necessary. Ms. Appy seconded and discussion followed. Mr. Nakajima's motion was unanimously approved.

Ms. Ordonez noted that there had been agreement that the seating arrangement will be changed to a more U-shape and it was agreed that such a change will be made. She asked about process for submitting agenda items. Mr. Nakajima noted that there are two level of agenda items--what do you want on next agenda and what do you want on the list of topics to get to. He encouraged members to send him agenda requests with a note about which category they fall into. Ms. Ordonez noted that more in-depth discussion of what is being done on lead abatement and SETF presentations are two items she would like to see on an agenda.

5. Adjourn

7:06 p.m.

Ms. Appy moved to adjourn at 7:06 p.m. Mr. Baptiste seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland