

**Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, February 12, 2013
Library, Amherst Regional High School**

In Attendance:

Kip Fonsh, Chair	Maria Geryk, Superintendent
Rick Hood	Kathy Mazur, Human Resources Director
Lawrence O'Brien	Jerry Champagne, Information Systems Director
Katherine Appy	Rob Detweiler, Director of Finance & Operations
Trevor Baptiste	Miki Lee Gromacki, ARHS Assistant Principal
Annemarie Foley	Mark Jackson, ARHS Principal
Michael DeChiara	Rhonda Cohen, Director of Teaching & Learning
Amilcar Shabazz	Betsy Dinger, ARMS Principal
Zoe Langsdale, Student Rep	Mike Morris, Director of Educator Evaluation & Assessment Analysis

Absent:

Rob Spence	Mike Malone, ARMS Assistant Principal
	Kim Stender, Community, Partnerships & Volunteers Coordinator
	Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder
	Public
	Press

1. Welcome and Agenda Review 7:04 p.m.

Mr. Fonsh called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. and welcomed the audience. He reviewed the agenda and noted that there will be an executive session at the end of the regular open session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as authorized by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(3) and to discuss the discipline or dismissal of a public employee or staff member as authorized by MGL Chapter A, Section 21(1).

Minutes—Ms. Appy moved to accept the minutes of the January 12, 2013 Four Towns meeting. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Ms. Appy then moved to approve the minutes of January 22, 2013. Ms. Foley seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Announcements and Public Comments None

3. New and Continuing Business 7:07 p.m.

A. FY13 Second Quarter Update

DOCUMENTS: Amherst-Pelham Regional School District FY2013 Second Quarter

Mr. Detweiler distributed and reviewed the highlights of the FY2013 second quarter budget update. He concluded that with positive variances, there is a net of approximately \$261,000 that can be applied to retirement incentives and special education out-of-district summer tuitions that would otherwise come out of the FY14 budget. This will be of assistance in addressing the gap in FY2014 funding. There was no discussion of the information reported.

B. FY2014 Regional Budget Public Hearing

DOCUMENTS: Amherst-Pelham Regional School District FY14 Budget Public Hearing (Powerpoint Slides)

Ms. Geryk gave a Powerpoint presentation providing a historical overview of budgeting and the challenges faced in the current year, the process followed in developing the budget proposal, and considerations in determining reductions to meet the budget gap. Her presentation also outlined proposed reductions and adjustments to the budget, as well as two additions necessary to meet the needs of students in 2014. Ms. Geryk concluded by noting that the primary goals of administrators when planning the FY14 budget were to maintain reasonable class sizes, maintain the team model at ARMS, maintain the majority of elective offerings, make as many reductions as possible based on declining enrollments, and ensure that all reductions and additions are consistent with district priorities. Ms. Geryk provided information in answer to questions emailed to her about the district's special education and free and reduced lunch eligible students, noting that neither population of students has shown a decrease correspondent with overall enrollment decreases. In addition, Ms. Geryk acknowledged that there are questions every year about the costs of district administration when budget cuts are required. She distributed a

document showing a snapshot of organizational charts over a period of years, noting that the number of administrators has decreased over the past decade while reporting and compliance requirements have increased at both the state and federal level. Ms. Geryk then answered clarifying questions for the School Committee. Mr. DeChiara asked for more information about the cut of the 1.0 computer technology teacher at the middle school. Ms. Geryk explained that there is a system-wide conversation about how to best integrate computer technology in the classroom to ensure more meaningful instruction, which is what will be done at the Middle School next year. She noted that Dr. Brady, Student Services Director, and Mr. Champagne, Information Systems Director, are overseeing a technology integration plan for the districts. With regard to making physical education part of the exploratory rotation at the middle school, Ms. Foley said that it is not really accurate to compare the amount of time students will get under that model to the amount of time in elementary schools. She noted that elementary students also have recess time to participate in physical activities. Ms. Geryk agreed, noting that there are ideas under discussion to find ways to provide additional opportunities for movement and physical activity at the middle school. Mr. Detweiler distributed updated pages for the School Committee members' budget binders, which included the adds and cuts with dollar figures attached. Ms. Gromacki provided clarifying information about how elective courses will be scheduled in answer to questions from Mr. DeChiara and Mr. Hood. Mr. Fonsh said that one of the things he is most pleased that Ms. Geryk has put in place is the family liaison, noting that it will be important to monitor the effectiveness of the position. After further discussion, Ms. Geryk thanked the district and site administrators who have done the difficult work in planning the FY14 budget. At Mr. Fonsh's request, Ms. Langsdale briefly shared her thoughts about the budget presentation from a student's perspective. Mr. DeChiara requested that the School Committee members receive final budget information by March 5th so they will have time to fully review the data prior to the March 12th vote. Ms. Geryk said she is committed to getting the information to the committee in advance.

C. Accept Gifts

DOCUMENT: Memo to the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee from Mary Wallace, District Treasurer, dated February 7, 2013

Mr. Shabazz made a motion to accept \$50 from Terry Ray and Margo Mace for the Ted Madden Scholarship, \$50 from Sheryl and Kenneth Ochs and \$500 from Richard and Catherine Lawlor for the Ellis Heyer Survival Living Fund Scholarship, \$500 from Jones Group Realtors for the General Scholarship for 2012, \$2,170.15 from Stan Ziomek for the Bud Jewett Award, \$400 from Matthew and Julie Emerson for the High School Theater Program, and an in-kind donation of a 1974 Kimbal console piano valued at \$1,100 from Frances Caporello. Mr. O'Brien seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

4. Subcommittee Updates

None

5. School Committee Planning

8:48 p.m.

A. Calendar—Four Towns Meeting, March 2 at 2:00 p.m.; There was discussion of flipping the dates of the Amherst and Joint School Committee meetings in March. Dr. Cohen will not be available on March 26 to provide the Teaching and Learning update since that is the second night of Passover, and she has proposed making the presentation on March 19. The committee agreed to make that change in the calendar. The school calendar and school choice hearing will be on March 12, with a vote on March 19. Ms. Westmoreland will send an updated calendar to the school committee.

6. Adjournment

8:56 p.m.

At 8:56 p.m., Mr. Fonsh asked for a motion to enter executive session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining as authorized by MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(3) and to discuss the discipline or dismissal of a public employee or staff member as authorized by MGL Chapter A, Section 21(1). Mr. DeChiara so moved and Ms. Foley seconded. By unanimous roll call vote, the School Committee entered Executive Session and Mr. Fonsh noted that they will not return to open session.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland

Approved 3/12/13