

**Amherst-Regional School Committee Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 6, 2016**  
**Library, Amherst Regional High School**

**IN ATTENDANCE**

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

Mike Morris, Acting Superintendent  
Sean Mangano, Finance Director  
Nick Yaffe, Wildwood  
Faye Brady, Student Services Director  
Jean Faye, APEA President  
Derek Shea, Crocker Farm Principal  
Shari Conklin, Crocker Farm Assistant Principal  
Diane Chamberlain, Fort River Principal  
Jill Berry, Treasurer  
Public and Press  
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

**1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes**

**7:19 p.m.**

Ms. Kent called the meeting to order at 7:19 p.m. and reviewed the agenda. Mr. Sullivan asked what happened to Policy BEAA which had been on the agenda. Ms. Kent noted that it should not have been included on the Regional meeting since it is a policy of the Amherst and Pelham School Committees. Ms. Kent noted that she is putting together a handout regarding Robert's Rules of Order to help facilitate the meeting and be respectful of committee and community members' time.

**2. Announcements and Public Comment**

**7:21 p.m.**

Ms. Kent thanked Ms. Marriott and Ms. Appy for attending convocation on August 30. She read a statement about the internal working of the committees, noting that two members have resigned. Ms. Kent said she has reached out to the state to see if there is anything they can offer, and they suggested working with the Massachusetts School Committee Association (MSCA). MSCA will be providing training and workshops to help the committee, with the first scheduled for September 13 with Dorothy Presser. Ms. Kent noted that there will be no public comment at that meeting, but community members are invited to attend. She also noted that the Committee will need to select a new vice-chair at their next regular meeting.

**3. Public Comment**

**7:27 p.m.**

There were no public comments.

**4. Acting Superintendent's Update**

**7:27 p.m.**

Mr. Morris reported on a number of events and activities including the summer AVID program, Project Backpack, Convocation, the First Day Celebration, the ARMS Vela program, and the status of the ARHS gym floor. Mr. Baptiste asked if the award-winning volleyball team's season will be postponed due to the damage. Dr. Morris reported that Rich Ferro, Athletic Director, is working out a schedule of events using alternate sites.

**5. New and Continuing Business**

**6:28 p.m.**

**A. Treasurer Appointment**

***DOCUMENT: Memo to Michael Morris, Acting Superintendent and the Regional School Committee from Sean Mangano, Finance Director dated 9/6/16***

Mr. Mangano noted that long-time treasurer Mary Wallace retired and introduced Jill Berry who was the top candidate. He noted that Ms. Berry has served as treasurer in three other school districts in Massachusetts. Ms. Appy moved to appoint Jill Berry as treasurer of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District. Ms. Douangmany

Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Members of the committee welcomed Ms. Berry to the district.

## **B. Accept Gifts**

Ms. Hazzard moved to accept \$400 from Regina and Daniel St. John for the Kingsley Perry Award, \$500 from Anson J. Tripp for the Anson J. Tripp Memorial Scholarship, \$500 from Catherine Atkinson for the Atkinson Family Practice Scholarship, \$500 from Peter Tripp for the Anson J. Tripp Memorial Scholarship, \$3,000 from the Local Vocal Chord Bowl for the HS Performing Arts department for musical instruments; \$450 from the Class of 2016 for a scholarship donation for the Class of 2017, \$17,700 from the Amherst Education Foundation for multiple projects, and a 2011 Ford Transit Connect from the PVTA for the transportation department. Ms. Douangmany Cage seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

## **C. Approve Minutes**

### **I. Outstanding RSC Minutes**

The amended minutes of August 9, 2016 and August 17, 2016 were unanimously approved (with Ms. Marriott abstaining from the August 9 minutes since she was not in attendance).

### **II. Executive Session Minutes**

#### **DOCUMENT:**

Mr. Baptiste noted that there is information missing from the minutes in July in which he stated that it was a mistake not to have the evaluation of the Superintendent prior to discussing a separation agreement. Extensive discussion followed, with Mr. Baptiste asking to add "A conversation was had about finding cause to fire" to the minutes. Ms. Ordonez noted that the statement is already included in the minutes. Mr. Baptiste agreed to leave the statement as is. He suggested adding a sentence saying to see his notes if it is the will of the Committee. Ms. Douangmany Cage asked that the attendance reflect the committee membership of each member and that the votes be reflected separately. Ms. Kent noted that she will add that information. It was also agreed that the names of members who were absent will be listed on each set of minutes. Discussion turned to the release of Ms. Geryk's demand letter, particularly regarding whether the Pelham Executive Session minutes will be released along with it. Mr. Baptiste stated that he does not like releasing the demand letter at all, but particularly if the information from the Pelham Executive Session is redacted from it. Ms. Kent noted that the Pelham Executive Session minutes are protected until they are released by the Pelham School Committee. Ms. Marriott noted that she is concerned that releasing the demand letter will present one side of the Pelham issue with no rebuttal of the other side. Ms. Kent thanked Ms. Marriott and stated that releasing the demand letter is not adjudicating the issue, it is just in the interest of transparency. Mr. Baptiste read a prepared statement regarding the process around the separation agreement that he noted was in the interest of moving forward.

After extensive discussion, Ms. Appy moved to approve release of the amended Executive Session minutes. Ms. Hazzard seconded and discussion followed regarding whether the Pelham minutes will be released as part of the demand letter. Ms. Kent explained that the formal demand letter itself will be released, but the attached minutes will not. After further discussion, the motion was approved with five in favor, two opposed (Baptiste and Marriott) and one abstaining (Douangmany Cage). Ms. Kent then read a prepared statement about the process and moving forward.

## **5. Adjourn**

**8:51 p.m.**

Ms. Douangmany Cage moved to adjourn at 8:51 p.m. and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Debbie Westmoreland