

MINUTES
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
Location: School Committee Room
April 28, 2021, 6:30 p.m.

In Attendance:

George Scobie
Jessie Harrington
Gail Holloway
Meghan McCrillis

Absent:

Dottie Kauffman

Casey Handfield
Beth Chamberland
Cecelia Wirzbicki

Jasmyn Gates
Aaron Zheng

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Scobie called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS: None

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS: None

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES INTRODUCTION / REPORT

Aaron Zheng and Jasmyn Gates

Aaron expressed his pleasure at finally making it to a meeting! He stated that everything was going pretty well at AHS. The seniors, of whom he is one, only have three full weeks left. The National Honor Society Induction Ceremony will be held on Thursday, April 29th at 6:00 p.m. It will be a quick ceremony but really nice. Model UN is holding an in-person conference for freshmen and sophomores. There will be 15 initiated into the UN with 15 seniors leaving.

Jasmyn hoped everyone was doing well. She noted that her anxiety was at an all time high as she had just broken the kitchen sink at home! She stated that it was great to have most of the student body back in the building and also very nice to be able to have lunch outside! She noted that everything else is pretty much the same with students following guidelines. She also noted that spring sports have started and everyone has their sights set on the summer.

The Committee thanked both students for their excellent reports. Aaron was asked if he had committed to a school for the fall and he stated that he would be attending Harvard. He was offered hearty congratulations!

MINUTES: 3/24/21 and 4/14/21 for approval.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 24th and April 14th meetings; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

COVID Update

Dr. Handfield noted that we continue to see COVID cases drop in the schools. We will be looking to see if there is a “bump” in cases because of the vacation week; however, “so far, so good.” With a question from the Committee, he stated that high school students 16+ are starting to get vaccinated.

2021-2022 School Year Calendar

Dr. Handfield shared the updated proposed school year calendar for 2021-2022, noting that the number of half-days have been reduced to three (day before Thanksgiving, day before Holiday Vacation, and one in May). He did note that the half day in May should state that it was for students only, with the teachers anticipated to have professional development in the afternoon.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 school year calendar for distribution to the school community with that update in place; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

FY '22 Budget Update

Dr. Handfield thanked the members for being in attendance at the public hearing on the draft FY 2022 budget on Wednesday, April 14th. He noted that we will seek final budget approval of this FY 2022 budget request of \$27,988,540.45 at the Annual Town Meeting on May 4th. He stated that presentations and documents are available on our website and Auburn Cable Television in advance of this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

School Committee Meeting Prior to Annual Town Meeting

Dr. Handfield noted that, historically, the School Committee has met prior to the Annual Town Meeting at Auburn High School for the purposes of discussing any last minute changes to warrant articles or the school budget request. With Town Meeting taking place next week, he was not sure there is anything to discuss beyond what was discussed already this evening. We can choose to meet briefly or we cannot. He was looking for direction from the committee.

Dr. McCrillis made a motion to not meet prior to the Annual Town Meeting on May 4, 2021; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

AHS Out of State Field Trip to Jay Peak, Vermont

Dr. Handfield noted that the packet included a request from Michael Young, AHS Ski Club Advisor, to take members of the Ski Club to Jay Peak Ski Resort in Vermont over the weekend of March 11th to 13th in 2022. He noted that this is a trip that has taken place in prior years and had to be cancelled at the last minute in 2020 due to the pandemic, with Jay Peak refunding payments in full. It was his recommendation that you approve this trip provided all COVID restrictions have been lifted.

Mrs. Holloway made a motion to approve the AHS Ski Club trip to Jay Peak Resort in Vermont in March 2022 provided all COVID restrictions have been lifted; Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

NEASC Update

Dr. Handfield provided the members with a copy of a letter from NEASC regarding the 2-year progress report submitted by Auburn High School as a follow-up to their 2018 decennial visit. As noted in the

letter, Auburn High School continues to move forward addressing the few recommendations the visiting committee noted in their final report.

National Superintendent's Forum

During the timeframe of April 11-13th Dr. Handfield participated in the National Superintendent's Forum. He was invited to attend with colleagues from across all fifty states to discuss critical issues facing our schools including strategic plans for district and school improvement coming out of the pandemic, social-emotional concerns of faculty, staff, and students, issues surrounding diversity, equity, and inclusion within schools, among other virtual workshops. Albeit virtual via Zoom, he noted it was inspiring, enlightening, thought - provoking, and informative. As Dr. Handfield has referenced throughout the year, he is putting together his entry review as Superintendent, and this will serve as a critical piece of the work he will be sharing with you soon.

Fall 2/Spring Sports

Dr. Handfield reported that the "Fall 2" season successfully concluded last week and spring athletics began Monday, April 26th. He noted that we are looking forward to seeing additional returns to the playing fields by our spring athletes and coaches, again, with appropriate COVID precautions in place.

TEACHING/LEARNING REPORT:

Review of Classroom Activities

Dr. Chamberland, through a PowerPoint presentation shared a brief overview classroom activities happening across the District. She noted that it is nothing short of remarkable that we have had a successful transition back to school for most of our students and learning is enthusiastic and robust at all levels. She was thanked for an awesome presentation with the Committee stating that they have the utmost respect for the staff in the District.

BUSINESS/FINANCIAL REPORT:

Year to Date Budget Report:

A year to date budget report dated March 26th was included in the packet.

Budget Transfers:

Mrs. Wirzbicki provided a list of budget transfers between the same series for your information and one between different series requiring the Committee's approval.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the transfers between series as presented; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Food Service Items to be Deemed Obsolete

Mrs. Janice King, Food Service Director, provided a memo requesting that several APS Food Service equipment items be deemed obsolete by the School Committee. If approved, they will be disposed of by Gillette Equipment.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to deem the requested Food Service equipment items as obsolete so that they may be disposed of; Mrs. Holloway seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Bus Application for 2021-2022 School Year

Mrs. Wirzbicki reminded the audience that the bus application for next school year has been shared with all families via One Call e-mails and will continue to be. It is also posted on the website. She noted that only 225 applications had been received as of Monday, April 26th.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:13 p.m., there being no further business to discuss, Mrs. Harrington made a motion to adjourn for the evening; Dr. McCrillis seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ailaine Zautner
Recording Secretary

Referenced Documents:

Minutes from March 24th and April 14th
202-2022 School Year Calendar
Warrant Articles
AHS Ski Club Trip Request
Letter from NEASC with final report
PPT Presentation from Dr. Chamberland re activities in buildings
Year to Date Budget Report
Budget Transfers
Food Service Letter re Items to be Deemed Obsolete