

**Amherst School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, March 15, 2017
Library, Amherst Regional High School**

IN ATTENDANCE

Katherine Appy, Chair
Phoebe Hazzard
Anastasia Ordonez
Eric Nakajima
Vira Douangmany-Cage (arrived at 5:54)

Mike Morris, Interim Superintendent
Sean Mangano, Finance Director
Kathryn Mazur, Human Resources Director
Faye Brady, Student Services Director
Nick Yaffe, Wildwood Principal
Press
Debbie Westmoreland, Recorder

1. Call to Order and Approve Minutes 5:48 p.m.

Ms. Appy called the meeting to order at 5:48 p.m. Mr. Nakajima moved to approve the minutes of February 6, February 15 and February 23, 2017 with minor corrections to the February 6 minutes. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

2. Announcements and Public Comment 5:51 p.m.

There were no announcements or public comments.

3. New and Continuing Business 5:51 p.m.

A. FY18 Budget Vote

DOCUMENT: FY2018 Amherst Public Schools Proposed Budget

Mr. Mangano provided the committee with one page that included a small spelling correction but no changes to the additions/reductions or the amount of the budget since the budget hearing. Ms. Ordonez commented that she had questions when the budget was first presented, but after speaking with Mr. Mangano and Dr. Morris she believes it is a very good budget. She thanked them for their work in developing it. Ms. Appy echoed her sentiment. Ms. Ordonez then moved to adopt the budget in the amount of \$22,523,222 for fiscal year 2018 for the Amherst Elementary Schools. Mr. Nakajima seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Morris thanked Mr. Mangano and his department for putting together such a thorough budget document that addresses feedback and questions from the Committees and the community. He thanked the committee for their vote and for the continued feedback, which improves our product.

B. Response to OML Complaint Vote

DOCUMENT: Letter from Thomas W. Colomb, Esq. to Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General regarding Open Meeting Law Complaint--Michael Hootstein v. Amherst School Committee

Ms. Appy distributed and read, in its entirety, a letter of response to the Open Meeting Law complaint filed by citizen Michael Hootstein. She then opened the floor for discussion. Ms. Douangmany Cage asked where the exhibits are that are referenced in the letter. Ms. Appy noted that they were not included in the copy tonight but they are described in the letter and can be sent to the School Committee members. Ms. Ordonez noted that on page two in paragraph four, a line references establishing 30 preschool seats for low-income families. She noted that the reference should be removed since it was not established that the seats will all be for low-income families. Ms. Douangmany Cage stated that it is important to note that the \$67 million building project does not fund the early childhood center. Ms. Hazzard moved to accept the letter as written as the official Amherst School Committee response to the Open Meeting Law complaint filed by Mr. Hootstein. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was approved with Ms. Douangmany Cage abstaining.

4. Adjourn 6:14 p.m.

Prior to adjourning, Ms. Hazzard recognized that this is Ms. Appy's last meeting serving as Chair of the committee. She thanked her for her dedication and service. Mr. Nakajima moved to adjourn at 6:14 p.m. Ms. Ordonez seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Debbie Westmoreland