

RSU2 Exploratory/Review Committee Meeting

Meeting held on January 25, 2017 at Bridge Academy Library. Members in attendance were Branden Perrault, Patty Stewart, Brenda Sawyer (Resident/Teacher), and Shari Lilly (Recording secretary). Dale Hinote (Selectman) and Jeffrey Pierce (PB) had other commitments.

Meeting was opened at 6:05 p.m. Branden asked Shari if notice of the meeting had been posted. She said that notice of all upcoming meetings have been posted at the town office, post office, Pownalborough Hall and all the local stores.

#1 – Previous minutes – were approved as written.

#2 – Survey – Branden began by noting that a list is to be compiled with questions for the survey. The feeling is to start soon in order to get the survey ready in the next 8 – week span.

#3 – Info gathered so far – Jeff had supplied the agreement form used by W. Bath when they pulled out of the RSU. That was emailed to all members.

Branden has a compilation of information for tuition at public schools and some private ones. Patty thinks she had seen it stated that if a school takes a student, they can't go more than the State tuition rates. She also mentioned that Wiscasset may be in discussions to close their schools and tuition their students out.

Branden feels the lists would be something to guide them if / when they contact other schools. He has given a graph of Dresden's Budgeted Expenditures since joining RSU. The Mil Rate being 17.1 per thousand. 15 is tax 2.06 municipal and 1.38 is County. Another graph shows how it has increased each year. He provided copies of the State "Per- Pupil' Operating Costs as well as copies of State Calculations for funding for public education (grades K-12).

The RSU breaks down the expenses per town. We're not sure how the funding is calculated. The 11.43% appears to come from the State calculating system. Patty asked if we take the 11+% for Dresden. Branden said that is Dresden's share of the cost. All shared services. No cost for secondary grades is shown here. Branden did notice a difference with further calculations in regard to our cost (for 2016). He's not sure why, but that is something to check on. No one seems to be able to figure out what our costs are for the secondary grades which is our largest cost, figuring on 180-185 students with approximately 70 – 80 going to secondary schools. Patty asked if it is the same percentage for all schools? Branden said yes, based on the number of students and the shared services.

Branden will do graphs on Hope, Appleton, Lincolntonville, etc. to give us more information. Brenda said she is struggling with how to quantify the whole things.

We need to do a mailing of the survey. Patty would like to include a return envelope which could be more persuasive for people to return the survey. It was also suggested that we put information online, perhaps on the Town website in case people want to know more to help with the survey questions.

#4 – Next meeting – Patty said we really need to buckle down on the survey. We would need to have everyone bring in their questions so we can go over them to see which ones overlap. Plus we may have some that would be open-ended. And we need to make sure about the wording.

Looking at the graphs, it is hard to understand how they have compiled the info such as having all combined librarians equal to three (3) full time for all schools in the RSU. Brenda would like to know the number of secondary students from Dresden, how the 11.43% was calculated and

if it's still relevant. Branden wants to find out how the State determines allocations and the RSU break downs from that. The graph indicates our spending at \$1.6M. Patty asked where the \$1.9M figure comes from. This could include not only our students, but any students who qualify for EPS. We have 9.9% of the students by we're paying 11.43% of the cost. According to the information we have our contribution is \$1.6 M+, the State contribution is \$800,000+. These make up the total allocation.

Patty asked if we can negotiate with the RSU for a specific amount with the option of pulling out if they don't agree. Would we have to pay a penalty for withdrawal?

Brenda said that in checking further, it doesn't seem to be a value for us to subsidize the others. Patty is still wondering where the money is that we were supposed to be saving after three (3) years that they had promised.

Brenda asked Branden if he could give us a graph of the money figures for the people to look at. If people can see the dollar value, they would be able to relate to the issues better.

Everyone will be thinking of questions for the survey and other information that we may need to get out to the people.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:02 p.m. The next meeting will be at 6 pm at B.A. on Wednesday, February 08th