

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 28, 2016

7:00 p.m.

SAU #1

Minutes

Present: John Jordan, Bob Edwards, Henry Kunhardt, Carl Newton, Gail Cromwell, Bernd Foecking, Rich Cahoon, Tom Kelly, Pierce Rigrod, Dr. Brendan Minnihan

1. Accept Minutes – February 18, 2016

Gail Cromwell moved to accept the minutes of February 18, 2016. Carl Newton second. Unanimous.

2. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Gail Cromwell moved to nominate John Jordan as Selectmen's Advisory Committee Chairman. Carl Newton second. Unanimous.

3. Budget Process

John Jordan said that several years ago, SAC was more involved in the budget process. That was not the case this year and he would like to see more involvement return.

Bob Edwards said that he recognizes that SAC is advisory.

SAC has brought concerns to the school district in the past.

4. Health Insurance Delta

John Jordan said that surpluses have been a bone of contention in the past.

Pierce Rigrod shared that the majority (60-70%) of surpluses has been returned to the towns to offset taxes. The district does not have the capacity to keep funds unassigned as the towns are.

In 2014, \$940K of which \$700K was used to reduce taxes as an example.

The original health increase was estimated at 19+% but resulted in 16%. The district has to budget for the maximum exposure and use the number given.

Discussion took place about the decision making process at SAC meetings. Sometimes SAC goes back to the town boards to confer before making decisions and other times they do not.

5. Capital Improvements Plan

6. Strategic Plan/Reconfiguration

7. Peterborough Withdrawal Study

Discussion took place about the potential Peterborough Withdrawal Study. Two crossroads; spend time studying a withdrawal and putting the Strategic Plan on hold.

Carl Newton spoke about other towns being liable for one town to conduct a study.

To vote for withdrawal, 50%+1 is required in Peterborough. In addition, should it go to a March 2017 vote, it would require 50%+1 of the district votes. Discussion took place about what Peterborough's agenda might be. Carl Newton said that it is financially driven and it is personal for each town.

Caution was given to saying that "Peterborough feels...". It is a smaller group of concerned citizens that have brought this vote forward. Is there a crisis? One of the goals of the Strategic Plan is to look at district configuration. It has been looked at before and there has never been a clear direction.

Bob Edwards asked what would be better for students with a Peterborough withdrawal.

Rich Cahoon said that Peterborough has 1/3 of the students, 1/3 of School Board membership, and 1/3 of the population. Their counter argument is that we have to pay 1/3 of \$45 million rather than \$40 million. They are paying to transport students in other towns etc.

RSA 195 cites that buildings and land must be transferred to the withdrawing town upon withdrawal through payment. If the study goes ahead, a select board member from each town must sit on the study committee. It will be a massive amount of work and will be time consuming.

SAC discussed taking a position.

Gail Cromwell said that she was not in favor of getting involved; Peterborough can make those decisions.

Carl Newton and John Jordan disagreed.

What will it cost to conduct the withdrawal study? It is hard to say at this point. There will be associated legal costs, the value of time, and costs to hire a consultant.

Tom Kelly said that hiring an outside consultant is wise to avoid the appearance of being partial.

This study is much different when Dublin studied withdrawing because every town in the district will be impacted by this potential withdrawal.

Tom Kelly said that Peterborough does not see movement in the direction of consolidation or reconfiguration.

Bob Edwards moved to make a statement that "The Selectmen's Advisory Committee is very concerned about the negative impact on the Strategic Plan, and the immediate and future impact on the towns of the ConVal School District. Therefore the Selectmen's Advisory Committee opposes the withdrawal of any town from the ConVal School District". Carl Newton second.

Discussion took place about the Strategic Plan's definition of the problem shared at a recent School Board meeting.

In favor: Bob Edwards, Henry, Kunhardt, Carl Newton

Opposed: Gail Cromwell

Motion carried.

8. Student Initiative

John Jordan spoke about student interest in becoming involved with town opportunities. Mr. Jordan asked what opportunities towns might offer for these students to participate. It can be volunteer or paid.

Bob Edwards offered to work with Mary Lou O'Neil to further these opportunities. It promotes good citizenship and community.

Bob Edwards motioned to adjourn at 8:15 p.m. Carl Newton second. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok