

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

106 Hancock Road
Peterborough, New Hampshire

CONTOOCCOOK VALLEY SCHOOL BOARD

Selectmen's Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 25, 2024

SAU Office Board Room
7:00 p.m.

Minutes

Present: William Kennedy, John Robertson, George Willard, Betsy Villaume, Mike Borden, Chet Bowles, Charlie Pyle, Jim Cleary, Carole Monroe, Dr. Kimberly Saunders, Dick Dunning, Alan Edelkind, Curtis Hamilton, Jim Fredrickson, Tom Kirlin

1. Call to Order

William Kennedy called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

2. Approval of March 28, 2024 minutes

Mike Borden moved to approve the minutes of March 28, 2024.

**John Robertson, Charlie Pyle, Chet Bowles, and Curtis Hamilton abstained.
All others in favor. Motion carried.**

3. Overview of the withdrawal process for Dublin and Frankestown

Bill Kennedy asked if those present have received any feedback from constituents regarding this study.

Mike Borden said that people in Greenfield are aware.

Betsy Villaume said that one person offered some assistance from an educational standpoint.

George Willard said that some in Temple felt that they should sit on the withdrawal study.

Jim Cleary said that many people are concerned about the impact on the study and what would happen if towns withdrew. It won't be cheaper. We have to look at how it will impact the entire district. The hard questions are coming and there is a lot at stake.

Carole Monroe said that Dublin has an education advisory committee that are doing a lot of work to determine the impact on the community and all other types of study.

There is a great interest in town as how this will proceed.

Charlie Pyle said that Frankestown also has a study committee. It is an ongoing topic of discussion in town.

Bill Kennedy asked if formal presentations from the groups in Dublin and Frankestown will be made to the feasibility study with their findings.

Carole Monroe said that they could. She has been asked to ask if more people could be appointed to the Feasibility Study Committee.

Bill Kennedy said that how input will be provided to the committee should be an agenda item. Bill said that the towns who voted to study should have the obligation of the work on them. It is a burden on the district as a whole to provide information to make it a reasonable assessment. Towns want to leave the district and some feel that it should fall on those towns.

Carole Monroe said that the attorney said that the school board drives the feasibility study.

Kimberly Saunders said that she did not hear that; the State School Board decides.

John Robertson said that it is critical in the manner in which the study committee relays the information out to the district so that when there is a question, they should be comfortable to share thoughts and ask questions. This has to be done right.

Carole Monroe said that it is imperative that we come out of this process as a whole and not as a divided group. We are divided today.

Kimberly shared the impact on the district related to this work.

Some feel that it does not cost anything to conduct this study. She said that we have paid Attorney, Dean Eggert to attend tonight. We pay for minute-taking services. The Board has charged her with determining what will not happen as a result of the time to conduct this work.

It does take all of us to run the district.

In terms of real dollars and cents, we have already approached \$1,200 in terms of costs to date.

Dick Dunning said that the Superintendent was asked what this study might cost. The bigger issue here is what will not be done educationally because time will be otherwise spent. He is okay if the groups do not want to release numbers but the board asked in order to control the budget. There is a belief that the school district has a lot of money and we are concerned about the ability to pay staff members and other items.

Addressing a budget one year out can be difficult with projections. Meeting educational needs should additional staffing be required is a concern.

It is not just the impact on the two communities that might leave but also all of the communities. Whatever is decided has to go back to the voters for approval for $\frac{2}{3}$'s vote.

Carole Monroe said that she empathizes with the board and district but people feel in Dublin that this is the only way to make change. Many are volunteering time to participate in this process. It also costs the town of Dublin as well. It is a serious situation. We have to go through this process with open minds on both sides. She said that she feels pushed in a corner when the costs are stated.

Kimberly Saunders said that it is not her intent to make one feel that way. She is doing her job as providing a resource.

Charlie Pyle said that there is a lot of information that the SAU can readily provide. There will be other information that will be more difficult to provide. Latitude must be provided with time.

Kimberly said that she is not complaining about her time and wanted to be sure that was understood.

Bill Kennedy said that everybody needs to know what we are getting into.

4. Other

Bill Kennedy asked about litigation; he understands that we are getting more money. Kimberly Saunders said that we are getting an additional \$300.00 per student. They were hesitant to pass more on for adequacy. They are trying to flush out the education trust and it will impact all towns.

Bill asked what adequacy is for charter schools. If everything passes, it will be to the tune of \$24M.

Kimberly said that it was \$8M over budget.

Carole Monroe asked when in the State Legislative process do they have to be done. Kimberly said they have to be done in June but things will slow down in May.

Jim Cleary said that we are at a huge crossroads and he knows how he is feeling. How this is handled will determine how things smooth out down the road. He hopes all can communicate well. We have to work together and get through this.

Bill agreed that all need to keep an open mind. He is looking forward to the arguments both ways and the numbers before he can decide.

5. Adjourn

George Willard motioned to adjourn at 7:31 p.m. Bill Kennedy seconded. Unanimous.

The next Selectmen's Advisory Next meeting is on May 23rd at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Marschok