

REMINDER: THE NEXT RPC MEETING WILL BE ON WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2008 AT 6:30 PM AT THE BELFAST AREA HIGH SCHOOL

RPC Meeting
Minutes
Wednesday, March 12, 2008
Searsport District High School
6:30 pm

Present: Veronica Magnan, Barbara Klausmeyer, Denis Howard, Roger Rowlands, Nedra Bellows, Mary Szwec, Bruce Mailloux, Marge Knuuti, Alan Hammond, Alexa Schweikert, Craig Poulin, Eric Sanders, Sonja Salvatore, Aaron Fethke, Harold Grove

Absent: Eric Walker, Kathy Hoey, Jan Austin, Larry Theye, Debra Riley, Joyce Davidson, Denise Dakin, Richard Crossman, Duffy Woods, Jean Dube, Twyler Webster, Brian MacFarland, Morris Leathers, Richard Marsden, Ray Hart, Ray Freve, Evelyn Adams, Catherine Leathers, Ed Moran, Ruth Holmes, Sara Bradford, Roland LaReau

AGENDA

(from previous meeting)

- Updates from Ray.
- List of tasks not completed.
- Work sessions.

Eric Sanders called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm in Ray Freve's absence. Eric asked the two superintendents to provide updates to the committee members.

Mary Szwec spoke about the Budget Validation Process conference where we were given guidelines and the process that SADs need to follow. The Board approves the budget and then there is a district meeting where the public goes through the budget line by line and approves or disapproves the budget lines. If a line exceeds EPS, there must be a written vote. Then a referendum is held. The process repeats if the budget fails at referendum. We need to see if the Legislature will make more changes.

Bruce Mailloux spoke about cost savings and cost sharing. He received information from Falmouth but we don't fit their model.

Discussion followed.

The committee requested that Ray Freve get them hard information from an RPC which has projected an idea/foundation, to give us a direction. How valid are their plans?

We began to discuss and brainstorm ideas concerning cost sharing and cost savings:

COST SHARING	COST SAVINGS
➤ Salary combinations when the contracts come together.	➤ The Business Managers and Superintendents should meet and give us a foundation, and some possible savings. "We believe, because of this

COST SHARING	COST SAVINGS
	evidence....” “We think....” They should make a presentation
➤ Sports teams – one or two teams?	➤ Possible cost increases.
➤ Phrase as a question – Do we need two special ed directors, transportation directors, food service directors, etc.?	➤ NCLB Coordinator/Title I. One person, perhaps a superintendent, to serve in the new RSU. Charge salary to NCLB expense. A savings to the districts.
➤ If a person leaves, do we need to rehire or can we share? An existing person/position.	➤ Closing of a school.
➤	➤ Won't need two business managers, two secretaries, two payroll personnel, etc.
➤	➤ One audit, not two.
➤	➤ Perhaps one administrator for X number of students. Use the EPS formula to guide the number of principals, teachers, etc.
➤	➤ May mean deep cuts in program areas, people.
➤	➤ Computer/payroll software.

RECOMMENDATION: Both superintendents and business managers will meet to tell us the cost savings in administration, transportation/maintenance, special education, food services, salaries, etc.

OTHER IDEAS/THOUGHTS:

- No savings with diesel fuel unless you have a huge tanker.
- Look at the two districts setting up a cooperative with churches, towns, etc. for fuel and diesel costs.
- Hear from the two superintendents and two business managers for our potential impact areas for savings/costs.
- Look at class size/teachers. Cuts, layoffs, etc. are ugly things but we have to address this. People want to hear the facts. Look at new ways to make education work, i.e. special education directors.

COST SHIFTING

Currently both districts spend above the EPS levels. There will be a one million dollar cost shift if/when the two districts join. This will be discussed by the Legislature.

- Question? Would the cost be of benefit to MSAD #56 students? Have MSAD #56 absorb their costs?
- Need a plan to deal with it down the road, i.e., in Year 1 each district will pay the extra cost over EPS, in Year 2 – what will it look like?
- There will be increased salary costs when the two districts combine.
- There are two types of costs: state debt service, and local debt service.

➤ Do we just say, “This is our new “pool” of money.”
Voters need to hear the facts – what is it? What is it not?

RE-submit the budget cost savings/cost sharing/cost spending to the Commissioner.

Veronica Magnan shared the process where MSAD #56 citizens met within groups to brainstorm ways to cut expenses.

Identify areas of cost savings, costs expenses.

***What are the consequences if the voters vote “NO” on consolidation?**

Ask Ray:

- Challenge the Commissioner’s decisions that are made if we have questions regarding her letter requesting more information.
- Other ways for cost sharing.

The committee voted to have the Superintendents and Ray Freve meet and submit the plan with a few adjustments to the Commissioner by March 28, 2008.

The next RPC meeting will be on:

**Wednesday
April 23, 2008
6:30 pm
Belfast Area High School**

The committee feels that the legislature’s work should be done by then.