

**NEWRY WITHDRAWAL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
Wednesday, April 8, 2015**

Present: **Committee members:** Jim Sysko (Chair), Bonnie Largess, William Andrews, Gary Wight
Legal consultant: Dan Stockford
Educational consultant: Dr. Mark Eastman
Community members: Alison Aloisio, Brooks Morton, Tama & Gary Drown, Carol Emery

Absent:

Open Session Proceedings:

Meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chair, Jim Sysko.

The minutes of the March 16th meeting were reviewed. **William moved for approval of the minutes; Bonnie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Citizens' Comments: Jim noted to those in attendance that comments may be made at any time during the meeting, and reminded them that this meeting is being recorded.

Old Business:

- a) **Feedback on spreadsheets showing SAD 44 Member Town Payments & Mill Rates:** Jim spoke of the spreadsheet and stated that this is a tool for the negotiations and therefore will be discussed in detail during the Executive Session.

Bonnie mentioned that SAD 44 has a Facebook page, which talks about a lot of good things going on in the Elementary, Middle and High Schools, and she encouraged folks to check it out.

- b) **Update on pending state legislation concerning changes to school funding rules:** Dan explained that he has not been able to reach the attorney for Frye Island so he has nothing new to report at this point. He will try to get more information to share at this committee's next meeting. Jim explained that if this bill does pass, it would affect Newry.

New Business:

- a) **Update on current balance of NWC's account:** Jim distributed a report showing the balance of \$38,066.25 and explained that it does not include a bill received just today from Mr. Stockford in the approximate amount of \$7900. Therefore, the current balance is actually just over \$30k. The committee was given a budget of \$50k to work with.

Dan explained that most of the legal drafting is done and counterproposals have been exchanged. He said this is the bulk of the work, and does not expect any significant drafting exercises going forward. Therefore the expenditure of time will be generally less depending on how negotiations play out.

- b) **Report from Mr. Eastman & Mr. Stockford regarding NWC fairness in school funding spreadsheet:** Dan recommended that the details of this document be discussed in executive session. It was noted for the public, that the purpose of this spreadsheet is to help ease the transition toward a different way of funding. This document will not be public until it is shared with SAD 44. Mark applauded the committee for the creative thinking that has gone into this process showing not only their desire to be fair, but also to look at the impact over time.

(Note: issues which involve strategy and negotiations will be done in Executive Session).

Carol Emery, from Andover, spoke of her town's experience with this process, noting how they are looking forward to getting together and working as a community to make this happen for one of the most important resources they have.

Carol was asked about the process of writing the budget and explained that Andover received a lot of help and communication from the state in regards to this process. She noted that Andover is looking at fundraising opportunities as well as grants.

c) **Executive Session Withdrawal Plan Discussion:**

William moved to go into Executive Session to consult with legal counsel pursuant to 1MRSA Section 4056E. Bonnie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The committee entered Executive Session at 5:21 pm. Executive Session ended at 6:15 pm.

d) **Dates for next meetings:**

- The next meeting of the Withdrawal Committee is to be determined pending the scheduling of the next negotiation date.

Adjournment – Jim moved to adjourn; Bonnie seconded. The motioned passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:17 pm.