

NEWRY WITHDRAWAL COMMITTEE MINUTES OF MEETING

Wednesday, January 28, 2015

Present: Committee members: Jim Sysko (Chair), Bonnie Largess, William Andrews, Brooks Morton

Legal consultant: Dan Stockford

Educational consultant: Dr. Mark Eastman

Community members: Steve Wight, Alison Aloisio, Gary Down, Doug Webster

Open Session Proceedings:

Meeting was called to order at 5:02 PM by Chair, Jim Sysko.

The minutes of the January 14th meeting were reviewed. **William moved for approval of the minutes; Bonnie seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Citizens' Comments: Jim informed those in attendance that comments may be made at any time as long as they are not disruptive.

Old Business:

a) **Legal Counsel, Dan Stockford's Update on 60-Day Extension:** Dan reported that the request was submitted to Maine DOE, and the extension was granted. The new deadline for submitting an approved Withdrawal Plan is April 4, 2015.

b) **Committee Approval of Revised Public Statement:** The committee reviewed the language drafted by Dan. On the 3rd line, in the phrase "education mil rate paid by other towns", the word "by" will be changed to "in", to read "in other towns".

Dan made a note to add, as mentioned in the January 14 meeting, the word "approved" in item 1 on the 2nd page, so the phrase would read "...choose which approved schools...".

Brooks moved to accept the wording as corrected; William seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Jim will change the date, add the names of all four committee members, and post this document on the website.

New Business:

a) **Official Committee Members making public comments, including use of letters to the editor, about Newry's Withdrawal Plan and Public Statement:** Dan advised committee members who wish to put in the paper information that is their own personal thoughts which has not been approved by the whole committee, that it be made very clear that you are speaking as an individual only and not for the committee. It was pointed out that the Public Statement is one way that the committee can speak as a whole. Mark cautioned the committee to not negotiate in the newspaper; negotiations should be done face to face. As a general response to previously posted letters to the editor, it was suggested that the committee write its own letter to the editor acknowledging the fact that this committee will not be negotiating through the local paper. It was decided that this issue would be discussed further in executive session.

b) **Education Consultant, Dr. Mark Eastman's request for setting an agenda for possible joint meeting/supper with SAD 44 Withdrawal Subcommittee. (Note: issues which involve strategy and negotiations will be done in executive session.):** Mark reported that the proposed date of Feb 4 would not work for the SAD 44 subcommittee; they suggested either Feb 17 or 19. Mark suggested that ground rules be appropriately framed so the facilitator/moderator can ensure the focus of the meeting is maintained. Due to the delayed timing and recent statements published in the newspaper from an SAD 44 subcommittee, this committee discussed whether they should move forward with this joint meeting.

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Steve Wight asked for clarification as to what Newry wants to accomplish as a result of the withdrawal. Jim responded that, with the targeted grant part of the proposal, the withdrawal would give Newry a say on how the town's educational dollars are spent. It was clarified that this committee's task is to create a withdrawal plan to be

voted on by the citizens of the town; this committee does not decide future curriculum.

Brooks reported that he found in his research there are over 100 proposals before the Legislature's Education

Committee. Brooks also spoke of a bill proposed by Senator Lamar Alexandar, Is Every Child Ready for College or Career Act 2015. This would amend the Secondary Education Act of 1965 and replace the No Child Left Behind Act that has phased out.

c) Executive Session Withdrawal Plan Discussion:

William moved to go into Executive Session to consult with legal counsel in accordance with 1-MRS Section 4056E; Bonnie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The committee entered Executive Session at 5:51pm. Executive Session ended at 6:36pm.

d) Issues for vote:

1) Joint meeting:

William moved that the committee understands that the District is not able to have the joint meeting until later in February, and because of the short timeframe created by the withdrawal process, the committee feels that it would be more productive to move directly to a meeting for purposes of negotiation at this time. Therefore, the committee authorizes Mark Eastman to propose to David Murphy to schedule a meeting for purposes of negotiation. This motion was seconded Bonnie. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Letter:

William moved to authorize the Chair of the Committee to write a letter to the Citizen along the lines that the Committee discussed; Brooks seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

e) Dates for next meetings:

Newry Withdrawal Committee's next meeting date is tentatively set for 5:15 on Monday, February 16, dependent upon receipt of SAD 44's document.

Dan will tentatively schedule the meeting with David Murphy on Feb 19 during the day at Dan's office in Lewiston. Brooks and Jim will represent NWC.

The revised Public Statement will be posted on the website. The proposed agreement will also be posted on the website for the public to view.

Adjournment – Brooks moved to adjourn; Bonnie seconded. The motioned passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:51 PM.