

NEWRY WITHDRAWAL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF MEETING
Wednesday, August 25, 2015

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

Absent:

Open Session Proceedings:

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

The minutes of the August 6th meeting were reviewed. **William Andrew moved for acceptance of the minutes as distributed; Bonnie Largess seconded. Motion passed unanimously.**

Citizens' Comments: Jim noted that comments may be made at any time during the meeting.

Old Business:

- a) **Mark Eastman update regarding potential mediator:** Mark reported that SAD 44 is receptive to having a mediator. Possibilities on the Commissioner's list include: Mary Jane McCalmon (former Superintendent in Oxford Hills and in Portland) and Ray Poulin (former Deputy Commissioner). Mark pointed out that the Commissioner's list is made up of people with a background in education; it does not, nor will it include certified labor mediators. However, this group can look at other lists that would include labor mediators. Dan Stockford clarified the distinction between professional mediators and those that are not necessarily trained in mediating, but have a background in education. Dan spoke of John Alfano who has experience with the withdrawal process and does labor/employment as well as court-based mediation. John is not a lawyer, but Dan spoke highly of him. Mark mentioned that Dr. Murphy is also looking at potential mediators, and the next step would be to compare lists. Another name mentioned during discussion was Sheila Mayberry (a hearing officer for special education and other state agency matters).

This group will provide SAD 44 with its list of preferred mediators (John Alfano and Sheila Mayberry being at the top) and will then wait to receive SAD 44's list. This topic will be discussed further in executive session.

New Business:

- a) **William Andrews' Chart of Income Levels in Four Towns of SAD 44:** The chart, created from research William did on a different project in 2013, shows average income by household in each town and was distributed to those in attendance. Newry is listed as third in regards to average income level. Discussion ensued in regards to second-home owners.

Tama Drown asked about Carrabassett Valley's withdrawal process with that town being so similar to Newry with second-home owners. Mark replied that they were never part of SAD 58, and therefore never withdrew; Carrabassett Valley pays for all of their students through a tuition contract. He also questioned, if the State Legislature felt Newry deserved an exception under LD1, then why not Carrabassett Valley and a number of other communities? Why just Newry and Frye Island?

Brooks asked if the school district talked about changing the funding formula. Bonnie replied that she asked Marcel Polak about doing a cost-sharing review, and he felt that this would move faster along with a mediator. The topic did not get on the agenda for a vote. Bonnie agreed to formerly request that it be added to the School Board's next meeting agenda. Dan provided Bonnie with the proper language for this request: Whether the School Board would vote to initiate the process for reviewing the cost-sharing formula among the towns in the district. Bonnie was advised to make it clear that she is making this request, not the Withdrawal Committee.

- b) **Executive Session: William moved to enter executive session to meet with legal counsel to discuss the rights and duties of the committee and negotiating strategies pursuant to 1MRS Section 4056E. Bonnie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- c) **Date for next meeting:** TBD; will be announced via email.

Adjournment – Following executive session, **William moved to adjourn; Bonnie seconded. The motion passed unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 6:33 pm.**