

Voluntary Regional Education District Study Committee

March 6, 2013

Leland & Gray Library

7:00 - 9:00 PM

*Approved MINUTES*

**R.E.D. Committee:**

Emily Long, Bruce Parliman, Cory Stark, Ken McFadden, LeeAnne Parker, Joe Winrich, April Chase. (Windham not represented.)

**Administrators:**

Steven John, Superintendent; Frank Rucker, CFO; John Everitt – VSBA Consultant. Samantha Bovat- WCSU- Minute taker.

**Board Members:**

Jamaica – none

Windham – none

L&G – none

Newfane - Kim Friedman

**Members of the Public:**

Jerry Dyke and Nancy Dyke- Windham

Rick Hege- Townshend

Drew Hazelton- Jamaica

7:05 Emily called meeting to order

**Review Agenda - No changes**

**Comments from the public**

Rick Hege-Question about reorganization and if the lack thereof has an impact on this committee?

John - because the committee is made up of board members and appointed members by the boards- don't see that this is an issue. Re-organization doesn't have an impact unless one of them is no longer a board member and that is how they were represented on this committee. The new board needs to appoint a replacement. They can appoint the person who was originally on the committee.

**Review and Approve Minutes - February 27, 2013** (copies given at meeting)

Moved by LeeAnne and seconded by Cory

Discussion:

Ken-had concerns that real numbers need to be included in the Articles. Felt that this was a clear directive at the Feb 27th meeting and that it wasn't reflected accurately in the minutes. Also didn't like the language on page 11 of 15 regarding the vacant school maintenance costs.

Discussion ensued that there was a vote to send the Articles with changes discussed and there was not a discussion about changing the financial impact figures in the document.

Kim F. Offered that we change the language on page 11 of 15 to reflect the statement *"Consideration of the cost of maintaining vacant buildings must be taken when developing the WCED budget."* (Replace language of *"In addition, the WCED Board will give consideration to the ownership, use, care, and maintenance of any of its school buildings no longer being used for educational purposes."*)

Cory-it was very clear that we voted to send Articles to the state and then this week we would talk about visions which would lead to financial figures.

Question Asked: Should they be rescinded?

Kim- Can we take out any reference to estimated costs?

Drew- How can we compromise if Jamaica already said that they would not move forward if \$\$ were not attached? If going to have a vote, should have warned it in the Agenda.

Emily- agrees that the vote was not on the agenda, but that those who were in attendance are the ones who made the decision. All four towns were represented.

Kim-Asked if we could rescind the articles and regroup on the issues presented by both Ken and Drew.

Steven- will withdraw the articles if that is the wish of the group, then have boards vote on them with any changes.

April- argues that the money figures don't matter at this point because we are presenting the concept to the State.

Rick Hege- As a resident of Townshend, don't come to me without real numbers.

LeeAnne- would ask that if several members feel that a disservice was done for Jamaica, we should rescind articles and regroup.

**Bruce makes a motion to rescind the Articles.** Ken seconds. Steven will contact State.

All in favor-(1 abstention)

Discussion- Emily- we want to do the right thing here.

Drew- Numbers and voting representation of SU are still a question if the RED goes through. Would like a clear answer on that.

John- SU representation is not in the articles.

Ken reiterates concerns that the numbers for current cost estimates do not reflect accurate costs.

LeeAnne- thought articles submitted are general to get the legislative approval and get the ball rolling- then work out the numbers for the townspeople.

Emily- reminds group the purpose of what the Articles are for.

John- These Articles are created to give citizens in the town the opportunity to vote and express their will.

Rick- will school boards in public hearings have ability to say "vote this down". What will the fall-out be?

LeeAnne- we are not in a position to sway voters one way or the other on this committee.

John walks through issues that have come up:

### **1. Representation on WCSU Board if RED is formed**

Emily- By-Laws committee has met one time and have not returned to that. We know that the by-laws will have to be decided upon by WCSU board. Tabled the conversation. (We would be sending up petition to change representation at the same time or after the WCSU board meets.)

- If approved RED, we want you to restructure the SU board like \_\_\_\_\_

- And we would like you to approve the articles at the same time.

\*\*Steven will share the representation options with the RED and boards. WCSU board will have to take action.

Emily- should we send up articles with or without WCSU decision on representation?

There was agreement that they both go together after decision by WCSU board.

### **2. Legislative Changes**

Laws have been drafted and attached to other education bills...

Drew- Why are we submitting articles "before" legislative changes are actually in effect?

John-State can not approve articles until legislative change is in effect. Further, if they don't make the change, the state board can't move forward and would not approve these articles.

Only action to take- call legislature.

John- recommends that you don't wait for the legislature - the Articles may just be the nudge they need to move forward.

Drew- does not want to send up in hopes that the legislature will move forward. Would support sending the articles up knowing that Jamaica will not be strong armed into voting yes.

### **3. What detail do we want to get into as far as these articles?**

LeeAnne suggests that we go ahead with the visioning.

John- If you have confidence in the numbers that are in the articles...they would be powerful. Do we have sufficient data available to be confident in this process?

LeeAnne- If we could look more carefully at the visioning and actual budgets. The scenario of combining Newfane and Brookline to form NewBrook does not necessarily reflect what would happen if Jamaica and Townshend combined.

Drew agrees and Ken does as well.

April- asks Drew if he would like to continue on this committee if appointed by the Jamaica board?

Drew- assuming that the board would like me to continue...I will be interested in continuing.

Steven- reiterates that the visioning will provide some direction for Frank and himself to put numbers together. Without a clearer vision- we cannot give a cost.

Emily- asks committee to review and email comments or questions to the visioning questions to John before the next meeting.

Kim-offers that these are preliminary assumptions not really a "vision".

#### **4. Local Board authority-**

This will be a topic to discuss at the next meeting.

What authority is this committee giving to the local boards about deciding whether or not to send the Articles to the State Board of Education? What if one or more boards say no to the articles? Where does this leave the RED Committee appointed to do the study and make a decision?

Cory- let's recap what we will do next.

Steven- recommended "vision" questions priority- 1-7, 8, 10, 11-16, 19, 17?, 25, consider 20-25....

**Next Meeting: April 3rd 5:30-7:00** prior to WCSU Executive Committee meeting.

Joe made a motion to adjourn, Ken seconds- adjourned 9:25pm