

JOINT MEETING MINUTES
ASHBURNHAM AND WESTMINSTER BOARDS OF SELECTMEN
MONDAY, JULY 8, 2013
WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL, ROOM 205
6:30 P.M.

- Meeting called to order at 6:30 p.m.

In attendance were Selectmen Wayne Walker and John Fairbanks from Westminster, Selectmen Leo Janssens II, Duncan Phyfe, and Nick Davis from Ashburnham, and representing the District, Chairman Dave Christianson and Superintendent Ralph Hicks.

- Selection of Moderator for July 23, 2013 District-Wide Town Meeting.

Leo Janssens II made a motion to appoint Bill Webber as Moderator for the District Wide Town Meeting on July 23, 2013, seconded by Duncan Phyfe unanimously passed.

- General discussion – District-Wide Town Meeting

Wayne Walker opened discussion by asking the District when we would see a recertified budget from them. Dave Christianson stated that there was a meeting on Tuesday night at which time the Committee will discuss the budget and hopefully we would know at that time.

Dave was asked about the amounts in the E&D Fund and he stated that in June the E&D fund was certified at \$1,481,169 which was \$111,665 above the amount the state would allow, therefore the assessments for FY13 for each town would be readjusted and the appropriate share returned. (Ashburnham - \$51,232)

At the last School Committee meeting they made a motion to put \$550,000 towards the FY14 operating budget and \$500,000 into the Capital Fund. This leaves \$319,504 of FY12 E & D that will not be used until recertified this coming year.

Mr. Walker asked if they could tell us what the number would look like. Dave did not answer the question, but stated that since they know they have Westminster's vote they would be hesitant to go to Ashburnham's at first review. It was then pointed out to them from a former moderator that they don't have the luxury of throwing out numbers, because the Committee would have to recertify a number each time they put one out there. It was also asked about whether the District Wide Town Meeting would be needed if the Committee recertifies at the Ashburnham level and Mr. Walker said that he believes it would.

Mr. Walker again questioned the use of the E&D fund for anything less than emergency and unexpected expenditures.

Nick Davis questioned the elimination of positions when we have such a large amount of E&D funds, and there needs to be more transparency from the District. John Fairbanks suggested a rep from the District attend Board of Selectmen meetings. Dave Christianson said if they were invited that could indeed happen. Wayne Walker said that he has learned more in the few minutes that we have been talking than the whole time he has been on the Board.

Doug Briggs asked Mr. Christianson if the Committee would earmark the additional transportation monies to ensure teachers would not be lost. Dave said he could not be sure. He could not speak for the Committee as a whole.

Mr. Christianson stated that he would like to see the budget come together sooner as a whole so that this type of meeting would not be necessary.

Mr. Walker thanked everyone for coming and asked everyone to show up at the District Wide Town Meeting on the 23rd of July.

- Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned at 7:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Douglas Briggs
Town Administrator