
*JOINT MEETING- BOARD OF SELECTMEN
AND ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES*

**TUESDAY - AUGUST 4, 2015 – 6:30 P.M.
TRAINING ROOM – PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING**

PRESENT: BOARD OF SELECTMEN – Duncan Phyfe, Chair, Leo Janssens II, Member, Kyle Johnson, Clerk.
ADVISORY BOARD – Bill Johnson, Chair, Bruce Whitney, Jaime Piedrafite, Secretary, Gail Dumont, Ron Putnam and Allison Weissensee.

Also in attendance – School Committee members - Dave Christianson, Chair and Keith Glenny. Sarah Dorsey, Gary Mazzola, School Supt. and Sherry Kersey, Business Manager.

Bill Johnson stated that this meeting was called to have a preliminary review of the proposed changes to the Regional School Agreement.

Dave Christianson gave a quick overview of the changes. Some of the changes included under Sections III and IV – a definition of useful life of capital items, purpose statement, defined methods of finance with the statutory method as default and a very specific assessment method with 10 equal payments in each fiscal year. He noted that Section V now follows state law regarding the budget.

At this point Bill Johnson asked the members of the Advisory Board to state their concerns, if any, with the document. Allison Weissensee stated that her main concern was the issue regarding the statutory and alternate methods. Keith Glenny noted that the statutory method is the default but that the alternate has to be in the agreement.

Bruce Whitney stated that he had some concern regarding capital costs in Section C1. Dave Christianson stated that capital cost should be based on percentage of student enrollment for each building. He also noted that Section C2 is related to equipment. It was noted that the Committee will change the words ***“operating cost” to “building related capital cost”***.

Ron Putnam noted his concern as to who signs nomination papers, noting that he would anticipate that it would be all Ashburnham residents for Ashburnham. Dave Christianson stated that they are elected in both towns not just one. He also noted that the majority of students in the district are from Westminster. He stated that it’s easier to represent the interest of the district without concerns.

There followed some discussion on a recall process which it was determined should be reviewed at a later time.

Bill Johnson noted his concern was capital. Dave Christianson stated that the original intent of the \$5,000 cap was to not spend over this amount on any non-district school such as Briggs or Meetinghouse. More discussion followed on this subject.

Bill Johnson stated that the \$5,000 amount was not realistic. He then polled his members on their level of comfort with the agreement. Bruce Whitney stated he was okay, Gail Dumont noted that they should not wait for 36 months to work on the capital and dismissal of members, Allison Weissensee stated she

had no issue, Jaime Piedrafite stated no issue except for capital, and Ron Putnam stated he was comfortable with the agreement.

The Board of Selectmen – Kyle Johnson stated he was comfortable with the agreement, Leo Janssens agreed with the concerns on the capital and recall issues, and Duncan Phyfe noted that he would do whatever is decided but that payments are an issue, where the first payment in the fiscal year should be in August not July.

Dave Christianson stated that he would encourage Gary Mazolla and Sherry Kersey to look at the payment situation again to possibly extend the front end. Doug Briggs noted that he is not able to change the due date on the Town's debt, such as Briggs, Town Hall and Public Safety Building as he would need to wait until they were more mature. He noted he was only looking for a little leeway from the school. Bill Johnson noted that this would be Ashburnham's request ***"to change the first payment to the school"***.

There was a short discussion on capital funding.

It was noted that the School Agreement should be placed on the Special Town Meeting warrant in the fall.

At 8:35 p.m. Bill Johnson motioned to adjourn and was seconded by Bruce Whitney. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Turcotte
Executive Assistant