

TOWN OF PRINCETON MA
Princeton Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 12, 2017

AC members in attendance: John Shipman, George Handy, Judy Dino, Bill Lawton, Jimmy O'Coin, Wayne Adams

BOS members in attendance: Jon Fudeman, Edie Morgan, Ritchie Bisk, and TA Nina Nazarian

DESE: Jeff Wulfson

State Reps: State Senator Harriette Chandler, Office of House of Representative Kim Ferguson

WRSD: Bob Imber, Megan Weeks, Joe Scanlon

Advisory Committee Agenda

- Joint meeting with BOS to discuss DESE Funding past, current, future with Deputy Commission Mr. Jeff Wulfson

Meeting started at 5:30 PM

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Jeff Wulfson presented how DESE Chapter 70 Funding works and referenced WRSD examples.

Mr. George Handy presented a historical comparison of Chapter 70 Funding for WRSD, Princeton, and comparative districts including Marlboro, Weston, Wellesley, Northboro/Southboro, and Westboro.

Q&A from BOS, Advisory Committee, Princeton School Committee Reps, and State Senator Harriette Chandler. Key points, discussions, and action items as follows:

- George to send Jeff the Princeton analysis. Jeff was unaware of the situation, the harm caused to the town, and recent changes to the formula (cap at 90%)
- School Committee expressed frustration with fluctuating state funding commitments and small dips results in district cuts. Also expressed frustration that the district is under-funded when compared to the rest of the state districts.
- Legislature wants to address Chapter 70 funding issues of regional districts. Governor's office rejected proposals in 2016; legislature to submit proposals in 2017.
- DESE will not make remedy payments for historical imbalanced/lack of allocations.
 - State is challenged with ongoing revenue shortfalls and increasing costs, as well as a growing list of priorities beyond K-12 education such as infrastructure.
 - Legislature proposing a progressive tax for those residents earning >\$1M to balance out the shortfalls and help restore education spend
- DESE needs to revisit school funding since historical formulas and assumptions no longer hold true
 - E.g. rapid increases in healthcare costs, retirement costs
 - Reset transportation funding commitment to 80% and fund it at 80% to get

local involvement for cost management and efficiencies. 100% is not achievable and allows inefficiencies to creep in

- DESE believes long-term that regional school districts are efficient.
 - Many districts west of 495 ; west of Quabbin are too small to operate as a single town/district given falling enrollment.
 - DESE desires WRSD to continue as a regional system and continue to work with DESE and legislators to improve funding fairness.

Session adjourned 7:15PM; BOS continued to meet on other BOS specific agenda business

Upcoming AC meetings

July 10th, time 7:30PM BOS Reserve Fund Transfer requests

Handouts and Referenced Documents

- DESE Chapter 70 Presentation
- AC prepared Princeton Chapter 70 Analysis and Comparison

Minutes recorded by Wayne M. Adams, AC Member