

School District Administrative and Structural Options Subcommittee

December 14, 2017

Meeting Minutes

Present: Susan Iuliano (Sudbury BOS), Dan Carty (Sudbury BOS)

Guest: Jennifer Glass (Lincoln BOS)

Citizens in attendance: Sarah Liberman (Sudbury), Janie Dretler (Sudbury)

Meeting opened @ 5:45pm by Iuliano, Carty offered to take minutes

After introductions Iuliano reviewed history – Iuliano/Carty met to discuss generalities then were to meet with Christine Hogan (SPS Committee Chair) and Kevin Matthews (LS School Committee Chair) but meeting was postponed due to schedule conflicts. Carty & Iuliano elected to have an informal meeting with Jennifer Glass (Lincoln BOS) in order to not lose a month due to coming holidays. All parties acknowledged the informality of tonight's discussion as exactly that – a discussion.

Iuliano said interested in high level discussion in 3 areas: Better articulate Sudbury's school structure, to learn Lincoln's viewpoint and concerns, and seek advice on how to procedurally move forward – how would the two towns go about even having a conversation on school structure?

Glass curious as to the problems Sudbury is trying to solve. Would like to not repeat reactionary nature of previous task force (Budget Review Task Force - BRTF) - she felt Lincoln was brought in too late.

Iuliano discussed history of how the Consolidated Working Group (CWG) was formed with members representing Lincoln and Sudbury. She gave history of G4 as staff driven and used as an excuse by two Select boards to end the CWG. There was some consolidation that came from these discussions however – e.g. shared Metco Director

Carty mentioned opportunities that he sees; continuity of curriculum, single SPED program, etc. Felt there likely is opportunity to save some money but cost isn't necessarily the #1 driver. Enhancing student experience is #1 as long as we can do it for the same or less money.

Glass asked if curriculum question was related to students going from Sudbury to LS or just transitioning from one school to another. Iuliano said there is a cultural change between SPS/Curtis and LS that students must adapt to. Glass said that she believes Lincoln historically likes the LS culture.

Dretler said she has no personal history or experience with LS but is more familiar with grades 4 to 5 then going to Curtis. Liberman felt it was not necessarily a cultural issue but anecdotally more of an overall disconnect between districts.

Iuliano said some concerns could be addressed without regionalization. Glass warned that the word regionalization would scare Lincoln off and said in her opinion Lincoln did not wish to regionalize beyond current arrangement. However she was open to seeing a list of concerns Sudbury has along with any data that backs up the concerns.

Iuliano said that Sudbury has challenges with budgeting processes and mentioned a recent Budget Strategies Task Force meeting that showed LS and SPS disconnect exemplified by school start times and busing – she felt LS had interest in changing start times but not for next school year whereas SPS wanted to change for next year. Carty asked if Lincoln had similar challenges in coordinating across Lincoln Public Schools and LS. Glass said it just wasn't as big a deal in Lincoln perhaps due to smaller size. She said LS is a much smaller part of the overall Lincoln budget, it's been fairly undramatic in the past few years as Lincoln has had no overrides or major budget issues, and that LS issues tend to be related more to the calendars and level of consistency of detail provided by two school districts.

Iuliano asked if Lincoln finds their cost centers competing for dollars. Glass responded no. Dretler asked about capital issues. Glass said they have a new school and new community center on the horizon. Carty asked if they were renovating the Brook School or the Smith School or both. Glass said that because last renovation project physically connected the two buildings they now must fix both if they touch either. Carty mentioned potential opportunity to send Lincoln middle school students to Curtis but then referenced back to Lincoln's probably desire to not further regionalize. Carty also asked if Glass felt Lincoln's attitudes regarding financials may change when these two large projects hit and Glass joked that that was the \$95 million question. Iuliano then asked if their capital projects ever crossed and used the SPS Administrative space as an example. Glass said Town's focus and energy is all currently directed towards these two projects.

Carty asked about Hanscom students and in particular students of retired military personnel. Glass replied that they pay for them out of pocket and they should be of no concern to Sudbury

Iuliano discussed possible cooperation between districts and used joint curriculum coordinator as an example – how would Glass envision Lincoln reacting? Glass said there is openness to having rational discussions but the sticking point would likely be lack of clarity of what the problem was we were trying to solve. She also questioned what the Selectmen's role in this would be. Iuliano said there were things the schools could do on their own but any change to the Regional Agreement would involve the Selectmen of both Towns. Glass agreed but said there are a lot of steps the schools should explore first. As a Selectman she would want to understand the problem and supporting data and acknowledgement from the schools before she jumped in their business.

Lieberman asked if the respective boards of Selectmen should be the ones to drive conversation. Asked if there were opportunities to make LS grades 6-12, to close an elementary school, or better utilize Curtis across two towns. Glass stated if the main goal was related to budget that's different than a goal of student continuity. Carty said we've already talked about budgetary and calendar issues but not yet curriculum. Glass said in Lincoln it's all about math and said the perceived notion is the two K-8 districts prepare their students differently for math. Carty said that sounded like an opportunity – rather than

have two k-8 districts push up to LS what if LS set the curriculum and pulled students in. Carty stated his dislike of sports analogies but noted that this is how he understood LS athletics work in some cases now – they set the teaching curriculum for youth sports so that they are ready upon arrival and noted that something must be working right given the number of times teams compete for state titles.

Liberman asked if Lincoln would have interest in splitting off from LS altogether. Glass said no.

Liberman mentioned Suzanne Bump Regionalization study and recommendations and asked if Lincoln had any concerns. Glass said to the best of her knowledge it hadn't been discussed yet and they are taking a wait and see approach.

Luliano brought meeting back to next steps. She felt that Sudbury needed to get more information from the schools. Glass felt there was no sense of urgency to change the Regional Agreement but they are certainly willing to discuss further. Carty agreed with Luliano about getting more information from the schools so that we are in a position to articulate challenges we face, problems we are trying to solve, and how to back up with data. Glass mentioned that in all honesty Lincoln has higher priority issues currently but would be happy to keep discussions going. She found this discussion refreshing and opined that open and transparent discussions are important. Carty asked if subcommittee next step was to meet with SPS and LS Committee chairs and Luliano agreed.

7:29PM – Jennifer Glass left meeting.

7:30PM – Luliano motioned to approve minutes of Nov 16 2017 and Nov 29 2017, Carty seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

7:34 Luliano motioned to adjourn, Carty seconded. Motion approved unanimously, meeting adjourned.