

MINUTES SUBURY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
OPTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING
October 9, 2014 7:30 P.M.
DPW CONFERENCE ROOM
275 OLD LANCASTER ROAD, SUDBURY

Present:

John K. Baranowsky
Risa Burns
Patricia Brown
Robert C. Haarde
Ivar Henningson
Elena M. Kleifges
William E. Kneeland, Jr.

David Levington
Paul F. Lynch
David R. Manjarrez
Scott B. Nassa
Allison Scheff
Bella Wong
Stephen Lambert

Call To Order; Organization of the Committee: Selectman Harde called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He noted that the committee needs to elect a chair which could be done at the end of this meeting or at the next meeting. Selectman Harde also noted the need for a Clerk to take minutes. Paul Lynch volunteered to take the minutes.

Evaluation Criteria.: Selectman Harde asked for input regarding Evaluation Criteria that the Committee would use in evaluating vocational options for Sudbury. Paul Lynch stated that in considering options going forward Sudbury will want to consider whether it will remain in a vocational school district or whether it will in the short or even the long term not belong to any vocational school district and would therefore send students to one or more vocational schools as an out of district town. Dave Manjarrez discussed the educational experience in general at a vocational school such as Minuteman which involves both an academic and vocational education and which for many students involves college prep program of studies.

Regarding transportation costs incurred by non member towns Dave Manjarrez noted that while reimbursement is allowed by statute. \$500,000 (was originally \$1.2 million) was allocated for tuition student transportation last year and \$2.2 million (was originally \$5 million) has been allocated by the legislature this year per the DESE for a 59% out of district transportation reimbursement.

Dave Manjarrez stated that he understands that Nashoba and Assabet have capacity to take out of district students and that they may be willing to talk about Sudbury as a new member to the district.

Bella Wong discussed the importance of stability; she also noted that each of the schools under consideration are good schools.

There was also a discussion of the risk of not being a member of a district – that if a school fills up with in district student it may not admit all out of district students that want to attend.

Dave Manjarrez discussed the need to consider what programs are currently in place in a school vs. what programs are planned for the future.

The group as a whole suggested the following evaluation criteria:

Educational Criteria:

- Academic Standards; AP Courses; Curriculum; MCAS Scores
- Vocational Standards and Vocational offerings
- Ratings, NEA, Coordinated Program Review
- Industry partners
- College and Career Placement; percent of students that go on to college; percent that go on to work in their field of study
- Student Loss Rate
- Teacher turnover

Financial Criteria:

- Cost
- Distance, Proximity, Transportation
- Capacity - do they want us? Do they have room for non district students?
- Stability and Sustainability of the enterprise; likelihood that the district will want Sudbury as a member town.
- Regional Agreement terms - what are we signing up for?

Selectperson Brown noted that a vocational education is very expensive and the Town will be interested in controlling costs.

There was a discussion by Dave Manjarrez regarding the tuition the Department of Education sets Minuteman to charge for out of district students and that this tuition rate does not cover the average cost of sending a student to Minuteman and that this in effect amounts to a subsidy by member towns of non member students. Paul Lynch stated that during his time on the Minuteman School Committee the school committee was satisfied that the tuition rate covered the marginal cost incurred as a result of a non district student and that therefore each non member student therefore reduced the assessment to the member towns. Selectman Haarde stated that with increased non member enrollment and the Department of Education decreasing tuition rates for out of district students it appears this is no longer the case. Paul Lynch stated that the tuition rate issue is in flux stating as an example that there are proposed regulations that will allow a district to charge a capital improvement fee to out of district students. Because of disagreement on this and other issues Paul Lynch stated that he felt it was important that the Committee hear directly from Minuteman at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the Superintendent of Minuteman and the Chair of the Minuteman School Committee would be asked to attend the next meeting to discuss these issues. Bill Kneeland stated that in all likelihood Minuteman would appear before the Finance Committee after January 1 to discuss financial issues and answer questions.

List of Schools to Evaluate: The Committee agreed that it made sense to evaluate the following schools: Nashoba; Assabet; Minuteman; Keefe Technical

Research Teams: The following Committee members agreed to assist in gathering educational and financial information:

Educational: Allison Scheff, Risa Burns, John Baranowsky; David Levington

Financial: Bill Kneeland; Pat Brown; Dave Manjarrez

The following Committee members agreed to participate in site visits with the understanding that any Committee member who has the availability can participate in site visits: Scott Nasa; Paul Lynch; Elena Kleifges; Dave Manjarrez

School Visits, Collection of Data: It was agreed that school visits would start as soon as possible an attempt made to schedule tours prior to the next meeting. Data will be gathered by mid November with goal being to have a recommendation finalized by the end of December. It was agreed that the proposed revised Minuteman Regional Agreement would be discussed at the next meeting. Dave Levington agreed to look at the draft agreement and present this at the next meeting.

Co-ordination with Lincoln: Selectman Haarde agreed to communicate with the Lincoln Board of Selectmen to inform them of what the Committee is doing.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

Paul F. Lynch