

HEART Committee Minutes 1/15/2019

Members present: Julia Blyth, Alan Genovese, Michele Giarusso, Bob Keir, Tony Matteo (@7:45), Jean Page, Shalee Pratt, Ginger Robinson, Tom Wyatt

Members not present: Cheryl George, Jess Marshall, Sue O'Reilly-McRae

Meeting called to order by Chair Giarusso @ 6:37 p.m.

Motion to accept minutes of 1/2/19 made by Bob, seconded by Ginger; motion passed.

Mac Reid led the ongoing review of the district agreement language:

Regarding Section IIA,4, members confirmed that the School Committee chair and vice chair positions should be rotated every two years, NOT annually.

On behalf of Jess (absent due to illness), Tom posed her question regarding whether the at-large SC member position should be rotated amongst the four towns. Several of us expressed concern that it may be difficult to find interested candidates, and it was agreed to allow the election process to play out without designating from which town the at-large candidate should be.

Section IIB,3, committee agreed that a two-term (i.e., 8 yrs) SC member can fill in a vacancy, should one occur, after their 2nd term concludes without a hiatus.

In terms of school closure process, Ginger raised the concern that if a feasibility study was conducted, its validity period should remain intact longer than a year. After discussion, we agreed that the study should be considered acceptable for up to five years.

Michele spoke about the many things which must be considered in terms of reimbursing a town whose school is closed.

Section IIIC., Alan voiced that school choice students will be allowed according to MGL's and seats available.

Mac provided an overview of Sections V, budget, and VI, apportionment and pymt of costs incurred by the district. He confirmed that 1) for student calculation we will continue to utilize a five-yr average (vs. changing to a fiscal year calculation), and, 2) we will continue to utilize , for enrollment numbers, the foundation enrollment (vs. in-district enrollment).

There was discussion about Section VI, C. Alan differentiated structural changes as being capital costs, vs. general repairs as being operating costs. Michele's preference was to define in dollar amount what the district pays for. Shalee pointed out that it is ambiguous to refer to deferred maintenance, as that can be quite a subjective category. Julia stated that the definition needs to be kept simple and clear. Alan suggested a categorization of building modifications to the structure and systems which exceed \$10,000, and this verbiage was agreed upon.

Section VI, B., 2, Operating Costs: Alan reminded us that if the funding formula changes, the district agreement changes accordingly.

Section VI,C,2,b: Mac questioned whether the town whose school is closed has to pay capital costs to the town which now hosts that town's students (or, the "host" town). He had been in discussion with the superintendent and financial director. All things considered, they both recommend NOT expecting the school-loss town to pay capital costs to the host town. They felt it should be considered a "wash". Following Ginger's lead, we agreed to take this

approach at this time. Mac anticipated his having further discussion about this, with Jon Scagel and Tanya Gaylord.

Continuing on, Bob pointed out the need to tie together, in Provision for Amendment, Section IX,A,3, and Section XII, A., B. Alan concurred with this suggestion.

Section XI, Withdrawal of Member Towns, Julia shared feedback from the Northfield Selectboard that they feel the withdrawal process is too restrictive and makes it very difficult for a town to withdraw. It was suggested that this may require further review.

Mac concluded his presentation at approximately 8:20.

It was noted that there is a joint meeting of the four towns' selectboards and finance committees scheduled for Monday, 1/28/19, at the Northfield Town Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Next HEART Committee meeting scheduled for 2/6/19, at the Northfield Town Hall, at 6:30 p.m. Motion to adjourn made by Bob, seconded by Shalee, motion passed, mtg adjourned @ 8:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Jean Page.