

**Washington West Supervisory Union Executive Committee**  
**“Revised Official” Meeting Minutes for September 23, 2015**  
Washington West Central Office

**WWEC Board Members Present:** Doug Mosle (Fayston), Rosemarie White (Harwood), Garrett MacCurtain (Harwood), Kate O’Neill (Moretown), Christine Sullivan (Waitsfield alternate), Rob Rosen (Warren), Jason Gibbs (Waterbury-Duxbury), Alex Thomsen (Waterbury-Duxbury)

**Act 46 Study Committee Members Present:** Jill Ellis (Fayston), Rosemarie White (Harwood ex-officio), Garrett MacCurtain (Harwood ex-officio), Gabe Gilman (Moretown), Christine Sullivan (Waitsfield), Rob Rosen (Warren), Jason Gibbs (W-D for Waterbury), Alex Thomsen (W-D for Waterbury), Sam Jackson (W-D for Duxbury)

**Other Board Members Present:** Dale Smeltzer (Harwood)

**WWSU Administrators:** Brigid Nease, Michelle Baker

**Other:** Rachel Goff (Valley Reporter)

- 1) Garrett MacCurtain, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 5:45 p.m.
- 2) Approve WWEC Minutes of June 10, 2015 and September 9, 2015: Rob Rosen moved to approve the minutes of 6/10/15 and 9/9/15. Rosemarie White seconded the motion and noted a correction needed in her name for the 6/10/15 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- 3) **Act 46 (in conjunction with Study Committee Members) – NOTE – Questions generated listed at end**
  - a) **Membership** – Brigid Nease reviewed the names of board members serving as WWEC members and those serving as Act 46 Study Committee members. The representatives from each board are as follows.
    - i) Fayston – Doug Mosle for WWEC, Jill Ellis for Study Committee
    - ii) Harwood - Garrett MacCurtain and Rosemarie White for WWEC, and also serving as ex-officio Study Committee members
    - iii) Moretown - Kate O'Neill for WWEC, Gabe Gilman for Study Committee
    - iv) Waitsfield - Eve Frankel for WWEC, Christine Sullivan for Study Committee
    - v) Warren - Rob Rosen for both WWEC and Study Committee (Alycia Biondo as alternate for Study Committee)
    - vi) Waterbury-Duxbury - Alex Thomsen and Jason Gibbs for WWEC, Alex Thomsen and Jason Gibbs for Study Committee for Waterbury, Sam Jackson for Study Committee for Duxbury
  - b) **WWEC Meeting Schedule** –  
**ACTION:** After a brief discussion, Rob Rosen moved to set the new regular meeting schedule for WWEC as listed on the agenda under “Future Meetings” – the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> meetings of the month except for holidays and vacations. Rosemarie White seconded the motion which passed unanimously. It was agreed that the meeting time should stay at 5:30 p.m., but that the location should move to the Harwood Library to accommodate the larger number of people. The meetings will be held jointly with the Act 46 Study Committee for maximum board member meeting efficiency.
  - c) **Accelerated Merger Process, Timeline, Information**
    - i) Brigid briefly reviewed the handout sent with the Board Packet, titled "Getting Started: Pursuing Options and Opportunities under Act 46", and distributed another handout giving comparisons of the possible actions to take, and the requirements for each of them.
    - ii) She then reviewed the green workbook titled "Merging Districts in Vermont: A Legal Review"
    - iii) Handout on MMU Process Used and Results Gained - One aspect learned is how much flexibility there is around maintaining local control. They are also exempt from the cost containment requirements, but not Huntington who is not part of the new District. This handout was for board members to look through on their own although there was discussion precipitated by some of the issues portrayed in the handout.
  - d) **Study Grant and Consultant Agreement** – Brigid reported that we now qualify for the \$20,000 grant, rather than the initial \$5,000 grant being considered. A recommended consultant agreement to provide services for this work was included in the board packet. Brigid thinks the best option is what is being presented – with VSA, VSBA and VSBIT who are working as a team and overseeing a set of consultants and

who are already providing support for this work around the state. They would provide a consultant to come to the meetings and be able to come up with answers to questions. Brigid is recommending that we do the \$16,500 level of services, which will be reimbursed by the grant. Attorney costs will have to be covered by the local money allocated.

**ACTION:** Based on feedback from the Study Committee, Doug Mosle moved to authorize the consultant agreement as presented. Rob Rosen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

- e) **Next Steps for Act 46 Study Committee** - There was then as discussion of next steps needed. Board members went through the handout, to start learning the steps that will need to be taken by the Committee - gain on overview of the process.
  - i) The Study Committee will need to elect a Chair and Vice-Chair. After discussion, Gabe Gilman agreed to serve as chair, and Alex Thompsen as Vice-Chair. These will need to be formally designated at the first warned Study Committee meeting.
  - ii) The next step for the Study Committee is to write a "Charge" - next meeting.
- f) **WWSU Per Pupil Spending** - Michelle Baker distributed a handout titled "Comparison of FY2016 Cost Per Pupil Components - Revenue, Expense and Net Education Spending", which contained answers to questions that people have been asking about what might be causing differences in the costs per pupil between Districts.
- g) **Review and Discuss Cost Containment Threshold Spending) impacts to the FY 2017 budget** - Michelle distributed a handout titled "WWSU Preliminary Look at FY2017 Threshold Spending Act 46 Cost Containment", for board discussion.
- h) Brigid then asked board members to share their current thinking about the issues involved, and their interests as we move forward.
- i) Adjournment – Rob Rosen moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m. Doug Mosle seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

#### QUESTIONS GENERATED DURING MEETING:

Question: Can we automatically roll into a RED if the vote fails in one town, or do we have to go to another vote?

Question: If we never get to a vote for the accelerated merger, do we have to have a vote to go to the merger?

Question: Talking at town meeting and then going later for a vote - are there any rules about that?

Question: What options is this committee empowered to recommend for a community vote at the end?

Question: What will happen to current fund balances, real estate owned, maintenance reserve funds from each District?

Question: Who is going to provide the notification re the elected Chair to the Secretary of Education, as mentioned on page 3 per the "Getting Started" document.

Question: What is the difference between a RED, a Union District, and a MUUSD in terms of governance and other aspects?

Question: What did MMU learn from the failed vote - what did they do differently the second time:

Question: What are the limits around spending? Do all legal fees have to be covered by the local funds allocated?

*Minutes recorded by Dale Smeltzer*