

Washington West Supervisory Union Executive Committee
&
Act 46 Study Committee
Approved Minutes for December 17, 2015
Harwood Union High School Library

WWEC Board Members Present: Doug Mosle (Fayston), Dale Smeltzer (alternate for Harwood), Garrett MacCurtain (Harwood), Kate O'Neill (Moretown), Eve Frankel (Waitsfield), Rob Rosen (Warren), Reed McCracken (alternate for Waterbury-Duxbury)

Act 46 Study Committee Members Present: Doug Mosle (alternate for Fayston), Dale Smeltzer (alternate for Harwood ex-officio), Garrett MacCurtain (Harwood ex-officio), Gabe Gilman (Moretown), Christine Sullivan (Waitsfield), Rob Rosen (Warren), Reed McCracken (alternate for W-D for Waterbury), Sam Jackson (W-D for Duxbury)

Other Board Members Present: Alycia Biondo (Warren)

WWSU Administrators: Brigid Nease, Michelle Baker

Consultants: Jeff Maer, Walter Nardelli

Other: Katie Sullivan, Channel 44 camera person

- 1) **Call to Order:** Gabe Gilman, chair of the Study Committee, and Eve Frankel, chair of the WWEC, called the respective meetings to order at 5:42 p.m.
- 2) **Confirming Agenda:** The agenda was shifted to allow WWEC business to occur first.
- 3) **ACTION ITEMS:**
 - a) Approval of Minutes of December 9, 2015:
 - i) **STUDY COMMITTEE ACTION:** Gabe Gilman moved to approve the minutes as written. Christine Sullivan seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
 - ii) **WWEC ACTION:** Garrett MacCurtain moved to approve the minutes as written. Kate O'Neill seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
 - b) Approve the WWSU Board Warrants: These will be done at the next meeting, as Rosemarie White was not present.
- 4) **Executive Committee Work**
 - a) **FY2017 Budget Update** - Michelle Baker distributed a handout titled "WWSU, FY2017 Budget & Assessment". She noted that it was very similar to the draft considered previously. It includes the new position of Project Manager, which is the only programmatic change, as well as bringing in the local district software program costs as an WWSU expense to be assessed out based on Equalized Pupils, resulting in a 11% increase in that component. Also included are Transportation, increasing at 3%, and Special Education, all to be assessed out. These latter two components are not included in the WWSU General Assessment as these costs, previously only reflected in the local district budgets, are assessed out to local districts in separate line items. The General Assessments for each local district are somewhat higher due to some of the expenses being moved out of the local budgets, and shifts due to changes in number of equalized pupils. An explanation of how the shifts are occurring and compared to previous years will be developed for the full WWSU Board meeting, which will meet at 6:30 on January 13, 2016. The local assessments are increasing about 11% as well since the revenues are fairly constant.
ACTION: Kate O'Neill made a motion to recommend the budget to the WWSU Board as presented. Rob Rosen seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
 - b) **Adjournment of WWEC:** Rob Rosen moved to adjourn WWEC at 5:58 p.m. Garrett MacCurtain seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
- 5) **Study Committee Discussion Items:**
 - a) **Review Current Draft of the Articles of Agreement to Edit as group** - Gabe projected the document incorporating as many of the suggestions he had received before the meeting, and the study committee worked through them consecutively. The following changes were made:

- i) Article 1 - Necessary Districts. Gabe explained that deciding whether some districts should be considered "necessary" or "advisable" has impacts on how the voting occurs, plus in considering the full picture of the potential future structure that would be created with only some of the districts. It was pointed out that one benefit would be retaining small schools grants and tax benefits for the districts who do vote to go in. There was discussion about whether a district, such as W-D, should be considered "necessary" given that it is half of the population, vs. not achieving the union and the smaller districts losing their small schools grants, and the tax incentives for those joining districts.
- ii) Article 2 - Advisable Districts - These first two articles were tabled for discussion at the next meeting, when more information is available about how other schools around the state have dealt with these issues.
- iii) Article 3 - Grades Operated – OK
- iv) Article 4 - Blanks to fill in. No other renovations planned.
- v) Article 5 - First-Year Transition Plan - Perhaps an appendix will not be needed, if it's in the Report to the AOE, as everything is already centralized.
- vi) Article 6 Indebtedness - The numbers for this list have already been generated.
- vii) Article 7 - Real Property; Valuation; Manner of Transfer - These values have already been calculated, and the language for the two union schools has been pulled from former language.
- viii) Article 8 - Allocation of Expenses - The consultants noted that this article is not required by statute anymore, but this will be reviewed. Perhaps better to leave in.
- ix) Article 9 - Board of School Directors; Representation - Gabe noted that this is language he has drafted to comply with what appears to be the consensus of the group. There were no suggested changes.
- x) Article 10 - Initial Directors; Terms of Office - clarify "same date" in the first sentence, being the date in the following article. Add that vote is by Australian ballot.
- xi) Article 11 - Date of Submission to Voters - There was a question about the timing of a vote for a rescission, to avoid making this happen in the summer if that happened. The goal is the first Tuesday in May. Add that vote is by Australian ballot.
- xii) Article 12 - Commencement of Operations - This is language from other schools' Articles that have been approved. Suggestion: "All existing boards will cease to exist" rather than listing all the specific boards. "forming and/or governing districts" might be possible wording in last sentence - just need to make sure that the Waterbury and Duxbury Town School Districts will be dissolved appropriately.
- xiii) Article 13 - Votes on District Matters by Australian ballot and commingled.

Gabe noted that the above are the required articles. There was then discussion of other articles that would be desirable, continuing below.

- xiv) Article 14 - Transitional Continuity for Resident Students - for the first year - no changes
 - xv) Article 15 - Choice - deleted "Assured" in the title but keep language as drafted.
 - xvi) Article 16 - Local School Councils – There was discussion of wording for an article on local councils, without obligating anyone to have one. The consultants offered to draft some suggested wording to give to Gabe, looking at some of the other examples within the state, allowing that local communities/schools "may" do this, and guiding principles.
 - xvii) Article 17 - School Closure Protection - new language suggested by Gabe, but after discussion there was agreement that the language from the RED made more sense. There was consensus that the board vote be 2/3 majority rather than 3/4.
 - xviii) Article 18 - Approval Contingent upon Benefits to Students and Taxpayers – This was a new section suggested by Gabe, and was put in parking lot until Articles 1 and 2 get decided.
- b) **Other Business:** There was a question about using the state's data tool, which they haven't had a chance to follow up on yet.
 - c) **Adjournment of Study Committee:** Rob Rosen moved to adjourn the Study Committee meeting at 9:09 p.m. Reed McCracken seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Minutes recorded by Dale Smeltzer