

Non-Operating Merger Study Committee
Special Meeting
August 16, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Members in Attendance: Marty Nadler, Celeste Keel, Dean Gianotti, Lorraine Weeks-Newell

Members absent: Megan McMahon

Others in Attendance: Daniel French, William Bazyk, Jacquelyne Wilson, Tom Montemagni

Press: Andrew McKeever GNAT

Meeting call to order at 7:03.

Introduction were made.

Dean Gianotti made a motion to approve the minutes of August 3 with striking the third T from his name. Celeste Keel Second the motion. Motion Passed unanimously.

Dr. French then presented on and the committee discussed:

1) Tax rates- While Dean Gianotti and Marty Nadler gave reasons for the high tax rate in Winhall being a one year spike, it was agreed by all that in the three town merger that Sandgate and Stratton taxes would rise to some degree while Winhall would see a decrease.

2) School Assets- Dr. French polled the towns about property or funds the schools may have. Stratton indicated they had some land. Marty Nadler said the Mountain School had been sold. Sandgate did not have assets. The general sense was school assets would not be an obstacle to merger.

3) Board Configuration- Dr. French explained two board configurations of a Town Model and an At-Large Model. The general sense of the study committee that either would work and board configuration would not be an obstacle to merger.

4) Study Committee Worksheet- Dr. French went through the worksheet and of note was discussions about Necessary and Advisable Towns. The discussion arose if Arlington were to vote no in the 3 x1 the other three towns could merge, but would do so without the tax incentives. If a town was designated Necessary by the study committee the merger vote would go before the town. If a town is designated Advisable then the school board of that town could only put the vote to the town.

5) Tuition Cost of Students- There was much discussion on how each town funds tuitioning their students and what would be important to each town. In the end all came to the realization that the voters in the new district would have the final say.

6) Transportation- This was an area of concern for Stratton, but in the end all agreed that this is an issue a merger would help.

The Study Committee spent time discussing and listening to the perspective of each town on the idea of merging into one school district with William Bazyk speaking on his thoughts on the direction Arlington would go in the 3 x 1 model.

Marty Nadler made a motion that it would be advisable to move forward for Winhall, Stratton and Sandgate to merge. Seconded by Celeste Keel. Motion Passed unanimously.

The Study committee discussed meeting schedule. There will be no meeting on August 22. The next meeting will be on September 5 for 7:00 at MEMS.

Meeting Adjourned 8:30