

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
Monmouth Richmond Dresden Hallowell Farmingdale
October 29, 2007 5:30
Hall-Dale Elementary School

PRESENT: Chair O'Neil LaPlante, Vice-Chair Mike Rogers, John Armentrout, Tom Austin, Tracy Woodman (Alt. for Jim Grandahl), Seth Goodall, Gary Getchell, Gary Gleason, Cindy McPherson, Doug Ludewig, Nadine Barnard, Nancy Jodoin

ABSENT: Doug Averill, Michaela Loisel

ALSO ATTENDING: Martha Witham, Rick Cote, Don Siviski, Jake Clockedile, Mike Burnham, Steve Philbrook, Representatives from Chelsea School Committee and Committee Chair Tanya Condon and Chelsea Selectmen

1.0 CALL TO ORDER

RPC Chair O'Neil LaPlante called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

2.0 ACTION ON MINUTES

Vice-Chair Mike Rogers **motioned** approval of minutes of the RPC meeting of 10/17/07. Mary Gleason **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously**.

3.0 ADJUSTMENT(S) TO AGENDA

The Committee consented to add 6.4, "a motion to submit an incomplete plan to DOE and to continue working on the plan until complete and approved by each board".

4.0 PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

5.0 OLD BUSINESS

5.1 Meetings scheduled with participating town officials have been planned or have occurred: Monmouth 10/24, Farmingdale 10/31, Richmond 11/8, Dresden 11/12 and Hallowell 11/13. (Dresden changed to 11/8)

5.2 A public meeting for all participating towns to attend an informational meeting has been scheduled for 11/14 at the Monmouth Academy Cafeteria at 7:00 p.m. Mary Gleason presented a tentative Power Point and asked for data from various committees in order to complete it.

5.3 Questions posed to Jake Clockedile, RSU facilitator, were addressed.

- Can an alternate for an elected official vote at an RSU Board meeting? *If included in the plan it may be accepted but a legal position will probably be necessary.*

- Can the \$2500 from the DOE for RPC use be used for mailings to citizens? *An Informational Letter from the Commissioner has allocated \$2500 to the RPC for legal services and another \$2500 for miscellaneous expenses. Furthermore, each SAU in the*

RSU can access \$2500 for legal fees. Forms are available at the DOE website. Therefore the RPC has access to \$2500 (legal) + \$2500 (misc.) = \$5000 and each SAU \$2500 \$2500: Dresden \$2500 + Richmond \$2500 + Monmouth \$2500 + Hall-Dale \$2500 = \$10,000 for legal fees (with invoices).

- *When will the funds be available? They are available now and one SAU must be named as a fiscal agent for the RPC expenses and revenue management.*
- *What is the 6 month period before official office of the RSU Board members called especially if they are hiring a superintendent? Under LD499 they have the authority to sign a contract even though they don't officially take office until July 1, 2009.*
- *If an apportionment proposal doesn't meet the 2% variance rule can we simply adopt Plan D to satisfy the matter? The commissioner said she would interpret Plan D for this reason yet legal counsel advises working on the plan to meet the 2% in case it is challenged once the RSU is formed.*
- *Do Letters of Intent have to be amended and then resubmitted if a new SAU is added to the RSU? If the original request did not include the additional SAU then new Letters of Intent and Commissioner approval are required.*
- *Can we expect a template from the DOE to use to submit an "incomplete" December 1st Plan? The template/checklist will be presented to facilitators on 10/30 so it should be available soon.*
- *Should RPC positions be accepted by Boards before being presented to the Public or is everything tentative until the whole plan is adopted? Everything is tentative until the School Boards/Committees accept the complete plan which then needs to be approved by the Commissioner.*
- *What creative ideas exist from other RPC's about educating our public in regard to consolidation? Public Q & A sessions at RPC meetings or at special, scheduled events, publicity, the website, letters to the editor, student take-home fliers, employee updates, burn a DVD and make available at video stores, newspaper articles.*

6.0 NEW BUSINESS

6.1 Request from Chelsea School Committee to join our RSU

Chelsea School Committee Chair Tonya Condon was accompanied by 2 other School Board members and 3 Selectmen. Ms. Condon outlined the decisions that Chelsea elected in relation to consolidation for the original Letter of Intent that was denied by the Commissioner as being focused on re-uniting the old Union 51 partners. They have 425 students, have contracts with Cony and Hall-Dale for their grade 9-12 students and share the same Technical Center. On behalf of the Chelsea School Committee and Chelsea Selectmen she asked that Chelsea be admitted to the yet to be formed RSU.

The RPC and representatives from the Chelsea School Committee, Chelsea Selectmen and the Union 132 Assistant Superintendent spent the next hour discussing choice, committing a % of students to the Hall-Dale, attendance of 7th and 8th graders, taxes and EPS rates. The prompt "How can you make us better than we are now by partnering in our district?" provoked commendation for their quality of staff, commitment to kids,

community support, and good Board members. They offer a full curriculum to their K-8 students, are aligned with Maine Learning Results, have 5 years experience with NWEA, offer a summer program for at-risk kids, and a full compliment of sports. They have no lease or debt liability and are looking at a new school in the near future. Approximately 1/3 of Union cost belongs to Chelsea.

Tom Austin **motioned** to entertain adding Chelsea to the existing RPC and extend a good faith effort to resolve enrollment and financial concerns by December 1st. Nadine Barnard **seconded** the motion, after discussion **voted 4 in favor and 7 against. The motion failed.**

Seth Goodall **motioned** to deny the request to join the RPC, Mike Rogers **seconded** the motion, after discussion the second and motion were withdrawn in favor of gathering financial statements and giving the Chelsea School Committee an opportunity to meet and vote on an enrollment % commitment. A vote will be scheduled at the next RPC meeting.

6.2 Timeline for December 1st submission and RPC Meetings in December

Seth Goodall **motioned** to select Monday, December 10th and Thursday, December 20th as RPC meeting dates. Mike Rogers **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously.** (Timeline for December 1st discussed in 6.4.)

6.3 RPC Meetings Rescheduled to November 14th and 27th

Seth Goodall **motioned** to have the RPC meet on Tuesday, November 13th and Tuesday November 27th. Gary Getchell **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously.**

6.4 Action Recommended for December 1st Plan.

Each SAU include the following motion to be adopted at the next School Board / Committee meeting so that the December 1st Plan for each SAU will meet the requirements of the Law and the intention of the SAU.

“If the required Dept. of Education Consolidation Plan has not been completed by December 1st, the SAU Board of Directors / School Committee authorizes the Regional Planning Committee to submit an incomplete plan and to continue to develop said plan until completed and approved by each participating SAU Board.”

Tom Austin **motioned** to approve the recommendation for Board / Committee vote in regard to the December 1st Plan, Mike Rogers **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously.**

7.0 COMMITTEE REPORT(S)

7.1 Governance Committee

Governance Chair Seth Goodall summarized the Committee’s work over the last weeks and referenced the group to further detail by accessing the minutes. His summary included the selection of Plan D, presence of local Advisory Committees, staggered terms of Directors, timeline for the RSU initiation, number of members from each town on RSU Board, recommendation for Board meetings held on a rotating schedule for each town, KIDS for Kennebec Inter District Schools and the site for the RSU Central Office. Next Committee meeting will be held after the November 13th meeting.

7.2 Finance Committee

Finance Chair Tom Austin summarized the work of the Committee as having received the financial template from the DOE and will now focus on analyzing and deciphering the data.

Next Committee meeting will be held on November 1st at the Hall-Dale Elementary School at 5:30 p.m.

Chair Mike Rogers **motioned** that MSAD #16 be the fiscal agent for the RPC's \$2500 miscellaneous expenses and \$2500 legal expenses. Gary Getchell **seconded** the motion. Tom Austin requested that should the DOE deny an expenditure reimbursement that the cost be pro-rated according to student population, **voted in favor unanimously**.

7.3 Public Education / Relations

Chair Nancy Jodoin summarized the scheduled meetings with each town's elected officials, the RSU public information meeting on November 14th in Monmouth, and the notice of future press releases to announce the event. RPC input is needed in order to meet the needs of 5 towns and multiple questions.

8.0 CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR REPORT

The 60 bills submitted under Private and Special Legislation have all been consolidated into a single DOE proposal. Therefore we will need to make our request known and scrutinize any proposals for application in our RSU.

9.0 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM(S)

The November 13th agenda will address the Chelsea request. The RPC Buildings and Grounds Committee will meet on November 7th at Richmond HS at 7:30 a.m.

10.0 ADJOURNMENT

Tom Austin **motioned** to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Mike Rogers **seconded** the motion, **voted in favor unanimously**.

Respectfully Submitted

Donald L. Siviski
RPC Secretary

DLS/src