



Joint Dennis-Yarmouth Board of Selectmen Public Meeting Minutes September 27, 2018

The Joint Dennis-Yarmouth Board of Selectmen meeting was called to order at approximately 5:30 p.m. in the Station Avenue Elementary School Cafeteria by Chairman Holcomb. Yarmouth Selectmen present: Tracy Post, Norm Holcomb, Mark Forest, and Michael Stone. Also attending: Yarmouth Assistant Town Administrator, Chris Dwelley. Selectmen present from the Town of Dennis: Paul McCormick, Sheryl McMahon, John Terrio, Bob Mezzadri and Chris Flanagan.

1. Call to Order

The Selectmen from the Town of Yarmouth and the Town of Dennis introduced themselves to the public. Selectmen Holcomb explained the background behind the negotiations to revise the Regional School Agreement between the two towns, and explained that the last time negotiating teams met was in March.

2. Administrative Matters

a. Feasibility Study Funding

Norm Holcomb, Chairman of the Yarmouth Board of Selectmen, asked what the Town of Dennis' position is on the feasibility study funding. Bob Mezzadri, Dennis Board of Selectmen, stated that Dennis has always been willing to pay their share of the feasibility study cost if a joint middle school is built. Furthermore, the Town of Dennis agreed to pay their share of the feasibility study based on foundation enrollment.

b. School District Agreement - Calculating Split of Capital Costs

Norm Holcomb explained that the Town of Yarmouth is interested in exploring a broader sense of shared costs among the two towns for the new middle school building. Sheryl McMahon and Bob Mezzadri, Dennis Board of Selectmen, suggested that Dennis would be willing to pay split capital costs based on a foundation enrollment for the new middle school. Tracy Post, Yarmouth Board of Selectmen, pointed out the fact that the Town of Dennis benefits a lot more from a Regional School district than Yarmouth does.

Chris Flanagan, Dennis Board of Selectmen, suggested adding flexibility to how costs are split over time so that the percentage each town pays remains directly correlated with the town's school population. John Terrio, Dennis Board of Selectmen, predicted that Dennis's school population will continue to decrease in relation to Yarmouth's, and he pointed to Dennis's focus on senior housing as opposed to Yarmouth's focus on housing for all ages. Tracy Post responded by saying that if Dennis's school population continues to decrease, Yarmouth will not be able to continue funding their resident's education. She suggested that if the enrollment numbers continue to dwindle in Dennis to a point where Yarmouth is paying an onerous amount in the Regional Agreement, Dennis will be forced to de-regionalize and build their own school.

Michael Stone, Yarmouth Board of Selectmen, stated that capital costs for some shared facilities such as auditoriums and hallways should be split evenly between the towns, as those

costs are not correlated with how many students each town sends to the school (like operating costs are).

Sheryl McMahon suggested having the Town of Dennis investigate how much it would cost to build a middle school on their own so that they can quantify just how valuable it is to have Yarmouth as a regional school partner.

Norm Holcomb explained that the Town of Yarmouth is looking for some stabilization with their costs over time as they have increased (and will likely continue to do so) over time based on Dennis's share of students dropping. He stated that Yarmouth believes a fairer approach with dividing the fixed costs and capital costs for the new middle school is necessary.

Tracy Post asked if the Dennis Board of Selectmen are willing to revise the portion of the Regional School Agreement that deals with the split of capital and/or administrative costs for the new middle school. John Terrio, Dennis Board of Selectmen, stated that Dennis would like the opportunity to have Dennis's subcommittee on the Regional School Agreement to meet and discuss the contents of tonight's meeting before making any statements on this matter. Bob Mezzadri did state that Dennis is willing to continue to work with the Town of Yarmouth to arrive at a resolution for the splitting of costs that is equitable to both towns. Tracy Post suggested adding a benchmark or deadline to their negotiations, as the negotiations have dragged on for years without any resolution. Sheryl McMahon suggested placing the discussion of how to split capital costs for the school project on the next Dennis Board of Selectmen agenda. Dennis Selectmen agreed and the topic will be discussed with the public at the October 11th meeting and will respond to the Yarmouth Board of Selectmen by Mid-October.

3. Adjourn

MOTION: To move that the Board of Selectmen adjourn the meeting.

Motion by: Tracy Post

Seconded by: Mark Forest

Yea 4 Nay 0

Meeting adjourned at approximately 6:45pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Dennehy