

October 15, 2012

Chairman Michael Jackson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Members: Barbara Brown, Jack Boyer, Rex Swain, Michael Jackson, Craig Schoon.

Alternates: Liddy Adams, Arthur DuBois

Selectmen: Mark Lyon, Tony Bedini, Richard Carey

The Board welcomed Voices reporter Mike Priatto

Financials:

Year-to-date financials, the Treasurer's Report and the Tax Collector's Report were reviewed and accepted. The Treasurer will investigate the possibilities of increasing interest rates with the banks.

Education:

Michael Jackson reported he and Mark Lyon had met with the new Superintendent Pat Cosentino, finding her very open, very receptive, very smart and very easy to deal with. It was agreed the future of the school system is a difficult problem due to the demographics of our Region and that the school population could become even smaller over time. There is a belief at the State level that systems with fewer than 1,000 students may be ordered to merge with other Regions.

Tony Bedini reported the Washington Primary School roof has been repaired and is no longer leaking. Repairs and work orders are continuing. Repair cost of the Mansard roof at the Middle/High School had been underestimated by \$30,000. Additional funding will be investigated by the Business Manager. Tony noted long-range planning for the schools will be discussed at a Long-Range Planning Committee meeting scheduled for October 23rd at 6 p.m. Tony felt this would be an opportunity for individuals to have some say on where the long-term planning goes. Mark Lyon also suggested it would behoove the residents of Washington to be well-represented at that meeting as it will be their opportunity to have some say about long-range plans. Previous meetings had been attended mainly by parents who may have a certain view and he suggested there should be more options and cost alternatives to be considered.

Tony noted his concern that this meeting may not portray the way the majority in the three towns feel. Whether to build new or renovate old should be considered, as well as considering the question "Will we have a viable school system in twenty years or will we spend all that money for buildings that will be empty?" It could mean construction of a new building, having to move and spending money on a system that may not work and could possibly cost \$20,000,000 to bond over twenty years. In addition, if state funding were received and the buildings were not used for the necessary length of time, would we be required to repay a portion of the funds. Michael noted if a real analysis were to be done, money would also have to be spent to know what future costs would be. Tony suggested before we even decide on the option at the ms/hs, it could take \$100,000 to determine what it will take to fix the high school or build another building.

Many questions face the Region: Should we merge with another Region? Should we repair and/or

build new buildings? Would the District remain a viable district if the population continues to diminish?

The Board felt it would be in the best interest of all residents of the three towns if they express their thoughts to the Board of Ed at their meeting scheduled for October 23rd at 6 p.m.

Financial Report/Update:

Mark Lyon reported the first quarter expenditures were on target. He noted his appreciation to the Board for their approval to immediately replace the heating plant in the town hall following the propane incident. He anticipated its completion by Friday. A request for replacement of the town hall windows should be prepared by the end of the week. The reconfiguration of the downstairs space is being completed to meet code compliance. The downstairs meeting room may be enlarged and the coal room will be eliminated. The bowling alleys will remain. Consideration may be given toward eliminating the stage, which has not been code compliant or usable since the 80's. The BMTH trustees, Building and Property Committee and the Board of Selectmen will have a special meeting on October 16th to look at the space and get ideas for new uses, old uses and whether it is practical to replace it. The CT Interlocal Risk Management Agency (CIRMA) continues to work well with the Town with regard to the two previous catastrophic events. They are very accommodating and work continues with the replacement of the town garage and the repairs to the town hall.

Roads:

The Board updated Rex on the proposed road program and the funding as discussed at the last meeting. The report provided by the Highway Director will be forwarded to him. He noted he is interested in looking at the entire stock of roads. Grants have been secured for some of the bridge work. Michael suggested that the road projects that have been completed in the past be integrated with the road report.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Gollow
Finance Secretary