

Final

School Consolidation Meeting Minutes September 12, 2019 Sheffield Town Hall

The 1st introduction of the School Consolidation Group was held on September 12, 2019 at the Sheffield Town Hall. In attendance as the primary representatives were the following: Alford-Lucy Prashker, Egremont-George McGurn, Monterey-Jon Sylbert, New Marlborough-Tara White, Sheffield-Nadine Hawver, Great Barrington-Ed Abrahams, Stockbridge-Charles Cardillo, BHRSD School Committee Member-Steve Bannon, SBRSD School Committee Member-Dennis Sears, BHRSD Superintendent Peter Dillon and SBRSD Superintendent Beth Regulbutto. There was not a representative from West Stockbridge present. Some alternates for the primary representatives and others were present in the audience.

Ms. Hawver began the discussion with introductions and the group then spoke on some of the goals that they hope to bring forward with these discussions:

- 1) Consolidation of both K-12, not just the high school
- 2) Present the best options forward for the 2 districts
- 3) This is a fact finding group
- 4) Bring DESE into the discussion for guidance
- 5) Bringing the best education for all the students
- 6) Work with each School Committee as they work on the education structure
- 7) Determine and retain a facilitator to help the group move forward
- 8) Determine funding for the facilitator from the state via Rep. Pignatelli and Sen. Hinds

It was then suggested that the group give some reasons why they were each at the table.

- 1) Financial burdens on all of the 8 Towns of operating 2 individual districts
- 2) Create expansion of programs for the students
- 3) Look at VoTech programs
- 4) Bring economic development for all the surrounding Towns
- 5) Accelerated career programs for students

6) Tuition and choice options for out of district Towns

The group then selected Nadine Hawver of Sheffield as Chair of the group and Jon Sylbert of Monterey as Vice-Chair.

It was decided the newly formed 8 Town School Consolidation Committee that only the 8 Town primary representatives (or alternate representatives, if the primary representative is not available) would vote. The school committee representatives nor the superintendents will vote. Ed Abrahams from Great Barrington raised the question that there are 5 Towns in the SBRSD and only 3 in the BHRSD and that the committee must be mindful of this. As this body has no legal authority, but is strictly an “investigative” committee, this should not be an issue, but everyone will be cognitive of it.

Postings for all meeting will be sent to the primary representative of each Town for posting to keep within the open meeting guidelines and the process open.

Next Steps: For the next meeting, DESE will be contacted for suggestions on facilitators for the group. Rep. Pignatelli and Sen. Hinds will also be contacted on how to access the money that the Gov. Baker has set aside for this specific

Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, September 25th at 4:30 pm at the Stockbridge Town Hall.

Prepared by:

Tara White
New Marlborough Town Representative

Documents Reviewed: None