

Milford Reorganization Planning Committee

Dr. Lewis S. Libby School

October 9, 2007

Attending: Ann Goodwin, Scott Hayden, Todd Saucier

- I. Review Reorg. Working Plan Template
 - A. #1: The units of school administration to be included in the proposed reorganized regional school unit.
 - B. #2: The size, composition and apportionment of the governing body.
 - C. #3: The method of voting of the governing board.
 - 1 Weighted Vote is the preferred method
 - a. Must consider the Orono/Veazie involvement
 - UM populations is included, we believe it should be removed
 - b. Spreadsheet created by fellow at MDI would help determine scenarios
 - Again, if Orono/Veazie depart, then that changes the scenarios
 - D. #4: The composition, powers and duties of any local school committees to be created.
 - 1 To what extent should the municipality "govern"
 - a. Do we have items, as listed on Pages 8 & 9 of the binder material, we want local control over?
 - 2 What if the town voted for a local committee, what does the RSU do?
 - a. What if the RSU creates local committees, how is it missioned?
 - 3 Perhaps consider an Advocacy Committee that wrangles issues and drums up support
 - a. Collaboratively coordinating our communication to the RSU board
 - Via our representative and others within the RSU board
 - E. #5: The disposition of real and personal school property.
 - 1 What do we transfer?
 - a. Do we have the deeds for the school and Chaisson Field
 - Town must retain the ownership of Chaisson Field
 - Must stipulate the RSU's use of the field
 - The town wants to retain the use of the school for its citizens
 - Open gym, community groups, town emergency center, etc.
 - b. Can we protect the use of the school via our transfer agreement? Negotiable?
 - Maintain K-8? No more than 500 students?
 - F. #6: The disposition of existing school indebtedness and lease-purchase obligations if the parties elect not to use the provisions of Section 1506 regarding the disposition of debt obligations.
 - 1 Do we want to share our current debt as well as share in theirs?
 - a. More beneficial to NOT share debt, municipalities retain debt incurred prior to the RSU
 - 2 Conversely, any updating/renovations after the RSU formation is shared by all RSU municipalities?
 - a. Proportionate to EPS/budget calculation
 - 3 Propose a new high school as part of the Reorganization Plan?
 - a. Old Town H.S. in poor condition and unable to house all students.
A new RSU H.S. would alleviate this issue and unify the RSU communities
 - b. Can we get a report from Old Town before we accept that high school's issues
 - G. #7: The assignment of school personnel contracts, school collective bargaining agreements and other school contractual obligations
 - 1 Union contracts must be carried forward into the RSU via the negotiations
 - 2 SAU contracts will automatically transfer to RSU
 - a. Consolidation of SAU contracts could be very costly to Milford taxpayers
 - 3 We need to "crunch" the numbers so we may be knowledgeable of the town's liability
 - a. Consolidation may cause increase in Milford tax rate
 - H. #8: The disposition of existing school funds and existing financial obligations, including undesignated fund

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balances, trust funds, reserve funds and other funds appropriated for school purposes

- 1 Honesty is the best policy!
 - a. Be certain that we issue full disclosure of financial obligations: assets and liabilities
 - Milford should do an internal review of its funds, specifically physical plant fund and educ. Emergencies
 - 2 Local RPC members need to have all of the financial data in a timely manner for decision-making/strategizing
- I. #9: A transition plan that addresses the development of a budget for the first school year of the reorganized unit and interim personnel policies.
- 1 The State did not provide for the initial RSU budget.
 - 2 Must educate town of the new budget approval process.
 - a. Citizen mailings, town report, community meetings
- J. #10: Documentation of the public meeting or public meetings held to prepare or review the reorganization plan.
- K. #11: An explanation of how units that approve the reorganization plan will proceed if one or more of the proposed members of the regional school unit fail to approve the plan.
- 1 Must consider continuation of plan?
 - a. What is the amount the State removes if we do NOT join the RSU?
 - b. Can Milford taxpayers absorb it?
- L. #12: An estimate of the cost savings to be achieved by the formation of a regional school unit and how these savings will be achieved.
- 1 Will there be a savings?
 - 2 What happens if the new RSU results in a tax increase to Milford citizens rather than "tax relief"
 - a. Can we reject "forced consolidation" on the grounds that it will result in an unfunded mandate (tax increase)
 - b. Need to compare the costs of consolidating verses cost if we do not
 - 1 State Penalties
 - a. 50% reduction in minimum subsidy (the special education minimum);
 - b. 50% reduction in system administration funds
 - c. Less favorable consideration in approval and funding for school construction
 - d. Loss of eligibility for transition adjustments
 - 2 Is it fair to be penalized for not wanting to accept a tax increase due to forced consolidation?
- M. #13: Such other matters as the governing bodies of the school administrative units in existence on the effective date of this chapter may determine to be necessary.
- # 13-A: Plans to reorganize administration, transportation, building and maintenance and special education.
1. State has reduced the EPS Allocation provided to schools by 70 million
 - a. 50% reduction in administrative reimbursement
 - b. 5% reduction in transportation reimbursement
 - c. 5% reduction in special education reimbursement
 - d. 5% reduction in building maintenance reimbursement
 2. Towns must make the same cuts "without " adversely impacting the instructional program.
 - a. How do you reduce the cost of fixed contracts (ie transportation) and items that are increasing yearly beyond our control (fuel, special ed)?
 - b. We will have to reduce the cost of the "instruction program" to find the required savings
 1. This will directly impact instruction programming provided to students