

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Act 46 Study Committee (706)  
Wednesday, May 10, 2017  
Cabot School Library  
Minutes

**Present:** Chris Tormey, Bruce Melendy, Lauren Cleary, Chandra Miller, Scott Harris, Ian Covey **Administrators:** Nancy Thomas, Superintendent WNESU, Mat Forest, Superintendent, CCSU; **Consultant:** Peter Clarke. **Absent:** Ry Hoffman, Robert Edgar, David Towle, Ginni Lavelly, Tim Sanborn, Sarah Watkins,

**Call to Order:** Chris Tormey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:10pm.

**Consent Agenda:**

Approve May 3, 2017 Minutes, - Scott moved to approve the minutes of April 24, 2017 as written. Ian seconded the motion. Minutes of May 3, 2017 approved as written.

**Public Comment: none**

**Discussion:**

**Review of the changes since May 3.**

- a. Peter reviewed the “town share” model of the tax savings estimate. This model adjusts for the town share of the costs recognizing the income based tax payments. He worked with the AOE financial specialists to finalize this model and get approval for including this with the MD model already in the report. He included a narrative including the assumptions for each of these models. The town model overestimates the savings and the town share model underestimates the savings. Both are compared to be able to show the range of the trend lines in possible savings.
- b. He explained the changes the lawyers required regarding closure of a school in Article 13 due to the fact that Twinfield is a unified district. He went on to explain the changes in Article 17 for a possible change in grades operating in a school. Both include a step by step process that will be followed in the event that a future board proposes either change.
- c. Peter described how the warning was adjusted to assure that the language of Articles 13 and 17 are included in the warning so that the changes to these articles would need to be voted on by the residents of all towns.
- d. The new adjustments (formerly S122) to the law are very likely to pass and will extend the timeline to November 30 so that all districts working on a RED will have opportunity for incentives.

**Plan for the Presentation to the State Board of Education**

- a. Chris shared that he will say to the SBE that for Cabot this proposal presents major challenges. He agrees that the proposal should be put to a vote. He worries that in the long run there will likely be a push to close/move the middle school. He also shared the concern about maintaining a grand list where residents will continue to want to live here. A decline in residents may raise taxes in the future. He is also concerned about continuing the positive community connection with the school. “This is not a document that has the support of the our school board”. Ian asked if it is worth moving the proposal forward to a vote. Chris believes it is valid to put the plan out for the vote. Bruce agrees that the proposal should go to the State Board

and be put out for the vote to the residents regardless of whether Cabot Board or other Committee members support the proposal. Peter gave examples of other Committees that were not unanimous in going to the SBE. Some such proposals have passed, some have not. He emphasized the benefits of bringing the proposal to the voters.

- b. Presentation to the SBE: aiming for 10 Slides
  - Area map
  - Challenges going in: declining enrollment, increased cost per pupil, difficult maintaining programs
  - The Proposal: Unite 3 districts into one, High school choice, close Cabot's High School, Unite 2 supervisory union offices into one
  - Benefits: savings from combining supervisory unions to put to savings, facilities improvements or programs, chance to share staff, more staff and student peers and better professional development opportunities, more extra curricular opportunities, educational program development across PK to 12. Comments: Neil suggested the plan that may provide more control over future changes. Jackie suggested that the Cabot Board would seek other opportunities should this be voted down.
  - Challenges: loss of local control, closing of Cabot's High School and maintaining diversity of high school offerings, creating new transportation patters that ensure all students have full access to district programs.
  - Scott, Chris and Bruce will pull the slide show together and share it via email by Monday
- c. Planning information distribution
  - Meetings: Danville: June 12, 6:00, Cabot: June 14, 6:00 pm, Twinfield: June 13, 6:00 pm,
  - Notices to get out next week.
  - Info distribution: Get flyers out immediately to schools, libraries, etc. Mail to all residents. Post flyer on websites and send flyers to board members to be posted on Front Porch Forums.
  - Board members to get notifications out regarding running for the Board. Petitions due on May 22.

**Adjourn:** Meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thomas, note taker