

Cabot/Danville/Twinfield Act 46 Study Committee (706)
Wednesday, May 3, 2017
Cabot School Library

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

Call to Order: Chris Tormey, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.

Consent Agenda:

Approve April 24, 2017 Minutes, - Dave moved to approve the minutes of April 24, 2017 as written. Lauren seconded the motion. Minutes of April 24, 2017 approved as written.

Public Comment:

Discussion:

A. Discuss Feedback from the individual School Boards

Twinfield: Chandra Miller spoke to the need for changes regarding building ownership in regard to the fact that Twinfield is a Union District. References to the “town” in which the school is located at a time that the property is sold would need to include both Marshfield and Plainfield.

Danville, Bruce Melendy, spoke regarding their meeting last night. No further suggestions came from that meeting.

Cabot’s Chris Tormey spoke to suggestions from Cabot’s meeting.

- Article 8: representation on the new Board. Current language says each town will not go below 2 representatives.
- Article 15: Community input policies. Cabot suggests changing the wording to require establishment of Community Input Committees. “Committees SHALL be established to serve...” the Merger Committee agreed to the change which included a few areas in that section.
- Article 17: There is concern regarding restructuring such as a reduction in the number grades at Cabot or any of the schools. Chris suggests “restructuring” including “eliminating any grade” in any school will not be done without: three public hearings, a ¾ vote of the members of the Board approving the change, including at least one vote from a board member of each the schools, and then every town would have to approve it in a general vote. This would be the same process as with closure of a school. After discussion there was agreement to the idea of setting up protections from eliminating any grades without a clear process. There was agreement to

allow for a one year, temporary shift in order to address temporary drops in enrollment, but if the change were proposed to be long-term or more than one year then a 3 step process would be used.

Cabot Board member, Jackie Folsom, asked if this could be moved to Article 1. Bruce moved and Chris seconded that this article would be included into Article 1 if it is legally permissible to do so. Unanimously approved.

Peter noted that one question previously posed was whether or not this district would be big enough to be eligible for tax incentives even if the PreK – 8 district does not vote affirmatively to create a side-by-side. The AOE clarified that this merger would not be big enough. It would need to be a side-by-side.

He reviewed the changes suggested or required by the AOE. He also explained the changes regarding sale of property currently owned by Twinfield Union School District should it not be needed as a school in the future as requested by the Twinfield Board. No further comment.

Article 12 regarding Australian Ballot Voting is being debated by the AOE and the Secretary of State regarding whether the ballots need to be comingled. Dave moved and Sarah seconded that the Committee will be satisfied with the joint decision of the lawyers at the agencies whatever their conclusion is. The Committee approved unanimously.

Peter shared the status of the financial models for looking at the possible potential savings. The model used by Peter uses the estimates on payment by home values, probably over estimating the long-term savings over 4 years by \$400,000. Chris is suggesting a different model that tries to include the factor of income sensitivity. They explained the differences, but they are working with Agency specialist to try to get closer to most accurate numbers. The AOE Finance Officer has agreed to allow both models to be used in the report. The Committee agreed that this new model will be done for all 3 entities and included in the Report. Chris also asked Peter to recalculate all of the financial estimates based on the budget that was passed on May 2, 2017. Chandra moved and Dave seconded the motion to include the revised numbers based on the new budget that passed last night.

Chandra moved and Dave seconded the motion to approve the Report and Articles of Agreement as written, with the changes that have been agreed to. Approved unanimously.

B. The State Board of Education will be held in Winooski High School on May 16, 2017 when the report will be given. Chris, Bruce and Scott will represent the Committee, along with Peter. The Committee provide a few slides to highlight the report. Both superintendents will attend.

C. Scott moved and Tim seconded that Caledonia Central Supervisory Union be the agency to provide support to the new district during the transition. Approved unanimously.

D. Peter explained that informational sessions must be held during the week of June 14. Committee members suggested doing one prior to the Danville will do theirs on Monday, June 12 and maybe one before. Cabot and Twinfield will determine their dates at their respective Board meetings.

Peter suggested doing a flyer for all 3 schools that goes out to the residents of all 4 towns.

The Committee agreed to meet Wednesday, May 10, 2017 6:00 pm at Twinfield to prepare for community forums and elections.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Thomas, note taker