

Norfolk/Colebrook School Study Committee
Thursday, October 23, 2014
Botelle Elementary School

Present: J. Hall, S. Dyer, H. Carfiro, S. Carr, J. Jones, T. McKeon, J. Millar, W. Brodnitzki, M. Sconyers

Non-Voting: J. Costa, G. Counter and M. Venhorst

Absent: S. Gray, J. Chittum

J. Millar moved to accept the minutes of the September 18, 2014 meeting as presented. H. Carfiro seconded the motion. The Motion Carried.

J. Costa began by saying that 3 things or major tasks that need to occur.

1. The Plan needs to be revised
2. Lease needs to be developed
3. The specific wording of proposed legislation needs to be discussed

J. Costa met with the Commissioner of Education and a lobbyist indicating the many challenges that small towns are facing with declining enrollment and that the laws currently on the books do not address those challenges in fact they have become an impediment. Bills would have to be introduced to assist any group facing this dilemma. M. Venhorst indicated that any changes in the law would be sponsored by the Department of Education. M. Venhorst will work with Tom Mooney to discuss legislative changes regarding the financial aspects and repurposing facilities.

At this point S. Carr indicated that she was not aware that Tom Mooney was with the firm of Shipman and Goodwin and that Shipman and Goodwin represent the Colebrook Board of Education and that was a conflict of interest and a no conflict waiver should be signed. It was pointed out to S. Carr that the town attorney for Norfolk reviewed the conflict of interest allegation and indicated that there was no conflict of interest; Mr. Mooney's capacity is advisory and that the people of each town will in the end make the decision as to whether or not regionalization of their elementary schools is in their best interest.

J. Costa handed out the revised Regionalization Plan. A lengthy discussion was held. It was recommended that the committee review the plan as presented. For the next meeting the following will be discussed; the revised regionalization plan, progress on legislation; progress on the lease and the cross over provision.

M. Venhorst will update the State Board of Education on the committee's semi-annual progress as mandated by statute. It was also noted that the State Board should be made aware of the limitations that currently exist within the statutes regarding any towns that might want to consider regionalization.

M. Sconyers moved to adjourn at 7:45 PM. T. McKeon seconded. Motion carried.

Submitted: Susan M. Dyer, Secretary

