

Yarmouth/Pownal/Freeport
Reorganization Planning Committee (RPC)

October 12, 2007

Yarmouth Central Office

Minutes

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:19AM by the state facilitator Robert Kautz. The agenda was reviewed and no modifications were made. The minutes were reviewed and accepted by consensus.
2. Financial information was distributed, reviewed, explained and discussed. The information included financial templates provided by the State Department of Education that reflected a reorganization that included Freeport, Pownal and Yarmouth and then another that reflected one that included Durham, Freeport, Pownal and Yarmouth. Yarmouth provided information that was entitled "Financial Factors in Consolidation of School Districts". Points that were discussed included the concept that the cost figures presented in all the information were a snapshot of the FY2008 budgets being redistributed and that they were not necessarily a predictor of the future. In the future such considerations as start up costs, leveling costs, potential savings, decisions in the plan on debt redistribution and cost sharing agreements, and future decisions by a new RSU School Board and budget referendums would influence local costs and impact on tax rates. Representatives offered their perspective as to the potential financial impact to their Town, voter response to the cost differences in a new RSU and past community decisions that might serve as a predictor of future decisions. Comments were also made as to how increased costs that would be associated with increased educational opportunities and results may make any additional cost more acceptable. Yarmouth representatives said that they had been told by the Commissioner of Education that they had received an exemption as being highly efficient and effective and that the exemption would be for at least three years. They said that they were going to have a public forum on October 29 to present the information that they had on their options and receive feedback to help them make a decision by November 1 as to which option they would select. Freeport and Pownal representatives responded to questions as to their desire to reorganize with Yarmouth as a partner by saying that they could see the benefits and were open to it. Freeport will also be holding a public forum to solicit information from its public on reorganization. Durham as a partner was discussed but more information would be needed as Durham has not been involved with these discussions. The RPC meetings between Freeport, Pownal and Durham were going forward while these discussions continued. The need to honor and respect the planning with Durham was recognized.
3. Leveling items were discussed. An information sheet entitled "Leveling Items" was reviewed. Class size at the different educational levels and athletics were included. The concept of regional collaboration between Yarmouth and Freeport/Pownal, or the new RSU that would include them, was discussed. Areas such as piloting regional fine arts courses, sports teams such as track as examples of collaboration were mentioned. The benefit of collaboration

would allow a history of working together to occur that might inform how they might work together as an RSU in the future.

4. Educational benefits achieved through reorganization were considered as the other agenda items were reviewed. The hope of leveling up so that all children would be successful was referenced as was the fact that the decision as to how the leveling might take place would be the responsibility of the new RSU.
5. Next steps. Each RPC would confer with their Superintendent and decide if a meeting before October 29 should be planned or whether to have a meeting after that date and have the information as to what choice in regard to reorganization Yarmouth had made from the options it has available.
6. Meeting adjourned at 9:10 AM

Respectfully submitted,

Robert B Kautz, Facilitator