

MINUTES OF TOWN OF BERKLEY SELECTMEN'S MEETING OF 1/25/2022

SELECTMEN IN ATTENDANCE: George F. Miller, Chairman, Dean R. Larabee, Clerk, Wendy F. Cochrane, Member

TOPIC		ACTION
	<p>Meeting Convened at 6:07p.m. via zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89731930790?pwd=eUYxc0ZDTmF0L3VRRldPVzF6Rkc2UT09</p>	
<p>Regional Planning Board Meeting & Presentation</p>	<p>The Regional Planning Board Meeting convened via zoom with members of the Somerset Berkley Regional and Somerset Public School committees, along with the Berkley Board of Selectmen.</p> <p>Mr. Miller responded to concerns from Somerset school committee member Victor Machado with regard to the missing documentation and unpreparedness for this meeting. Mr. Miller stated he has asked the Town Administrator to track down this report in order to give Mr. Machado some indication as to where the Board is going with it. He echoed Mr. Machado's frustration in that he is disappointed about the lack of documentation to prepare for such meetings, and to also ask the proper questions.</p> <p>A motion was made by Somerset Berkley Regional school committee member Richard Pierce to start the presentation immediately. A roll call vote was issued, Mr. Larabee voted no. Mr. Larabee stated he would've liked to have had more information before the meeting and presentation, and it has been worked on for years. He stated he doesn't see how the meeting can move forward with 1 of the 3 districts not present. A motion was made by Mr. Machado to table the meeting, which Mr. Larabee voted in favor of. The majority of the school committee members present voted to continue the meeting.</p> <p>After reviewing the presentation, Mr. Larabee agreed that it was very informative. However, along with other committee members, he deemed the information in the presentation to have many inaccuracies. He asked if the underlying data that was utilized in order to make this presentation would be made available for members of the Regional Planning Board for the purposes of double checking the data. Mark Abrahams, one of the presenters, confirmed it will be available to the Planning Board. Mr. Larabee also wanted clarification from Mr. Abrahams that there has been no attempt at putting the adjustable data into that assessment spreadsheet to determine impact of each member community, and that it appears to be missing from the presentation. Mr. Abrahams stated that is correct, and that he was not part of the scope.</p> <p>Mr. Larabee questioned the roughly \$1.8 million in savings from the Regionalization of the Berkley and Somerset Regional and Public Schools. Berkley would receive roughly 25% of the funds. The Town of Berkley would essentially have to eliminate Berkley's Central front office staff, as well as the Facilities Director. David King, one of the presenters replied that those savings don't accrue to Berkley, but to the Regional budget. Mr. Larabee stated the savings would be at the cost of these positions. Without the proper data on hand before the presentation, Mr. Larabee stated he would have found these issues in advance. Mr. Pierce suggested that Berkley Schools could eliminate 75% of transportation costs if the percentages continue where they've been over the last few years. Mr. Larabee stated that may be the case but it would be something that would have to filter through the formula and sorted out.</p> <p>Mr. Miller asked if the governing arrangement would be similar to something Berkley had as an arrangement with Somerset Berkley Regional High School in terms of votes and in terms of how it would operate, and would it be the same representation ratio. Richard Fenstermaker, Chair of Somerset Berkley Regional, answered that he doesn't think they got that far, and that there was no interest in moving too quickly toward regionalization on the part of Berkley or Somerset. Mr. Pierce also answered by state law, it has to be proportional to the population of the communities that are members of the district, and it has to be reviewed every so many years to make sure that the proportion remains consistent with the changing population of the communities.</p> <p>Mr. Larabee questioned the concept of whether or not full regionalization is going to be financially feasible and attractive to the Town of Berkley. He stated it's a question the</p>	<p>Larabee to motion for roll call, Cochrane 2nd, voted.</p>

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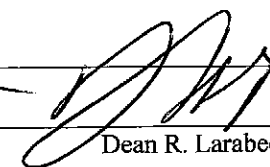
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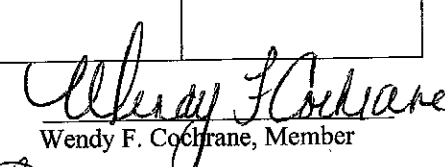
Planning Board has been trying to answer for roughly 6 years. He agreed to wrap up the meeting, and to gather the correct information when able from the consultants and determine if regionalization is financially feasible.

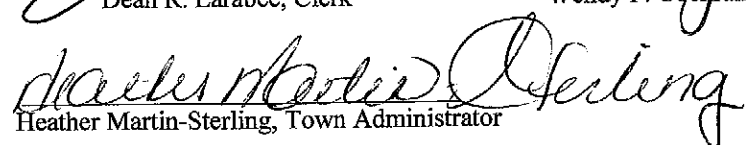
Mr. Larabee made a motion to adjourn the Berkley BOS Meeting.

Larabee to motion to adjourn, Cochrane 2nd, voted.


George F. Miller, Chairman


Dean R. Larabee, Clerk


Wendy F. Cochrane, Member


Heather Martin-Sterling, Town Administrator