MINUTES

Hampton/Scotland Ad Hoc Committee on Interdistrict Cost Savings
Governance Subcommittee
August 24, 2021
10 am
Scotland Town Hall and online

Chair Gary Greenberg called the meeting to order at 10:08 am. Present: Members Gary Greenberg, Tom McAvoy, Kathy Donahue, Clare D'Appollonio (10:17), Allan Cahill (via video), Rose Bisson (via video), and Special Assistant to the Scotland First Selectman Kylee Dostie

No minutes, as this was the first meeting of this subcommittee

General Discussion: Chair Greenberg related his conversations with Lt. Gov. Susan Bysiewicz and Attorney Matthew Venhorst regarding the need for counsel to guide the process of creating a cooperative agreement for two towns to operate a single school. No similar agreement is yet in place, and he suggested it would be best to have an attorney from the beginning. Greenberg contacted an attorney, Kevin Roy, who is willing and able, but he works for Shhipman and Goodwin, and will have to seek a waiver of conflict agreement from the Hampton Board of Education, which is represented by a different attorney at the same firm. The consensus of the subcommittee was that it would be prudent to obtain counsel. Greenberg is waiting to hear back from Atty. Roy and, should the waiver be granted, receive an estimate of costs. Kathy Donahue suggested approaching the State Department of Education for funding support.

Also discussed was the importance of keeping the public informed of the purpose of the ad hoc committee and the subcommittees: to provide the Boards of Education with a blueprint for school consolidation for their consideration. Public input will be solicited along the way in various formats, including public meetings, public information sessions, and an advisory vote by referendum.

Meeting dates: The subcommittee agreed to meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month at 10 a.m.

Audience for Citizens: Mary Ellen Donnelly expressed concerns that holding meetings in the morning limits the opportunity for the public to attend. All members of the committee agreed that it is important to get as much public investment as possible in the process, and to minimize the perception that the public is being excluded. However, they also agreed that it was important to find a time that members could meet frequently. Recordings of the meetings will be made available to the public, with opportunities to comment in writing as well as in person. The committee decided to maintain its schedule through September and re-evaluate, at which point a calendar of meetings will be created and posted. Also discussed was the importance of providing a concise statement of purpose for the committee and its subcommittees that would accompany communication with the public.

Ms. Donnelly also expressed concern that the committee was not in compliance with public records laws regarding minutes and agendas, and that posting was not consistent between the towns. Her concerns were noted, and the chair agreed to work harder to comply.

Adjournment: Mr. McAvoy moved to adjourn at 11:00am. Seconded by Ms. Donahue. 10Motion carried unanimously.

Submitted 8/24/2021
Gary Greenberg, Clerk Pro Tem