

Minutes
Lincoln Finance Committee
February 17, 2016
8:00pm

Present: Eric Harris, Gina Halsted, Jim Hutchinson, Peyton Marshall (Chair) and Laura Sander.

Absent: Jeff Birchby and Chris Kasper

Also in attendance was Peter Braun, Selectman and member of the VEOWG

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 pm in the Second Floor meeting room at the Town Offices.

Mr. Marshall began the meeting by providing a summary of the Minuteman Forum held on February 11, 2016. At that meeting, the Vocational Education Options Working Group (VEOWG) provided the audience with the background, context, history, educational elements and the financial implications of the alternatives for vocational education. Comments from the audience were very supportive of the high school. The discussion was in part about whether Lincoln should send students there, as well as we should be members of the district.

The Committee discussion moved to the terms of enrollment for students if we remain a member of the Minuteman district or choose to leave. If we remain a member, students from Lincoln are obligated to attend Minuteman unless they are seeking a program that is not offered there. In that case, they may attend another vocational high school that offers their desired program. If we are not a member of the district, the student may choose from several area vocational schools, including Minuteman. The discussion concluded that we are not considering a change in our educational relationship with Minuteman. Rather, we are considering a change in our membership in the district.

Ms. Sander presented financial analysis for a number of scenarios which contained several variables and assumptions:

1. Whether we remain a member of the district or not.
2. How many other towns remain in the district.
3. How many students from Lincoln choose to attend Minuteman in any given year.

The discussion moved to consider reasons not to exit the district, which include a guarantee of access, supporting education in our town, a say (albeit reduced) in the governance of the district.

Reasons to exit the district were discussed, including the possibility of catastrophic costs to our town in form of operating and capital costs and debt obligation. The committee discussed enrollment and the challenges of filling the school highlighted in previous FinComm and CapComm meetings.

A motion was taken and seconded to recommend withdrawal from the Minuteman district. The vote was unanimous.

A second motion was made to recommend, if the town does not vote to exit the district that we approve the proposed governance change. The vote was 4-1 in favor of the governance change.

The committee discussed the format of the upcoming Special Town Meeting.

After a motion duly made and seconded, the Committee reviewed and approved the minutes of the meeting held on January 20, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 9:28pm

Submitted by: Gina Halsted