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(12)

MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 16, 2003

Members of the Fin Com, BOS, School Committee, Legislators were present, The meeting was televised

Walter Foster introduced the Board of Selectmen to the audience.

Gim Hom introduced the Finance Committee and Minuteman Representative Chuck Olmstead.

David Stone made a presentation regarding Minuteman's history and Town Assessment Calculations. The assessments for this year were voted at Town Meeting very late and then it turned that we needed additional funds. The detail of changes in enrollment and assessments were discussed. They spoke about Minimum Contributions and that they do not reflect ability to pay. David suggested an assessment change with equal per pupil with HWM changes. We want to continue to support the School but want it to be fair to member towns. They suggested several options for corrective action and to set the minimums in a fair way and asked our legislators to change the rule that is currently all or nothing. They were asked to change this section and to establish rule that it can change with 2/3 vote of the School District. MGL Ch70 16B, currently it requires unanimous approval.

Walter Foster asked the legislators what they plan to do. Rep. Eldridge asked to be corrected if he made statements incorrectly as he was just coming up to speed. They look at how much money is needed to fund Minuteman and then they work backwards to determine the assessment and growth factor. Acton's growth factor is 3.45. The legislators are committed to make this fair and perhaps change Chapter 70 formula. Cory said they could go forward with the recommendations noted in the Fin Com's Presentation.

Dore' noted that it takes all community approval to get out, and Arlington will not allow it as they have no incentive.

Walter spoke about the concerned about the process and fairness of the assessment and asked for legislative fixes to make this work. First that town's can afford to send students. He will work to change Chapter 70 and we will not stand by and let this go on.

Cory Atkins spoke about her frustrations and the inequities in this formula.

Jon Chinitz said that the figures were not correct. He said that based on calculations the State was projecting an increase of 14 percent. He said that the theory was a "house of cards".

Jon Ryder stated his concern with the formula and asked that the legislators on whole to get up and say NO.

Gim Hom thanked them for attending. He noted the belief that there is a formula. They want a formula on each town's calculation asked the Legislators to ask the House and DOE for their formula.

Walter noted a document request and Eldridge to provide it.

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Marie Altieri said that they too have a problem understanding Chapter 70's formula. She asked about Chapter 70 formula sent out by the Governor last Spring and what is now being done to correct this.

Retha spoke about Debt exclusion and the formula.

Mr. Markum wanted to let us know that they understand the budget cycle difficulties we have been having. He explained that the assessment kept changing and the numbers used were the Governor's numbers for FY04.

Dr. Evans too agreed with Retha. He felt this is an attempt to do something dishonestly and that person should be fired.

Charlie Kadlec stated that the fact that no one can find the formula and could be that they don't have a formula and it is just made up. He asked the legislators to find out why we can't get the formula.

Herman spoke about the pot hole fund and how we can get money from it. He asked if we could get an assessment of when we can get money from that fund. He further asked what we have to do to expedite the process. Herman wanted a time certain for the answer.

Trey asked if he writes a letter on public records request would he get the formula. Cory said you can get it but you may not understand it.

Peter said there is a formula and there is a calculation and there is a lot of discretion after the formula is worked. He asked them to look at this situation. He noted that if you look at other Regional Schools you will see the same inequities. He said we need to pull together.

Cory wants to have every ones Email address so she can update every one at once when she gets feedback and answers

John Ryder wanted to have Pam's assurance that they will support. Her aide will report back to Pam on the Board's requests.

Bob Johnson felt we were being treated unfairly.

Dore' spoke about Arlington's involvement with the district and how they are held harmless and suggested the contract be changed to a 2/3 vote by communities under the contract...

Retha - Spoke about getting other communities involved in this change.

Gim Hom thanked all those coming out tonight to this meeting and closed the meeting.

Christine Joyce, recording Secty

Clerk, Board of Selectmen

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September 12, 2003

TO: Board of Selectmen, Sewer Commissioners

FROM: Walter Foster, Chairman

SUBJECT: Selectmen's Report

NOTE:
THIS SPECIAL MEETING BEGINS AT 7:30 P.M.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2003
MEETING BEGINS AT 7:30 P.M.

I. PUBLIC HEARINGS & APPOINTMENTS

1. **MINUTEMAN ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION** – Enclosed are copies of materials regarding Minuteman Assessment that were in your packet last week.

II. SELECTMEN'S BUSINESS

2. **OTHER BUSINESS**