

Brattleboro

Town Finance Committee

Minutes

September 10, 2013

4:30 PM

Cosman Mtg Rm

Hanna

Present: Committee members Michael Bosworth, John Woodward, Tim Cuthbertson, Lisa Lorimer, John Wilmerding, Spoon Agave (Chair)

1. Call to order: 4:37 PM
2. Agenda Review: Add VY at the end as new business
3. Approve minutes of August 27, 2013: **MOTION** to approve Bos/Cuth. PASSED 4-0
4. Announcements: none
5. SB budget discussions:
 - SB Chair Gartenstein asks for flat budget with increase only for P/F bond. SB mention of re-opening sales tax and pay-as-you-throw issues. FC will take a wait and see position for now.
 - Pleased that SB is taking up budget early. Departments are responding to Sondag request to produce budgets with 5% reduction scenario
6. Woodward slides:
 1. sources of revenue, schools - mostly local funding until Act 60 in 1999. Total spending doubled in next ten years
 2. local revenue vs local spending - unexplainable decline in local spending
 3. revenue sources outside WSESU
 4. sources of WSESU revenue
 5. teacher salaries - salaries average within all states. Salaries somewhat below average household income
 6. teacher and administration ratios to students. VT lowest in US with 9:1. Admin 3rd lowest in US
 7. administrative costs per pupil highest in US - probably due to very large number of school districts
 8. Active members in retirement system.
 9. Special Ed costs
 10. student population - 1999... 104,559; 2010... 85,635. Drop of 18.1%

11. smallest school district sizes in US
12. ave school size smallest in US in schools with
less than 100 students
13. cost per pupil increases as student population
decreases
14. tech schools have higher cost per pupil. Perhaps
indicating an increase in programs
15. health premiums - rapid increases
16. Administrative costs - high. Composition of WSESU
expenditures needs closer examination
17. Income sensitivity participation near 70% across
state. Bratt about 72%

TASK - Agave will invite local House rep Valerie Stuart. She serves
on education committee.

7. General discussion: What will be the broad statement we can make
about Bratt finances? Can we predict a
continuing shift to and reliance on property taxes. What is the
impact of this?

8. Adjourn: 6:40 PM