

Town of Warwick
Selectboard
October 1, 2018
Minutes

Members present: Lawrence Pruyne, James Erviti

Others present: Town Coordinator David Young, Town Secretary Rosa Fratangelo, Assessor Keith Ross, Broadband Committee Chair Tom Wyatt, Dawn Magi, Patty Lazok, Matthew Woollven

I. Call to Order

Chair Pruyne called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. in the Town Hall.

Pruyne apologized for the meeting being called to order a few minutes late due to the joint Selectboard/ Broadband Committee running a bit over.

II. Minutes

Erviti MOVED to approve the September 17, 2018 minutes as printed. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

III. Presentations and Discussions

1. Official Position of the Board of Selectmen on the Continued Operation of Warwick Community School as a School —Pruyne said that he brought up this matter to open the discussion. He said that options could include spending more money to run the school or close the school. Pruyne said that he expects more developments to be coming down the line and that things will not likely stay as they are now.

Erviti said that he is adamantly opposed to closing the school, saying that closing WCS is just wrong for the Town in every respect. Speaking as a School Committee member, Young said that we must gather data and come to an agreement on terms and how to allocate costs for things including shared services, special education, employee health insurance and administration. Young said that as a School Committee member there is a need to get a handle on reality. He noted that Warwick might even exit the District. Young stated that he personally does not want to see WCS close, and as Town Coordinator he is almost at that point as well. Erviti said that it was

his understanding that we would leave the District only if WCS were to be closed. Young said that as Town Coordinator he wants to look at all possible options. He pointed out that there are only 34 children, including school choice students, in the 9th grade at PVRSD and said this was indicative of the problem within the District as a whole.

Pruyne said that his job is to consider the ramifications for the Town and to look out for and protect the Town's best interests and not those of the District. Erviti said that our chance of survival is probably better than that of the District. Pruyne said that the District is in dire straights and that we will keep paying more. He noted that he spoke with one of the consultants who is dealing with the School Committee and this person told him that we may pay more on top of the levy.

Young said that based on the current PVRSD figures the central office administration costs are about one third the cost to educate one pupil and that this is between 60 and 70 percent higher with respect to overhead than the next most expensive district. Young pointed out that PVRSD is down to two administrators earning over \$100,000.00 per year. Erviti brought up the possibility of combining districts. Young said that this district does not want to change. Pruyne said that he felt no one would know the actual deficit amount. Tom Wyatt commented that the School Committee is allowing the HEART Committee to do the research and wondered if the School Committee members will listen to the consultants. Young said that five incumbents have two years left on their terms, and seven positions are up for election. He noted that the School Committee will reorganize after the November 6th election.

Young said that there is a meeting on October 2nd to negotiate with the Teachers Union, but since there is no more money there is nothing to negotiate except for more lay-offs.

Pruyne said that he could not see how closing WCS could benefit the Town in any way at all.

Erviti MOVED that the Town's official position on Warwick Community School is that it remain open as a school. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

2. PVRSD K-12 Notice of Voted FY 19 Budget Increase—Young said that it is within the power of Town Meeting to vote to repudiate the voted FY 19 PVRSD budget increase. He noted that two towns must vote it down for it to be rejected. Young said that his position on this, both as Town Coordinator and School Committee member is that if we repudiate the increase he fears that things will revert to the old tricks of making unrealistic budget figures appear as though they will work when in fact they do not.

Dawn Magi asked if it is possible to obtain some real figures; Young said that there are about four different types of software, and that he was hopeful that a full-time business manager will whip things into shape and come up with meaningful reports within a couple of months.

Young suggested that the Selectboard craft a letter to the District that while we will not hold a Special Town Meeting it was very tempting and use strong language to convey the gravity of the situation. Erviti said he is in favor of calling for a Special Town Meeting as it would be a good

idea to inform the townspeople and include the voters in the process. Pruyne wanted to talk with the other member towns. Erviti noted that he has had positive responses from Bernardston and Northfield but still has yet to hear from Leyden. Young reminded the Board that we have 45 days from the date of the letter sent by PVRSD to the towns (September 17th) to hold a Special Town Meeting (November 1st). Pruyne chose to table the discussion for now and have a meeting to discuss this further.

3. Follow-Up on Chapter 61 Right of First Refusal Request/Notice Johnson Estate—Erviti recused himself from the discussion due to his role on the ZBA. He left the room prior to the beginning of the discussion and did not return until the discussion had been concluded.

Young said that if the Town's departments are interested in acquiring the land the Board can vote to purchase the land, or if the land trust is interested and ready to go we can assign our option to them. He noted that the sale is contingent upon the buyer obtaining a permit for gravel extraction, and this has not yet happened.

Assessor Keith Ross said that the Town has yet to receive proof of a bonified offer and that the seller must be notified by certified letter within thirty days of the letter that was sent by the seller that full and proper notice and proof of a bonified offer are needed. Ross said we can negotiate and put something together to either purchase or assign the option to a non-profit land trust. Young said that he gave the information he had to the Mt. Grace Land Trust. Young said at he will take care of the notifying the seller by certified letter tomorrow.

4. Selectboard Report—Pruyne said that he attended a meeting last week of a regionalization action committee for the school districts of Orange, Petersham, Mahar and Swift River. He said that a clause was drafted providing for the exit of a town and the acceptance of a new town. Pruyne said that it is interesting to see the process get underway. Pruyne and Erviti concurred that this is worth paying attention to as it moves forward.

5. Coordinator Report—Young said that he will attend the negotiation meeting tomorrow between the School Committee and the Teachers Union. He said that Police Chief Shoemaker will come before the Board, most likely in an executive session, to speak about security cameras. Young said that this will require being tied to Warwick Broadband to allow for remote data capture.

Young told the Board that Cemetery Commissioner Jim Toth has shaken up the Commission, and that George Roaf and David Shoemaker will resign and once the Town Clerk receives their written resignations the Board can appoint Brad Matthews and Tracey Kirley until the May 20, 2019 Town election. He noted that Roaf will stay on as the maintenance worker for the cemetery. Young wanted to have it on the record his thanks and gratitude to Roaf and Shoemaker for their service on the Cemetery Commission.

Erviti said that Chief Shoemaker will be giving him information gathered from other towns on Verizon's response times to incidents of downed wires. Young said that he spoke with Ellen

Cummings at Verizon and was given numbers for public safety personnel to use to contact Verizon in such instances, and that we will see if this helps.

6. New and Other Business Unanticipated at Time of Meeting Posting — None.

7. Public Comment— None this meeting.

Adjournment

Pruyne MOVED to adjourn at 7: 02 p.m. Erviti SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

Documents consulted at this meeting:

*Draft Minutes of September 17, 2018

*Town Coordinator Report dated September 28, 2018

*Emails between Assessors Clerk Beth Gilgun and Conservation Commission member Karro Frost dated September 27, 2018 RE: Lily Pond

*Letter from Scott Adams, PVRSD Treasurer to Warwick Treasurer Beth Gilgun dated September 17, 2018 RE: Increase in FY 19 PVRSD Operating Budget