

# **Town of Princeton, Mass. – February 21, 2017 – 5 PM**

## **Board of Selectmen –Regular Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Stan Moss, Edith Morgan, Jon Fudeman present; TA Nina Nazarian absent.

**5:03 PM** Stan opened meeting in the Town Hall Annex. Advisory Committee members present were Chairman John Shipman, George Handy, Wayne Adams, Don Schoeny and Judy Dino

Atty. Tim Corcoran, 29 Mountain Road, had volunteered to reach out to his contacts on Beacon Hill and see if Princeton can get any restitution from lack of Chapter 70 Education funding. This state aid has provided minimal percentages to the town over recent years—under one percent in 2013, up to almost 17 percent this year, but still below comparable communities. Other towns in WRSD are closer to 50 percent with Sterling at 25 percent. The state has a formula for its Foundation Budget disbursements, and it exempts regional systems from certain benefits, such as the fact that Chapter 70 funding is assured to never go down for independent school systems, but that's not true for regionals.

Tim approached members of the legislative branch who steered him toward the Executive Branch. The Executive Branch recommended the Legislative Branch. He researched judicial means of filing suit to reclaim funds but a five-year time frame plus costs were too high to be a practical solution. The Minimum Local Contribution which towns pay is based on a complex formula that assesses a town by property values and household incomes. Tweaking the formula would require help from legislators, who have been approached in the past. The formula has been changed recently but just slightly—not addressing the real inequity.

The group discussed various strategies. Tim noted that Jeff Wulfson, commissioner of the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, had been very helpful and informative, and would be willing to meet with the Princeton boards. Tim offered to arrange it.

They noted the Foundation Budget Reserve Fund which could be tapped if the town met certain requirements. A town must show what needs in town have been underfunded in order to support the school budget.

It was reported that the assessment for Monty Tech is down by \$35,000 owing to fewer Princeton students.

**6:08 PM** Selectmen voted all in favor to sign cemetery deeds as written for a swap: two lots were given back to town from Palmerlo family at Woodlawn and two at South were then deeded back to the family.

Selectmen voted all in favor to authorize Jon F. to represent Princeton at WRSD Roundtable meetings. He had also agreed to attend on temporary basis the WRSD Audit Committee meetings—held infrequently.

Group agreed to have T.A. evaluation forms filled out by next month. They discussed issue of overflow crowds at a public meeting or town meeting, and if they can be held at a religious facility—such as Heritage Chapel. They will have T.A. investigate if any state law addresses this. Edith suggested that the selectmen's Code of Conduct be shared and applied to all appointed committees. Stan noted that elected boards would only have to take directives from Town Meeting

**6:20 PM** BOS voted all in favor to approve minutes of Feb. 6 & 7.

**6:25 PM** Selectmen voted to adjourn.

Respectfully submitted, Marie Auger, admin.assist.

**BOS Referenced Documents:** Report from Atty. Tim Corcoran

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978-464-2100