

BRIDGEWATER, HEBRON & GROTON STEERING COMMITTEE

297 Mayhew Turnpike
Bridgewater, NH 03222

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Terence Murphy
Bridgewater Selectman

Patrick Moriarty
Hebron Selectman

John Rescigno
Groton Selectman

Erick Piper
Bridgewater Representative

Jennifer Larochelle
Hebron Representative

Virginia Parker
Groton Representative

Derry Riddle
BHVD – Ex Officio

William White
BHVD – Ex Officio

January 10, 2024: Meeting called to order at 6pm

Meeting Location: Bridgewater Town Hall, Bridgewater NH

Committee Members Present: Jennifer Larochelle, Patrick Moriarty, Terence Murphy, Virginia Parker, Erick Piper and John Rescigno.

Ex Officio Members Present: Derry Riddle

Ms. Larochelle called the meeting to order.

Ms. Larochelle asked for any updates to the minutes of the November 29, 2023 meeting.

Ms. Larochelle asked for a motion to accept the public meeting minutes as presented.

Mr. Piper moved to accept the minutes as presented. Ms. Parker seconded. Five approvals and one abstention by Mr. Rescigno.

Ms. Larochelle asked for committee updates.

Education Committee updates:

Ms. Larochelle stated that she did not have any new updates.

Budget and Contracts Committee updates:

Mr. Piper stated that there aren't any new updates as the School Board just approved the budget. He and Ms. Parker will begin building a proforma budget over the next week.

Contract Negotiations Committee Updates:

Mr. Piper stated that he and Mr. Murphy attended the recent School Board meeting. Mr. Nilhas, the Superintendent, presented a proposed interim working agreement. The SAU#4 School Board approved.

Conceptually students can go to any school in SAU #4 and SAU #4 students can attend BHVS. Also, all of our students will be allowed to attend Newfound Regional High School.

Mr. Moriarty asked if there are any updates regarding the preschool.

Mr. Piper explained that we would like to continue hosting the preschool. We will need to work out the logistics with SAU #4.

Discussion ensued regarding enrollments at BHVS and the need to continue the preschool and when grades may be added to BHVS.

Mr. Moriarty stated that the next item we need to solve is administrative services.

Mr. Piper explained the administrative services is mostly structuring the 17 statutory requirements upfront. After the initial structure is built, there are less items to tend to on a daily basis.

Discussion ensued regarding the various methods to contract someone for administrative services.

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Teacher Contracts Committee updates:

Ms. Larochelle let everyone know that we received a letter from the attorney to explain why the teachers are unable to negotiate with SAU #4 and the new School District at the same time. But after July 1, 2025, they can review their contract to go over items with the BHG Steering Committee or new School District representatives.

Facilities Committee updates:

Mr. Murphy updated the committee that the grant has been received for the new playgrounds at BHVS. He additionally stated that it would be nice to receive a few more donations to assist in covering the remaining cost involved in updating the playgrounds.

Ms. Larochelle asked if there are any additional updates. Seeing none, let's open the meeting to public comment.

Debra Hart asked if the letter from SAU #4 can be shared with the public.

Ms. Parker stated that she could give her copy to Ms. Hart, but that she believes it will be added to the website shortly.

Christina Reynolds asked do we have costs yet.

Ms. Parker explained that we do not have an excel spreadsheet built yet. She stated this will be worked on over the next few weeks and that some of the items will be based on current numbers until we reach negotiations with vendors and contractors.

Discussion ensued around other school districts that are currently operating and of similar size as the one that will potentially be formed by Groton, Hebron & Bridgewater. This led to an explanation of how real estate tax amounts are derived and where those monies go.

Kathleen Connor brought up the fact that the specials are currently divided between all the schools within the SAU #4 school district. How will the new school district handle staffing for OT, PT, Speech etc?

Ms. Parker explained that those services are actually contracted services, and we will begin having conversations with some of these contracted individuals. They already come to BHVS at set times and could continue this, but with a contract through the new school district.

Kathleen Connor expressed concern that it will be harder to find someone for one day per week.

Mr. Murphy expressed that the BHG Steering Committee would like to continue to work with all the current service providers.

Kathleen Connor continued, we need to make sure that the middle school students will have access to a different allied arts program.

Discussions ensued regarding specialized services.

Ms. Larochelle asked if there were any other comments/questions from the public.

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Seeing none, let's move on. Terry I believe you have something to distribute.

Mr. Murphy stated that he was distributing a letter that needs to be reviewed by the committee. This document is to parents, voters, grandparents, etc. It answers some important questions from the community.

The main item is that we cannot make any final arrangements until after the vote.

Mr. Murphy asked all committee members to review the letter and get corrections/edits back as soon as possible, so that the document can be distributed by email and on the website.

Ms. Larochelle asked Mr. Piper if he had a chance to speak with the potential parent representative.

Mr. Piper replied that he has, but he has not received a response back.

Discussions ensued regarding current tuition amounts and what potential tuition agreements could be. Also whether or not state aid will be available and how that may affect the proforma budgets.

Ms. Larochelle asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Moriarty made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Ms. Parker seconded. All committee members present were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm