

The workshop meeting of the Great Meadows Regional Board of Education was held on Monday, November 12, 2007, at Great Meadows Middle School, Independence Township. The meeting was called to order at 7:30 PM by Robert Jones, President. A statement was read that adequate notice of the meeting had been given in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Flag salute.

**ROLL CALL:**

Present: Richard Alexander, Jennifer Cassini, Maryann Citro, Peggy Faulborn, Robert Jones, Matthew Mowatt, Bernie O'Hara, and William Vonder Haar.

Absent: Joe Mahal.

There were 3 members of the public in attendance.

Committee reports were discussed.

Public Comment: None

Motion by Jennifer Cassini, seconded by Richard Alexander, to approve the resolution between Great Meadows Regional Board of Education and Liberty Township as follows:

**Whereas**, Liberty Township ("Liberty") commenced with a petition on February 5, 2007, to the New Jersey Department of Education ("Department") to convene a Board of Review to authorize a referendum on the dissolution of the Great Meadows Regional School District; and

**Whereas**, the petition to the Department by Liberty to conduct a referendum to withdraw from the Great Meadows Regional School District was denied on April 20, 2007; and

**Whereas**, Liberty filed an appeal to the Appellate Division contesting the Department's decision; and

**Whereas**, upon the following the denial of Liberty's petition, the Great Meadows Regional School District Board of Education in an effort to facilitate a solution to the funding formula, arranged for mediation between officials from Liberty Township and Independence Township; and

**Whereas**, subsequent to the mediation process, the Board approved on October 9, 2007, a compromise in the form of a referendum to be submitted to the public on December 11, 2007, seeking to modify the current funding formula based on 100% student enrollment to a formula, to be phased in over five years, which would be 50% student enrollment and 50% equalized assessed value; and

**Whereas,** upon being noticed that Liberty was proceeding with their appeal concurrent with the referendum process going forward, the Board voted on October 16, 2007 to rescind the referendum if Liberty did not dismiss its pending litigation within seven days; and

**Whereas,** at a public meeting on November 1, 2007, Liberty considered the Board's proposal, rejected same, and responded with a proposal of its own; and

**Whereas,** Liberty's proposal included its agreement to arrange for a briefing schedule extending the date for the Board to file its opposition brief with the Appellate Division for 30 days beyond the December 11, 2007 referendum date. If the Appellate Division was unwilling to grant the Board the aforesaid extension of time, Liberty offered to reimburse the Board for the reasonable attorney's fees expended in the preparation of its opposition brief starting on November 1, 2007; and

**Whereas,** Liberty's Resolution did not expressly indicate whether it would dismiss its appeal if the referendum was adopted by both municipalities in accordance with law; and

**Whereas,** on November 2, 2007, the Board requested from Liberty confirmation, in writing, that it would dismiss its lawsuit if the referendum was successful; and

**Whereas,** on November 5, 2007, Liberty, represented to the Board by way of a letter from their attorney which was accepted by the Board as valid documentation that it would dismiss its appeal if the December 11, 2007 referendum to adopt a revised Great Meadows Regional funding formula was successful; and

**Whereas,** the Board at a special meeting conducted on November 5, 2007 considered Liberty's counter-proposal and accepted same.

**Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved That,** the Board of Education for the Great Meadows Regional School District shall proceed with a referendum on December 11, 2007 thereby allowing the residents of both Liberty and Independence Townships to vote upon a new funding formula for the Great Meadows Regional School District, which said formula shall be based upon 50% of equalized property values and 50% on student enrollment to be phased in over a five year period.

**Be It Further Resolved That,** the Board's decision to proceed with this referendum is based upon its acceptance of Liberty's offer to arrange for a briefing schedule to extend the date for the Board to file its opposition brief with the Appellate Division for 30 days beyond the December 11, 2007 referendum date. If the Appellate Division is unwilling to extend the date for the Board to file its opposition brief, the Board accepts Liberty's offer to reimburse the Board for the reasonable attorneys fees expended in the preparation and filing of the brief beginning on November 1, 2007.

**Be It Further Resolved That,** the Board's decision to proceed with the referendum is also based upon its acceptance of Liberty's representation that it will dismiss the pending appeal if the referendum to adopt a revised Great Meadows Regional funding formula is approved by the voters in both Liberty and Independence Townships.

Roll Call Vote: Yes: Alexander, Cassini, Citro, Faulborn, Jones, Mowatt, Vonder Haar.

No: None.

Abstain: O'Hara - Motion carried.

Motion by Peggy Faulborn, seconded by Jennifer Cassini, to adjourn at 9:50 PM.

Motion carried in a unanimous voice vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Mumaw  
Board Secretary