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**Minutes of the RSU Withdrawal Exploratory Committee**

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**March 31, 2015**

**6:00 PM Meeting held at the Embden Town Office**

**In attendance was:** Chuck Taylor, Betty Pratt, Bob Dunphy, Larry Witham, Dwight Barron, Brainard Tripp, Joe Creamer, Mike Cahill, Tim & Torry Wahler, Paul Fortin, Lois Erickson, Ann Bridges, Shawn Cyrway, Paul Fortin.

1. Chuck Taylor called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.
2. **Pledge of Allegiance.**
3. **Structuring of RSU Withdrawal Exploratory Committee continued.**
   1. Appointed Robert Dunphy as Exploratory Committee chairperson.
   2. Secretary – Chuck Taylor volunteered to record and summarize minutes for this meeting. Secretary to be appointed at the next meeting.
   3. All attendees at this meeting to be considered as the initial exploratory committee members although there are a few who don’t want to commit. Some admitted they’re simply attending for the informational aspect of the meetings. Future action needed regarding the appointment of the four member withdrawal committee if the 22 step withdrawal route progresses.

1. **Discussion of potential courses of action to address concerns regarding cost sharing and other concerns related to RSU #74.**  The group feels that Embden’s share of the RSU # 74’s budget has been and continues to be inequitable. The group is eager to work toward a solution and will adhere to all applicable rules, guidelines, and legal advice.
2. **Discussion of whether to move forward with either or both of these processes, by requesting the RSU Board to vote to call a meeting of municipal representatives to review the cost sharing formula, or by circulating a petition to initiate the withdrawal process.**

The Chairman allowed open discussion to clarify the intent of the Exploratory Committee (negotiations first, petition circulation during the negotiations, etc.) Discussion ensued with the following primary concerns:

* Hand out information was reviewed and discussed at length regarding the process to amend the RSU’s cost sharing formula.
* Committee members were in agreement that negotiations need to happen sooner than later as it is budget time.
* The group requested that Embden’s School Board members schedule a preliminary meeting with the superintendent Ken Colville although the group is skeptical that he will be genuinely helpful.
* Embden’s School Board members educated the group of the Maine Dept. of Education’s 2015-16 EPS model, ED279, and overall budget numbers including additional local funds.
* The Committee insisted negotiations should be paired with the circulation of a withdrawal petition to indicate that Embden “means business”.
* The Committee needs to get the word out to as many Embden citizens soon. The question being posed is, “where are the parents?” and the intent of the group is ***not*** to surprise or scare the inhabitants with regards to their children’s’ education.
* The processes to withdraw from RSU (22 step process from the Maine Dept. of Education’s website) along with petition forms were disseminated.

1. **Next Meeting Announcement & Adjournment.** 
   1. Next RSU Withdrawal Exploratory Committee Meeting – Tentatively planned for Tuesday April 14, 2015 @ 6pm.
   2. Meeting adjourned 7:38pm.