



**Town Council Meeting
(Part of the Four Towns Meeting)
February 1, 2020 – 9:00 a.m.
Amherst-Pelham Regional Middle School Library
170 Chestnut Street**

Minutes

1. Call to order and declaration of a quorum

President Griesemer declared the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

Councilors present: Councilors Brewer, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ryan, Schoen, Steinberg, Swartz

Councilors absent: Councilors Bahl-Milne, DeAngelis, Ross, Schreiber

Councilors participating remotely: None

Others present: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Interim Finance Director Sonia Aldrich; representatives from the Amherst-Pelham Regional School Committee, Amherst School Committee, and the Towns of Leverett, Pelham, and Shutesbury

2. Presentations and Discussion

- **Presentation on School Finance**

Eric Nakajima, Chair of the Regional School District, welcomed the representatives from the four communities. Superintendent Morris and School Finance Director Slaughter presented an overview and status of the Regional School District operating budgets. They reported variables about health insurance and Charter School assessments were in hand and included in the budget which resulted in an overall budget increase of 1.54%. They listed the advantages of the budget noting that it maintained many of the positive characteristics of the District.

The Superintendent noted that the budget will be presented to the Regional School District Committee on February 11th and that he anticipated a vote of the Committee on March 10th or 24th.

The four towns separated into individual Town caucuses. Members representing the Town of Amherst included the Town Council, Amherst School Committee and Town staff. The group discussed the presentation and clarifying questions were answered.

At 9:58 a.m., the four towns reunited. Representatives from the towns reported on their positions with brief explanations of why. The Town of Pelham said the “45%” model was acceptable to them. Mr. Steinberg, speaking for the Town Council, stated that the Town of Amherst preferred the “40%” model as it was the second of a two year proposal. A representative from Leverett said they preferred the “40%” model. And the representative from Shutesbury said they preferred the “45%” model with the intention of continuing movement to the statutory method.

Messrs. Morris and Slaughter presented the Region’s capital budget for FY21. There were several questions.

Mr. Demling stated that the different expectations of the communities may lead to a larger discussion about the future of the Regional School District.

Mr. Morris thanked all for participating.

3. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the President 48 Hours in Advance - None

4. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilor Hanneke moved, second by Councilor Steinberg to adjourn the February 1, 2020 meeting of the Town Council.

VOTED unanimously (Councilors Brewer, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ryan, Schoen, Steinberg, and Swartz voted Yes; Councilors Bahl-Milne, De Angelis, Ross, and Schreiber were absent) to adjourn the February 1, 2020 meeting of the Town Council.

The meeting adjourned at 10:48 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Bockelman

Town Manager

Attachment: Record of Agenda Packet Materials and Documents Presented