

DRAFT MINUTES

Lincoln School District Board Meeting

June 29, 2022, 9:30-12PM

Town Offices

In attendance:

Zoom: Jen Oldham (LSD board), Andrew Furtsch, Mary Beth Childs

In-person: Paul Forlenza (LSD board), Abby Reynolds (LSD board), Sally Ober (town clerk, Lincoln School District clerk), Sarah McClain, Rob Backlund, Coco Moseley, Jim Warnock, Jeanne Albert, Su White, Karen Lueders, Ron Shems (legal counsel- Town of Lincoln and LSD)

Call to order at 9:32

Note taker: Su Wite

*action taken

Bold- actionable items

Jen- Welcome

Thank you to Sally for all the work done to get us to this point. You've had our back and we wouldn't be here without your efforts. And to Paul for being the connective thread with the selectboard and Sally.

1. Public Comment:

Rob Backlund- I have resigned from the MAUSD board and it is unclear what the role Lincoln has in the district moving forward. Thanks to SCS and the new board for all you've done. It's clear that the higher ups are committed to these efforts not succeeding. I am committed to the LSD work and our community. "It's only a thankless job when gratitude isn't expressed.

Thank you Rob for your efforts on the MAUSD board.

APPLAUSE

2. Election of Officers

Jen proposed selecting "acting" officers until new members are elected

***Elected officers to the Board-**

Acting Chair- Jen Oldham

Acting Vice Chair- Abby Reynolds

3. Information from Sally Ober - Town Clerk

Sally explained that she is the clerk for the Town of Lincoln and the clerk for the Lincoln School District. She is not the clerk for the Lincoln School Board but will help us now while we get everything in place.

- **She will warn and post meetings with the agenda she receives from the board.**
- **She will keep an "official and permanent" archive of minutes and other important documents (state board, district board minutes and communication) secure in the vault at the town offices.**
- **Send things to Sally that you'd like included. She will update the website as needed.**

*Abby and Coco will share notetaking duties as needed for now.

Van Talmage is the Lincoln Town Treasurer. We will ask if he is willing to fill this duty for the board for now. We should invite him to one of our next meetings.

4. Agenda addition; Report from Save Community Schools (SCS) on new information provided by Patrick Reen (MAUSD Superintendent during 6/21 Merger Committee meeting, and SCS analysis of impact on Lincoln.

Jen asked Andrew Furtsch (SCS) to provide the Board with this update and how SCS sees it informing the work of the Board:

Andrew -

According to Patrick Reen (MAUSD Superintendent), the State Board of Education (SBE) and the Agency of Education (AOE) Secretary (Dan French) do not believe we can sustain a Supervisory District (SD) or Supervisory Union (SU), and French is looking for 'long-term stability' in the area. Therefore:

- Contrary to the desires of the SBE, MAUSD and Lincoln, if the Starksboro withdrawal is successful, French is likely to recommend deconstruction of MAUSD to become an SU including Ripton, Lincoln and Starksboro. This is not something Lincoln had envisioned nor been planning for but should start to seriously consider as an outcome..
- If the Starksboro withdrawal does not go through, it is less clear what the recommendation may be for Lincoln or Ripton and Lincoln should continue planning to stand the Mountain SU in early 2023.

The current timeline:

1. Ripton will present its progress report to the SBE on July 20 outlining the Ripton School District and establishing the Mountain Supervisory Union with the Lincoln School District. Lincoln is supporting this work.
2. The vote by the other towns of MAUSD to approve Starksboro's withdrawal will take place August 9.
3. By mid-August, Ripton should receive the assessment of its progress report from the SBE committees.
4. On September 1, Lincoln is scheduled to meet with SBE for information on SU assignment.

Since this new information was delivered through Patrick Reen at a Merger Committee meeting, it was suggested Lincoln seek additional clarification directly from Dan French on: 1) the AOE's metrics for determining whether a small SU is viable, 2) the issue of district deconstruction and whether an SD or SU can reject acceptance of a new school, and 3) preferred SU assignments for Ripton and Lincoln if the Starksboro effort to leave MAUSD is not successful. **Jen agreed to reach out to Dan French.**

5. Policies

Conflict of Interest. A motion was made to amend the MAUSD Conflict of Interest Policy to reflect they/them pronouns. The amended Code of Ethics policy was approved for adoption by LSD, 3-0

Jen will send her spreadsheet to board members laying out the other policies adopted by MAUSD and ACSD.

Next meeting, 7/7, will look at the governance policies and include 5 or 6 others at each successive meeting.

Abby will create an agenda for 7/7

6. Board Operational Issues

LSD set Board meeting schedule for July:

- Thursdays- 7th, 14th (no Abby), 21st, 28th
- Daytime meetings through the summer. July meetings set- 9:30-noon
- Quorum is 2 people.
- Must be warned and an agenda posted 48 hours in advance. If this needs to be revised or canceled that should be posted too.
- Send materials to Sally and she will take care of this.

Robert's Rules for Small Organizations adopted.(3-0)

Paul will create a draft for Meeting protocols- including public comment and discussion- invited and recognized by the chair, with participants introducing themselves. In the spirit of a model that is inclusive and informative

Sally will look into open meeting protocols and zoom participation. She's willing to take on research projects like this as long as time allows.

Email addresses for board members- **Sally will look into how to add them to the users on the town account until July 2023. Su will pay any associated costs**

Sally will create and maintain a page on the website for LSD until July 2023

Board members and contacts

Board meetings and agendas and meetings- drafts and approved

Upcoming special meetings and votes

LSD will use the town office for its mailing address and. **Sally will create mail slots for board members**

Lincoln School District name. Is "LSD" distracting from the seriousness and responsible nature of the work and intention? LCSD - Lincoln Community School District could be a possibility.

Sally will investigate what it takes to change the name.

Bank Account-

Peoples Bank is the Town's bank and makes sense to continue and expand on the relationship. **Jen will look into starting an account. Su will provide necessary funds to open the account**

7. Funding

- Jeanne has developed a draft transition budget to
 - Now - Dec 31, 22- ~\$30,000- for legal fees and moving the SU development process forward
 - Jan 1- July 1, 23- ~\$80,000- for SU start up costs and hiring– dependent on how the SBE determines our SU status (this is Lincoln's share with the expectation Ripton will also allocate \$80k).
- Can we fundraise for the initial amount- adding an event at the end of the summer to bring the community together?

- Paul said the selectboard is willing to go to the town to ask for transition funds to launch new SU – either through a loan or an additional assessment
- Any vote for \$\$ for new school district/SU can be done at a special meeting, warned 30 days in advance. We can warn any amount we are looking to vote on ahead of time, with info on spending included as best as we can.
- Paul- cautions about going to the voters twice for money.

8. Community communications

Abby will create a FPF post bringing the community up to date on our first Board meeting and where to find info about the meetings

9. Election of Additional Board members

School board members can be nominated from the floor and voted on at the same meeting as a vote for transition funds from the town **Tentative vote for new board members 8/17/22. Voting on funds TBD at next meeting**

10. Discussion with Legal Counsel, Ron Shems, lawyer for Town of Lincoln

- Recommended that LSD have its own counsel
- Ron is currently engaged to work on the Exit Agreement, paid by the town's education legal services budget. At the end of that work, At the conclusion of the agreement, Ron will let go of legal work for the town and switch to be just the LSD counsel.
- Ron will draft a letter of engagement- His rate is \$180/hour. Nick Low is partnering on the work when necessary.**

Scope of work for Ron includes-

- **Advising on Lincoln's continued "rights" in MAUSD if we are no longer a member but financially support it, have two board seats, and MAUSD is educating our children. Should we be able to vote on Starksboro withdrawal or merger vote?**
- **Facilitate negotiation of Exit Agreement with MAUSD**
- **Clarification on implications of "Advisable district" in Merger Articles of Agreement**

"If we are OUT of the district, what are the implications and do we have a clear understanding of our role- in or outside of the district. **Can Ron offer a "wide-angle" perspective of implications/consequences.**

A draft exit agreement exists that has been sent to MAUSD and Ron and Nick have been in touch with the MAUSD lawyer. Additional questions about the agreement.

- Considering Lincoln has paid into a capital improvements fund- why is MAUSD requesting we pay the full depreciated amount of capital improvements to LCS.
- What about Lincoln's portion of unexpended ESSR funds? Is there another tranche not yet received?

Meeting tomorrow with Ron and MAUSD lawyer. Jen will attend

Sally will forward emails and mail from SBE, AOE and Sec of State regarding withdrawal to the board. Jen will forward to Ron.

11. Looking ahead-

- **Set an annual meeting. Town Meeting Day?**
- **Next meeting Thursday July 7, 9:30-noon**
- **Abby will create an agenda and distribute to Sally for warning and to other board members**

Meeting adjourned- 12:40

DRAFT minutes submitted to LSD board by Su White