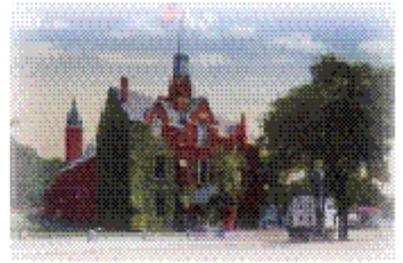


# Town of Ayer

## Finance Committee

### Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



Location: Ayer Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Great Hall.  
Finance Committee Minutes

Wednesday, August 11, 2010

Present: Brian Muldoon; Chairman, Jesse Reich; Vice-Chairman, members Scott Houde and Andrew Crowley  
Absent: Glen Lapierre

Called to order at 7:05 pm by Brian Muldoon

This meeting was an open invitation for area Finance Committee and Town officials to Join and talk about how money can be saved. To Share Experiences on what works and what does not.

Attendees included people from Shirley, Littleton, Groton, and Boxborough.  
From Ayer, George Frost and Pat Kelly came to talk about school regionalization.  
Rick Gilles spoke about the multi-year finance plan.  
Scott Houde spoke about the Financial Policies.

Brian Muldoon welcomes everyone and then round-table introductions.

Jesse Reich Started with regional FinCom synopsis and introduces the first speaker.

Pat Kelly and George Frost talk about regionalization planning.  
Process took 3 years. Shirley initiated it with Lunenburg and Ayer. Process over 3 years eventually led to Ayer and Shirley regionalization.

The Ayer/Shirley regional school district is in a transitional phase with each town maintaining a school committee along with the RSC.

Comment from the audience notes this is a trail blazing project since no new region has formed in the last 20 years in Massachusetts. This is being looked at as a model to follow for other regions.

Pat Kelly also talked about why this was needed, funding cuts, and kids choosing to choice out and a slide in quality imminent unless savings could be found.

Question: What is the future enrollment numbers projected to be?

George Frost: Trends for 10 years (from 2 yrs ago.) For the 3 towns (Lunenburg, Ayer, Shirley) where 3500 students then, and 2800 students at the end of 10 years.

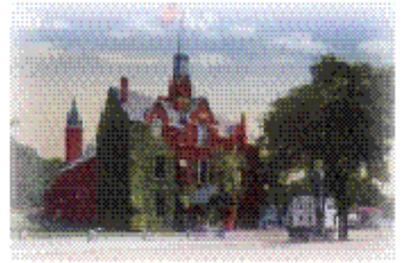
Question: How are those numbers arrived at?

George Frost: Demographic data.

# Town of Ayer

## Finance Committee

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Question: What saves money in regionalization?

AND

What are the issues with two separate teacher contracts?

George Frost: Consultants compared the possibilities of individual districts vs. the region.

We save by:

Operations could save 500k / year.

Facilities reimbursement from the state for new construction and major renovation would be higher.

These savings can be put back into creating and maintaining more programs for the students.

Contract issues were minimized by Teachers unions were both under MTA.

Tough issues were length of Teacher days, Days in the year, Blending salary schedules, and handling different insurers.

Boston Benefit Partners was our consultants and helped with these issues.

Question: Are School and town insurance splits (e.g. Town 25% / Employee 75% in Ayer. ) Equal?

George Frost: In Ayer Yes,

Question: Don't Laws require best salary wins in the blending. ?

George Frost: Some maneuvering room is available.

Going back to the original problem, the situation was heading in the wrong direction in regards to revenue vs. cost.

Staff and people understood this and that helped foster some understanding in negotiations.

Question: Consolidate school with DPW Maintenance, does it help?

George Frost: Not apparent here, economies of scale drive this and the scale of both jobs have to hit a sweet spot for it to work.

Audience: Shirley has schools maintain all town computers. This means they will likely pay the school region if they want the school people to continue maintaining town computers.

All consolidations depend on the individual situation.

Jesse Segues to how do we Define Sustainable?

Rick Gilles presents multi-year budget model.

Rick Gilles talks about Joint tri-board and how it works.

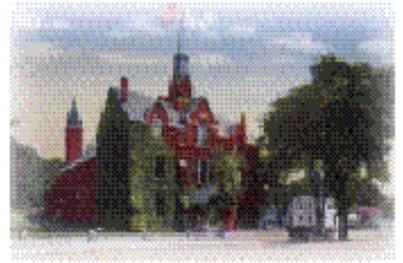
This communication helped with issues such as getting all of town on an equal footing. All departments at least had a heads up in which direction the town was trying to march.

This helped in getting all employee unions on the same contract schedule and with the same health insurance split.

# Town of Ayer

## Finance Committee

### Ayer Massachusetts, 01432



The Tri-Board also spun off sub committees to work on strategic issues such as the five year model or the financial policies.

The end result is less people taken by surprise, Data is more coherent and consistent when presented at town meetings.

Question: Where does all the data get collected?

FinCom- Town Accountant. GFOA? Has good info. This is a national organization.  
[Http://www.gfoa.org/](http://www.gfoa.org/) (Government Finance Officers Association.)

Question: Groton Tried the Tri-Board but it did not seem to work well, what was different?

Discussion centered on Need/goal of the board, Attitudes of the people,

Question: Are Tri-Board meetings strategic or Tactical?

Both, Anything from Union Negotiations to Should we regionalize.

Question: How does the tri-board work?

Brian Muldoon: Quick explanation,

Question: How to deal with non Agreement.

Rick Gilles: Not much experience, we seemed to arrive at consensus quite often. Lots of discussion about how to handle disagreements here.

Comment: Boxboro calls there body a Leadership forum and communication is a big benefit.

Scott Houde: Discusses the proposed Financial Polices.

Purpose: Make decisions consistently and predictably.

Used Amherst as a template but customized for Ayer. Liked the fact that they state why policies were in place, not just what the policies were. Also talked about perhaps trying to get the policies enforceable.

Question Virtual Town Hall, does it work? Westford is happy.

Comments; VOIP is savings for phones. Virtualizing computers, does it work?

Floor opens to discussion.

Comments,

State has a regionalization survey which is worth it.

Minuteman region has a study on going on regionalization.

Unibank for payments, comments?

Clunky on Receipts, you have to manually check to see when payment goes through.

Escos Technology discussed.

**Town of Ayer**  
**Finance Committee**  
**Ayer Massachusetts, 01432**



Jesse Reich wraps up regional Finance forum.

Fin com discusses problems with how meeting for the Financial Policies meeting for Monday was posted. It should be listed as a forum, not a public hearing.

Next Tri-Board meeting is August 31st at 7pm at Page Hilltop Prof. Dev. Room.

No one is going to the next Finance meeting from MFA; members will wait for annual meeting in Oct.

9:20pm: Motion to adjourn FinCom by Jesse Reich, second by Andrew Crowley. All in favor, unanimous

Brian Muldoon, Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Jesse Reich, Vice Chairman \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Glen Lapierre, Clerk \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Scott Houde, Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Andrew Crowley, Member \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_