

# **School Withdrawal Committee Meeting**

## **Informational Session**

**March 21, 2023**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Kugelmeyer at 6:00PM.

Attendance was taken: Committee member present were Kara Kugelmeyer, Mike Gardner, Scott Carey and Billie-Jo Brown-Woods.

Mike Gardner and Scott Carey passed out packets that detailed the estimated model to run Albion school should the town separate from the district. Kara went over this model in depth explaining that these are only estimates at this time. The model details upper end, middle end, and lower end of total costs.

Kara went over school choice and guaranteed school of acceptance. In order for Albion to be its own entity, the State of Maine requires that Albion obtain what is called a guaranteed school of acceptance, this is the school that has to take Albion students. There were several questions from residents to clarify this. Kara explained that any student may choose to attend a different school but the guaranteed school of acceptance is obligated to take them when no other school is. A choice school may decide that the student has more needs than they can accommodate and choose not to accept that student, whereas the guaranteed school must take student regardless of needs. At this point in negotiations, MSAD 49 has not agreed to be Albion's guaranteed school of acceptance.

Residents questioned why the committee is doing this. All committee members stated that they believe Albion residents deserve to have a voice at the table in regard to what happens to their school. A voice that they currently do not have.

There was discussion about taxes increasing. They anticipate anywhere from 2 to 5 mil increase and that staying in the district does not ensure taxes will stay the same as currently are. Some residents asked about how property value would be affected should the school be closed. Kara stated that it may not be seen right away but having local school with impact property value in the future. One resident also stated that if Albion school closes then the town is likely to continue to see a decrease in young families moving into the town and will likely see more families leave.

Committee members were clear that Albion residents will make the decision on whether the committee continues or not. Should the committee continue, a final agreement would need to be approved by the Maine Department of Education. Once that was completed, the agreement would go to the town residents to vote on. Next step is for the Committee to send out a survey to Albion residents to make sure that this is still what they want. All residents are encouraged to attend the future

withdrawal meetings and to ask questions.

Motion was made to adjourn committee meeting, motion was seconded by Mike, total vote was 4-0-0.

Meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

A copy of the Albion Estimated Working Model will be included on the website with the minutes.

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Mitchell