



# Freetown Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 27, 2020 – 6:00pm

Old Colony Regional Technical Vocational High School  
476 North Avenue, Rochester, MA 02770

2020 DEC -2 AM 10:03

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## 6:00pm Call to Order

Chairman Lisa A. Pacheco calls the meeting to order at 6:15pm, with the joint meeting in progress, upon the virtual arrival of Selectman George L. Grunwald. Selectman Trevor R. Matthews is not present. Present: Town Administrator David DeManche & Executive Assistant Timm McIntosh and members of the Freetown Vocational Education Exploratory Committee and Old Colony Charter Review Subcommittee and Old Colony Superintendent Aaron Polansky. The meeting is being run by Superintendent Polansky with the Board of Selectmen as invited guests. The meeting was livestreamed by Old Colony Regional Technical Vocation High School.

Note: The Old Colony Charter Review Subcommittee began their meeting at 6pm, and Selectman Grunwald did not join the meeting until 6:15pm.

Mr. Polansky says there are presently 68 Freetown students currently at Old Colony in grades 10-12. He informs the Freetown delegation that the Old Colony School Committee met and voted unanimously on October 21<sup>st</sup> to invite Freetown to join their district. He gives a presentation walking everyone through the process that they must follow to make that possible. Per the district agreement, a new member town can join effective July 1<sup>st</sup> of any fiscal year, provided the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education approves the admission prior to December 31<sup>st</sup> of the preceding calendar year. According to Mr. Polansky's timeline, all the member communities would be asked to hold a Special Town Meeting to vote on this proposal, and if the approvals are unanimous and then approved by the Commissioner, Freetown's membership could begin on July 1, 2022. Freetown would be assessed a buy-in of \$601,809, which was determined as a factor of debt: Old Colony used their current outstanding debit, consisting of a capital lease in FY11 and a bond payable from FY16 and determined what Freetown's per pupil assessment would have been. Freetown would be responsible for transportation costs in the first fiscal year of being a member community.

Selectman Pacheco would want a guarantee for next year's freshman class before the Town would be willing to go down this path, highlighting how horrible it was for the parents of this year's freshman class to hear that they were being shut out. Old Colony Charter Review Subcommittee member Shirley Bourque explains that such a guarantee can only be made after approvals and

asking all five communities and the Commissioner to approve this prior to December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year would be borderline impossible.

Mr. Polansky assures the Freetown delegation that the School District will advocate for the inclusion of Freetown, and he is very confident that this will pass. Mr. Medeiros says the Freetown-Lakeville School District is also committed to making this happen, noting that the State was not at all pleased with the situation for this school year, with Freetown students not being afforded a vocational option. Mr. Polansky says there cannot be a guarantee, as they cannot go against the regional agreement.

Mr. Donald Foster of the Old Colony Charter Review Subcommittee explains that Mr. Polansky's presentation was called "Consideration of Expansion", and it was worded that way for a reason. Freetown joining the District is only one portion of expansion, as they are also looking to expand the curriculum and the number of seats they are able to hold. The other member communities may view adding Freetown as taking away potential seats for their students, but those will be made up as part of this expansion.

Mr. Polansky says that Freetown is in the driver's seat at this point on whether they want to proceed, but notes that support by the Old Colony School Committee is a very important step, and they were unanimous in their support.

Mr. Polansky adjourns the meeting of the Old Colony Charter Review Subcommittee and the Board of Selectmen at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Timm McIntosh

Executive Assistant

No additional documents were utilized by the Board in this meeting (handouts of the presentation were provided)