

Sharing Town and School Resources

Raymond School and Town Officials have held joint meetings to investigate sharing services. On June 24, we met to determine a schedule for our meetings and investigations. Discussions would include: Technology, Maintenance and Facilities, Human Resources, Payroll, and contractual items such as copiers. We also will look into shared staff trainings. Present were: John Harmon, Ellen Small, Ron Brickett, Craig Wheeler, Jack Barnes and Greg Bemis. We also invited particular department heads to those meetings related to their area of expertise.

Technology: Bailey Rigg, Technology Director for the Raymond School District, discussed ways in which the school district would be able to help the town. He met with Ernie Creveling on several occasions to set up a timeline and what would work between the town and school. Bailey believes that some of the software used by the town could be phased out if the town used google apps. He has been working with town employees and will also provide training for the town hall staff in google apps.

Facilities and Maintenance: Todd Ledoux and Steve Brewer met with the committee to discuss areas that are already being shared as well as ideas to continue this relationship. The following shared resources were noted

- Town helps with plowing the school area, and depending on the severity of the storm event School staff (Todd Ledoux) work collaboratively to address the circumstances.
- School helps with scheduling after school activities for recreation
- Fields, maintenance, irrigation, use and general operations need to keep the fields in good shape and used by the public
- Electricity contract, both the Town and SAU are part of an electric utility contract that enables both uses to purchase electricity at reduced rates. This contract is in place for another year.
- Ellen Small and a combined effort of Raymond Dispatch/Raymond Police and Craig Sykes (DPW) work to address road conditions regarding a “no-school” announcement.
- There is a continual and consistent flow of equipment and staff time and cooperation between the DPW professionals and SAU staff as required. This one on one approach is the most effective and functional way that demonstrates the positive working relationship between the two public agencies.
- Summer programs and summer recreation is a shared community program that addresses the needs of Raymond Recreation and Raymond Residents. (School District purchased scheduling software for the Recreation Dept to use when scheduling events in any of the school buildings
- The SAU and building facilities hosts the BOS meeting and all land use Board(s) meeting and public hearings.
- RCTV has invested time and money into the “studio” and necessary infrastructure (camera, microphones, etc) to be able to video, and live stream meeting and events held at the High School

Areas to look into for future sharing possibilities: Bundling Comcast services once the contracts are up

Payroll and Finances:

School and Town Officials met to discuss Finances including the software used by the town and the software used by the school district. The town uses MuniSmart while the school district uses Munis. Account numbers would need to change. After considerable research done by the SAU Finance and Business Department and the Towns' Finance Director, the cost benefit analysis to merge to one system (MUNIS) was not a viable option. We spoke to communities who have tried to "merge" into one operating system and their advice was NOT to move in that direction. It cost double what was originally anticipated and the performance and levels of service were not sufficient to meet the needs of the various disciplines, particularly Town Clerk/Tax Collector. The Town Clerk requires software that integrates with the software used by the Division of Motor Vehicles- Munis does not currently do this.

The Town has taken advantage of the purchasing vendor for supplies associated with the SAU and continues to support that service.

Human Resources:

There was considerable discussion regarding the need by both organizations to address the "Human Resource" needs of each organization. Both the SAU and Town do not have a highly qualified and trained individual to serve in this capacity. There were various concepts discussed on possible personal solutions to address the joint need and possible job sharing to address this need. However the more that the job sharing concept was explored, it became clear that the Human Resource needs of the SAU and the Town were quite different. The final conclusion was to seek personnel in each area and move in that direction with possible joint and cross training in the future.

Final Summary and Conclusion:

This initiative has been beneficial from the stand point that both Public Officials, School Board and Board of Selectmen, met on a regular basis to discuss various mutual concerns and issues facing the residents of the community. It was the committee's recommendation that moving forward this mutual and positive discussion regarding services, performance and financial impact to the taxpayer continue.

Submitted: November 24, 2015

Ellen Small
Superintendent of Schools

Craig Wheeler
Raymond Town Manger