

To: Richard Brown, Somerset Town Administrator

From: Julie M. Ramos Gagliardi, Chairperson Somerset Berkley Regional School Committee

Date: April 16, 2021

Topic: **Somerset Berkley Regional School District – Articles for Somerset Annual Town Meeting May 17, 2021 and request to present at the April 28 BOS Meeting**

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Below please find language for the motions and descriptions for the two (2) articles being presented for consideration at the Somerset Annual Town Meeting on May 17, 2021. I also request the opportunity to discuss these articles in advance of the Town Meeting at the Board of Selectman Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, April 28, 2021. Please let me know if you have any questions or proposed changes to the language suggested below and I look forward to meeting with the Board of Selectmen on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Article 6:** To see if the Town will vote to approve the Somerset Berkley Regional District Amended Regional Agreement as presented by the School Committee and dated April 27, 2021. Adoption of the Amended Agreement is subject to the approval by both member towns, as well as the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. Said Amended Regional Agreement is on file at the Somerset Town Clerk's Office, Superintendent of Schools Office and the Somerset Public Library as well as being posted on the Town's website and the District's website ([www.somersetberkley.org](http://www.somersetberkley.org)).

**Motion Article: 6**

**Assignment: Somerset/Berkley Regional School District**

**Madame Moderator, I move that the Town vote to approve the Amended Regional Agreement for the Somerset Berkley Regional School District on file with the Town Clerk, as presented by the School Committee and dated April 27, 2021. Adoption of the Amended Regional Agreement is subject to the approval of both member towns, as well as the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.**

**Article 6**

**Title or subject matter: Amend Somerset Berkley Regional Agreement**

**Description:** The Somerset Berkley Regional Agreement was first adopted on June 21, 2010. In October 2020, a Regional Planning Board was established to review the agreement in its entirety and to make recommendations for amendments. The Amended Agreement language, including the Alternative Assessment Methodology described therein, has been developed by the members of said Regional Planning Board in consultation with DESE officials and was approved by the Regional School Committee at its meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2021. A summary of the proposed amendments along with the Amended Regional Agreement in its entirety has been made available to the public for their review on file at the Somerset Town Clerk's Office, Superintendent of Schools Office and the Somerset Public Library as well as being posted on the Town's website and the District's website ([www.somersetberkley.org](http://www.somersetberkley.org)).

The proposed amendments include general updates to the original Regional Agreement that delete references to the Transition Plan and Interim Period which are no longer relevant; the deletion of references to staggered terms for elected officials used at the start of the region which are no longer relevant; the deletion of references to the former Somerset High School building and sale of the land to the District; updating language relative to the Budget Development process to be line with M.G.L. and State

*Regulations, including adding language relative to amendments to approved budgets. The Amended Agreement also details both the Statutory and the Alternative Assessment Methodologies which may be used to allocate the annual operating and capital expenditures between the two member towns.*

*The Alternative Assessment Methodology or formula detailed in the Amended Agreement is based on the State-determined Minimum Local Contribution for each member town and apportionment of all the costs in excess of the Minimum Local Contribution allocated on a per pupil basis, with the exception of the Net Out-of-District Special Education Tuition costs which are assessed to each member town based on the actual costs incurred on behalf of all current and incoming high school students who are residents of said member town for the year for which the budget is being prepared. This Alternative Assessment Methodology more fairly allocates the expenses associated with costly Out of District Special Education Tuitions to the members based on the costs incurred on behalf of students residing in their respective towns while allocating all other costs in excess of the state determined Minimum Local Contribution on a per pupil basis. Upon approval by both member towns, the Amended Agreement will then be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval by the Commissioner.*

**Article 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, and/or transfer from available funds a sum of money for the purpose of paying the Town's share of the operating and capital expenses of the Somerset Berkley Regional School District, said amount having been assessed to the Treasurer of the Town of Somerset and with said assessment subject to the Town's approval of the Amended Agreement.

**Motion Article: 7**

**Assignment: Somerset/Berkley Regional School District**

**Madam Moderator, I move that the Town vote to appropriate the sum of \$10,096,542.00 for the purpose of paying the Town's share of operating expenses (\$8,504,353.00) and capital expenses (\$1,592,189.00) for the Somerset Berkley Regional School District, said amount having been assessed to the Treasurer of the Town of Somerset and that said sum be raised from taxation and/or transfer from available funds.**

**Article 7**

**Title or subject matter: Annual Assessment – Somerset Berkley Regional School District**

*Description: This article relates to the Town's portion or assessment of the annual expenses for the Somerset Berkley Regional High School District. This assessment is determined by a formula that allocates the operating costs for the Regional District to the towns of Somerset and Berkley. The assessment formula is described in the amended regional agreement presented in the previous article and is contingent upon approval of both member towns and the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Amended Agreement language including the formula described therein has been developed by the members of Regional Planning Board in consultation with DESE officials and was approved by the Regional School Committee at their meeting on Tuesday, April 27, 2021. The assessment formula is based on the State determined Minimum Local Contribution for each member town and apportions all the costs in excess of the Minimum Local Contribution allocated on a per pupil basis with the exception of the Net Out-of-District Special Education Tuition costs which are assessed to each member town based on the actual costs on behalf of all current and incoming the high school students who are residents of said member town for the year for which the budget is being prepared. This Alternative Assessment Methodology more fairly allocates the expenses associated with costly Out-of-District Special Education Tuitions to the members based on the costs incurred on behalf of students residing in their respective towns while allocating all other costs in excess of the state determined Minimum Local Contribution on a per pupil basis.*

**Cc: Paula Ramos, Administrative Assistant Board of Selectmen  
Lorne Lawless, Chairperson, Board of Selectmen  
Lucia Casey, Town Moderator**