

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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N I N E T Y - F O U R T H L E G I S L A T U R E

Legislative Document

No. 626

H. P. 1170

House of Representatives, February 10, 1949.

Referred to Committee on Legal Affairs. Sent up for concurrence and ordered printed.

HARVEY R. PEASE, Clerk.

Presented by Mr. Faas of Benton.

STATE OF MAINE

IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD NINETEEN HUNDRED
FORTY-NINE

AN ACT to Create the Town of Benton School District.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine, as follows:

Sec. 1. Incorporation; name; purposes. Subject to the provisions of sections 7 and 9 hereof, the inhabitants of and the territory within the town of Benton are hereby created a body politic and corporate under the name of "Town of Benton School District" for the purpose of acquiring property within the said town for school and related athletic and recreational purposes; for the purpose of erecting, enlarging, repairing, equipping and maintaining on said property a school building or school buildings for elementary school purposes and related athletic and recreational facilities; for the purpose of completing, grading, furnishing, rebuilding, renovating and otherwise bettering the condition of any or all buildings within the said town used for school purposes or which may hereafter be used for school purposes; for the purpose of leasing or letting any property of said district to said town; for the purpose of receiving, accepting and holding gifts, grants or devises of property, real, personal or mixed to be used for school and related athletic and recreational purposes; all for the benefit of the inhabitants of said district.

Section 2. Trustees, powers and duties; limitations. All the affairs of said district (except the election of teachers who shall serve in the said

schools and the fixing of their salaries, the course of study, the terms of school and all other matters pertaining to the education of pupils, which matters shall be controlled by the school board of the town of Benton) shall be managed by a board of 5 trustees who shall be bona fide residents of the town of Benton and who shall be elected as hereinafter provided. The board of trustees, acting for said district, shall have and exercise all the powers and authorities necessary to carry out the purposes of this act and the powers and authorities granted herein.

Sec. 3. Trustees; how elected, tenure of office, organization of board; officers, vacancies; compensation; reports. As soon as may be after the acceptance of this act, as hereinafter provided, at an annual municipal election of the town of Benton 5 trustees shall be elected to hold office as follows respectively; 1 for a term of 1 year, 1 for a term of 2 years, 1 for a term of 3 years, 1 for a term of 4 years, and 1 for a term of 5 years. At each annual municipal election of the town of Benton, beginning with the annual municipal election following the acceptance of this act, 1 trustee shall be elected as hereinafter provided to serve until the annual municipal election occurring 5 years thereafter. When any trustee ceases to be a resident of said district, he vacates the office of trustee. All trustees shall be eligible for re-election, as hereinafter provided.

The nomination of all candidates for trustee to be elected as provided by this act shall be by petition. The petition of a candidate for trustee shall be signed by not less than 25 qualified voters, resident in said district. Each voter signing a nomination paper shall make his signature in person and each voter may subscribe to as many nominations as there are trustees to be elected in said district. Such nomination papers, before being filed, shall be submitted to the town clerk of Benton, who shall forthwith certify thereon what number of the signatures are names of qualified voters in said district. Such nomination papers shall be filed with the town clerk of Benton not less than 14 days, exclusive of Sundays, previous to the date of such election. With such nomination papers shall also be filed the consent in writing of the person or persons nominated. All nomination papers, being filed and being in apparent conformity with the foregoing provisions, shall be deemed valid.

In case any candidate who has been duly nominated under the provisions hereof shall die before the day of election, or shall withdraw in writing, or shall remove his place of residence from said district, the vacancy may be supplied in the manner herein provided for such nominations, except that the time limit for filing such nomination papers shall not apply. The ballot in said district shall contain the names of all candidates so nominated in

such district alphabetically arranged, printed in 1 column under the heading "For Trustees of the Benton School District". In preparing his ballot, the voter shall make such mark against and to the right of the person or persons voted for as will clearly indicate his choice on said ballot. In no instance shall the number of such marks exceed the number of trustees to be elected in said district. The members of the board of trustees to be elected shall be elected at large by and from the qualified voters of the Benton School District for a term of 5 years and until their successors are elected and qualified. The result of such election shall be declared by the municipal officers of the town of Benton and due certificate thereof filed with the town clerk thereof.

The first meeting of the board of trustees shall be held in 2 weeks after all members of said board have been elected as above provided. At this original meeting they shall organize by the election from their own members of a president, a clerk and a treasurer, adopt a corporate seal, may ordain and establish such by-laws consistent with the laws of Maine as are necessary for their own convenience and proper management of the affairs of said district, and may employ all needed officers and agents for the proper conduct and management of the affairs of the district.

In case any vacancy arises in the membership of the board of trustees for whatever cause, it shall be filled by appointment by the municipal officers of the town of Benton for the period extending to the next annual municipal election. If at any annual municipal election there shall exist a vacancy in an unexpired term, the voters of the district shall cast their ballots as prescribed heretofore for a candidate or candidates to fill the unexpired term or terms.

No member of the board shall receive any compensation for his services, and the treasurer shall give bond to the district in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the trustees may determine, which bond shall remain in the custody of the president of the trustees. The cost of the premium of such bond shall be paid by the district.

At the close of each fiscal year of the district, which shall coincide with the fiscal year of the town of Benton, the trustees shall make a detailed report of their doings, of the financial condition of said district, of the physical condition of its property, and also of such other matters and things pertaining to said district as shall show the inhabitants thereof how said trustees are fulfilling the duties and obligations of their trust. Such reports shall be made and filed with the municipal officers of the town of Benton on or before February 20 of each year.

Sec. 4. How financed. To procure funds for the purpose of this act,

and for such other expenses as may be necessary to carry out said purposes, the said district, by its trustees, is hereby authorized from time to time to borrow money and to issue its bonds and notes therefor, but shall not incur a total indebtedness exceeding the sum of \$69,000. Each bond and note shall have inscribed upon its face the words "Town of Benton School District", shall bear interest at such rates as the trustees shall determine, payable annually, and shall be subject to such other provisions as the trustees shall determine. Such bonds may be issued to mature serially, or made to run for such periods with call provision as said trustees may determine, but none of which shall run for a longer period than 30 years. All bonds and notes issued by said district shall be signed by the treasurer and countersigned by the president of said district. Said bonds and notes shall be legal obligations of said district which is hereby declared to be a quasi-municipal corporation within the meaning of section 132 of chapter 49 of the revised statutes, and all the provisions of said section shall be applicable thereto. The said bonds and notes shall be legal investments for savings banks. The said district is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into such an agreement with the federal government or state government, or any agency thereof, or any corporation or board authorized by the federal government or state government to loan money or otherwise assist in the financing of such projects as this school district is authorized to carry out, as may be necessary or desirable to accomplish the purposes of this act.

Sec. 5. Sinking fund; refunding bonds provided for. In any case any bonds or notes at any time issued are made to run for a period of years (as distinguished from serial maturity) the trustees shall establish a sinking fund for such bonds and notes for the purpose of redeeming the same when they become due. The amount to be paid annually into such sinking fund shall not be less than 1% of the total principal amount of such bonds or notes originally issued during the first 6 years from the date of issue, and not less than 4% of the total principal amount of such bonds or notes originally issued annually thereafter. In addition to such annual sinking fund payment, the trustees shall have authority from time to time to add to any such sinking fund any funds of said district not required for other purposes. Funds in any sinking fund may be deposited in any national bank, savings bank or trust company within the state or may be invested in whole or in part in any bonds of the United States, of the state of Maine or of any political subdivision thereof, as the trustees may determine. Interest received on any funds so invested shall be added to the sinking fund. When and if the amount accumulated in any sinking fund, together with interest received or to be received thereon, shall be sufficient to pay at

maturity or, at the option of the trustees, to redeem the bonds or notes for the benefit of which such sinking fund was established, all further payments to such sinking fund shall cease.

Whenever any bonds or notes issued by said district may become due or can be purchased or called for redemption by said district on favorable terms, said trustees, if sufficient funds have accumulated in the sinking fund provided therefor, shall pay, purchase or redeem said bonds or notes and cancel them. In no case shall bonds or notes so paid, purchased or redeemed, and cancelled, be reissued.

Sec. 6. Assessment of taxes authorized to meet indebtedness; how collected; procedure. The trustees of the "Town of Benton School District" shall determine what sum is required each year for sinking fund payments, or if the bonds or notes authorized by this act shall be issued to mature serially, what sum is required each year to meet the bonds and notes falling due, and what sum is required each year to meet the interest on said bonds or other obligations, and what sum is required each year to meet other necessary expenses in the district, and shall each year, before the 20th day of February, issue their warrant in the same form as the warrant of the treasurer of the state for taxes, with proper changes, to the assessors of the town of Benton, requiring that they assess the total sum so determined upon the taxable polls and estates within said district and to commit their assessment to the constable or collector of said town of Benton, who shall have all authority and powers to collect said taxes as is vested by law to collect state, county and municipal taxes. On or before the 1st day of February of the fiscal year in which said tax is so levied, the treasurer of said town shall pay the amount of the tax so assessed against said district to the treasurer of said district. In case of a failure on the part of the treasurer of the town to pay said sum, or in case of his failure to pay any part thereof on or before said 1st day of February of the fiscal year in which the tax is levied, the treasurer of said district may issue his warrant for the amount of said tax, or so much thereof as shall then remain unpaid, to the sheriff of Kennebec county, requiring him to levy by distress and sale on real and personal property of any of the inhabitants of said district, and the sheriff or either or any of his deputies shall execute said warrant except as is otherwise provided herein. The same authority as is vested in county officials for the collection of county taxes, under the provisions of the revised statutes, is hereby vested in the trustees of said district in relation to the collection of taxes within said district.

Sec. 7. Provisions for the termination of the board of trustees. At such

time as the school building or buildings and related athletic and recreational facilities shall have been completed, equipped and occupied by pupils of said district, and the board of trustees of the district shall have discharged all of its principal obligations, and the property of said district shall be free and clear of all indebtedness, the board of trustees shall automatically cease to function and all of the duties, management, care and maintenance of the property of said district shall revert to the school board of the town of Benton, or such other board as may at that time have jurisdiction over similar school property, and the then president and treasurer of said district shall cause to be executed, signed and delivered a good and sufficient deed of all the property of said district to the town of Benton. All money, if any remaining in the treasury of said district at the time said trustees cease to function, shall be given to the town treasurer of the town of Benton. This money shall be used only for school purposes and shall be kept separate from all other money until authorized by the voters of the town of Benton to be expended for one or more of the purposes stated in this act.

Sec. 8. Authority to receive property from the town of Benton. The "Town of Benton School District" is hereby authorized to receive from the town of Benton, and said town of Benton is authorized to transfer and convey to said district, any property, real, personal or mixed, now or hereafter held by the town of Benton for school purposes, and any sums of money or other assets which said town of Benton has raised or may raise, either by taxation, borrowing or otherwise, for school purposes.

Sec. 9. Referendum. This act shall take effect 90 days after the adjournment of the legislature only for the purpose of permitting its submission to the legal voters of the territory embraced within the limits of said district, present and voting at a special election called and held for the purpose or at an annual municipal election held by the town of Benton. Such special election or annual municipal election shall be held not later than the next regular annual municipal election after the effective date of this act. In event a special election is called for the purpose, it shall be called, advertised and conducted according to the law relating to municipal elections; provided, however, that the board of registration of said town of Benton shall not be required to prepare for posting, or the town clerk to post, a new list of voters, and for the purpose of registration of voters, said board shall be in session the 3 secular days next preceding such special election, the 1st and 2nd days thereof to be devoted to registration of voters, and the 3rd day to enable the board to verify the corrections of such list

and to complete and close up their records of said sessions. The town clerk shall prepare the required ballots, on which he shall reduce the subject matter of this act to the following question: "Shall the Act to Incorporate the Town of Benton School District be accepted?" and the voters shall indicate by a suitable mark placed over the words "Yes" or "No" their opinion of the same. This act shall take effect for all the purposes thereof immediately upon its acceptance by a majority of the legal voters voting at said election. The result in said district shall be declared by the municipal officers of the town of Benton, and due certificate filed by the town clerk with the secretary of state.