

## **Correspondence with SAU and a Right to Know Request**

### **1. Fri, Dec 15, 2017**

Ms. Sherman

I do not live in your District (or anywhere near it) and I am unable to find an email address for SAU 55. As Chairman of the SAU 55 Board I wonder if you may be able to help me.

I'm aware of the 91-A cases that the SAU have been involved with and I have two questions:

1. What were the total legal costs (Superior court and Supreme Court) involved in the Green Case (2016)?

2. Similarly, for the Taylor case in 2017?

I hope you can assist me in this matter.

Thank you.

David Maudsley

### **2. December 30, 2017**

SAU 55  
Timberlane Regional School District  
30 Greenough Rd,  
Plaistow, NH 03865

Dear SAU 55 Chairman and Dr. Metzler:

Please provide me with:

1) The total legal costs (Superior court and Supreme Court) involved in the Green Case (2016) and/or all the legal invoices associated with this case.

2) The total legal costs (Superior court and Supreme Court) involved in the Taylor Case (2017) and/or all the legal invoices associated with this case.

Since my original request dated Dec 15 has been ignored by Mrs. Sherman, I would expect a timely response this time.

Since I am not able to visit your office, I enclose a check for \$15 to cover the cost of a flash drive plus postage with a request it be sent to the address given at the top of the page.

Please keep any overage or notify me if it is insufficient (hndassoc@aol.com).

Thank you.

David Maudsley

**3. Jan 8, 2018 10:10 am**

Dear Mr. Maudsley,

Please allow this email to serve as confirmation of receipt of your right-to-know request for legal costs/legal invoices pertaining to Green vs. SAU55 and Taylor vs. SAU55. Due to the extent of research and work associated with producing these items (manually going through two years of legal invoices, redactions necessary to maintain confidentiality of some of the information on the invoices, and review of invoices by legal prior to their release) it may take up to 30 days (or possibly longer) to fulfill this request.

Furthermore, the invoices you requested are not maintained in electronic format, thus hardcopies will be provided. I will hold onto your check dated 12/30/17 and numbered 2363, until I can provide you an estimated or exact cost.

Materials and/documentation produced to fulfill a Right to Know request shall be subject to a charge of \$.50 per page when hardcopies are provided. Hardcopies shall be picked up at the Superintendent's office during normal business hours. For materials that are requested in an electronic format and are maintained or available in electronic format (including but not limited to video recordings) requesters shall provide their own thumb drive (in original, sealed packaging only) or the District shall provide the thumb drive at the requester's expense. Electronic copies shall also be retrieved at the Superintendent's office during normal business hours.

Thank you.

Cathy Belcher

**4. Jan 12, 2017**

Ms Belcher

Your response to my request is quite astonishing, particularly the time line and the apparent need for redactions. Thirty days or more! As the lady once said to Richard Feynman, "Surely, you must be joking!"

It would be my contention that the information requested should and could have been provided in far less time than it took to compose your response to my request.

The first objection is that I had been given to understand that this information has already been compiled by your office and provided before. There is no reason why the same information cannot be immediately provided to me.

Second, I suspect that legal invoices have been provided to various parties in the past and should not need to be delayed due to redactions which have probably already been done. If that is still a problem and since legal invoices never contain any confidential attorney/client information I'll accept the total invoice obviating the need to do any redactions at all.

If that is still beyond your willingness or capabilities to distribute such information, let me make it even easier for you – give me a listing (from your accounting program, assuming, of course, that you are not using an abacus) of all amounts paid to your lawyers since the end of the 2015-2016, school year. Since lawyers bill monthly, it is probably no more than 30 lines and should be available all on a single sheet.

Whichever is most convenient for you.

Regard this as a formal RSA 91-A request - with the clock ticking.

Your resistance to providing such simple, basic information (TWO numbers is all I originally requested) is being noted with rising concern.

David V. Maudsley

**5. Jan 18, 2018**

Dear Mr. Maudsley,

We are in receipt of your email dated January 12, 2018. However, clarification is needed in order for us to process, what appears to be, a new request for information.

Does this latest request for copies of accounting reports indicating all amounts paid to district legal counsel serve to replace your original request for copies of legal invoices specific to Green v SAU55 and Taylor v SAU55?

Your prompt and concise response is very much appreciated.

Materials and/documentation produced to fulfill a Right to Know request shall be subject to a charge of \$.50 per page when hardcopies are provided. Hardcopies shall be picked up at the Superintendent's office during normal business hours. For materials that are requested in an electronic format and are maintained or available in electronic format (including but not limited to video

recordings) requesters shall provide their own thumb drive (in original, sealed packaging only) or the District shall provide the thumb drive at the requester's expense. Electronic copies shall also be retrieved at the Superintendent's office during normal business hours.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Cathy Belcher

**6. Jan 18, 2018**

Ms Belcher

Inclusion of the phrase : "Whichever is most convenient for you." was intended to speedup the procedure - clearly that was to no avail.

So - please give me a listing (presumably from your accounting program) of all amounts paid to your lawyers since the end of the 2015-2016, school year. Since lawyers bill monthly, it is probably no more than 30 lines and should be available all on a single sheet.

Do let me know if that is not now clear enough.

David V. Maudsley

**7. Thu, Jan 25, 2018**

Dear Mr. Maudsley,

This email serves as notification that the items you requested under RSA 91-A (listing of all amounts paid to lawyers since the end of the 2015-2016 school year dated and received on January 18, 2018) are available for pick up or inspection at the Superintendent's Office.

The information you requested is not available in the exact format you requested as that listing (a single sheet generated from our accounting system) does not exist. What does exist, and meets the criteria for the information sought, are hardcopies of existing voucher detail reports. We do not have an electronic version of these reports; they are printed and filed as hardcopies.

Materials and/documentation produced to fulfill a Right to Know request shall be subject to a charge of \$.50 per page when hardcopies are provided. Hardcopies shall be picked up at the Superintendent's office during normal business hours. For materials that are requested in an electronic format and are maintained or available in electronic format (including but not limited to video recordings) requesters shall provide their own thumb drive (in original, sealed packaging only) or the District shall provide the thumb drive at the requester's expense. Electronic copies shall also be retrieved at the Superintendent's office

during normal business hours. There is no charge associated with inspecting the documents.

Your requested information consists of a total of 16 pages, thus your total is \$8.00. Your check dated 12/30. 17 and numbered 2363 for \$15.00 is on file. We are happy to provide a refund of \$7.00 when you pick up the materials or a refund in full should you choose to only inspect the documents. Kindly note our business hours of Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. Our office is located at 30 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH.

It is the district's position that your right-to-know request has been fulfilled.

Thank you,

Cathy Belcher

**8. Jan 30, 2018**

Ms Belcher

Progress.

I do not live anywhere near Plaistow and quite unable to visit your office during your normal hours of business. Given these circumstances would it be possible for you to mail the information to me? I have already sent you a check which should cover the cost of postage.

Thank you.

David Maudsley

**9. Feb 2, 2018**

Dear Mr. Maudsley,

Please click the link below to access SAU55's procedure on Right-to-Know requests.

<http://www.timberlane.net/sau/files/RIGHT-TO-KNOW-REQUESTS-v4.pdf>

As indicated in my last email, your check dated 12/30/17 and numbered 2363 for \$15.00 is on file. We are happy to provide a refund of \$7.00 when you pick up the materials or a refund in full should you choose to only inspect the documents.

It is the district's position that your right-to-know request has been fulfilled.

Thank you,  
Cathy Belcher

**10. Feb 12, 2018**

Ms Belcher

Part of the objective of RSA 91-A , it so states, is to ensure "the greatest possible access" to municipal records. Given my inability to visit your office during your normal hours, your refusal to mail or email the information requested is , in today's world, unbelievably obstructive.

I will arrange for someone to pick up copies of the information requested. Please have the refund available.

David V. Maudsley

**Note added – I arranged for the items to be picked up but on a visit to the office on February 15<sup>th</sup> during office hours neither the items requested nor the refund were available.**