**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE – FACILITIES/FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE**

**April 5, 2016**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law requires minutes for all school committee and subcommittee meetings.  The recorded minutes are open to the public for inspection within 10 days of the meeting. Minutes recorded provide a brief overview that reflects the subject matter discussed and any decisions made.  If any motions are made clearly state the motion and indicate who made the motion and who seconded the motion.  Record who was in favor, opposed, or abstained.  The names of any person(s) appearing before the committee are to be indicated.

**Date:**  Tuesday, April 5, 2016 **Time:** 6:00p.m. **Place:** Mohawk Principal’s Conference Room

**Subommittee Members in Attendance:** Martha Thurber and Lark Thwing

**Committee Members Not in Attendance:**  John Payne

**School Committee Members in Attendance:**  None

**School Administration:** None

**Others in Attendance:**  None

**Documents:** March 23, 2016DraftMinutes Facilities/Finance Subcommittee

**Call to Order:** Lark Thwing called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Minutes:** On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by Lark Thwing, the BEST Finance/Facilities Subcommittee voted to approve the minutes from the March 23, 2016 meeting.

**Citizen Comments:** None

**Review Consolidation Scenarios**

The Subcommittee reviewed five options for potential reorganization of the District with an eye toward assessing which were worthy of further, in-depth financial analysis. These included:

OPTION A

- Retain PK-3 (or PK-1, or Pre-K-2) at all of the existing elementary schools

- Move the remaining elementary grades to BSE

- Move all grade 6 to Mohawk to become part of the middle school

- Work with towns to re-purpose available space in elementary schools (not including BSE)

The sense of the Subcommittee was that this option should be analyzed further.  The District Leadership Team (DLT) will be asked to provide input on the most appropriate “division” of the elementary grades from an education perspective, as well as on the educational efficacy of combining 6th grade into the middle school.

OPTION B

- Retain PK only at Colrain and Heath (with parents responsible for transportation)

- Redistribute remainder of elementary students to BSE and Sanderson based on geography (which school is nearest), not town lines

- Move all grade 6 to Mohawk to become part of the middle school

- Work with Heath and Colrain to re-purpose available space in elementary schools

The sense of the Subcommittee was that this option should be analyzed further.  The Subcommittee also agreed the analysis should look at a variation that would keep one or more lower elementary grade(s) as well as pre-K at these two schools (essentially a combination of A & B), with DLT input as for Option A.

OPTION C

- Build new elementary school on Mohawk campus

- Move all PK-5 to new elementary school

- Integrate all grade 6 within the Mohawk middle school

- Work with towns to re-purpose available space in elementary schools

The sense of the Subcommittee was that this option should be analyzed further. However, the Subcommittee also noted that this option is encumbered by several key threshold issues, including:

1) The cost of building new facilities at Mohawk and the willingness of towns' and the MSBA to fund new construction;

2) The willingness of parents of pre-K and potentially other lower elementary grades to bring/bus their kids to Mohawk campus;

3) The willingness of MSBA to forego the “clawback” provisions of existing outstanding mortgage debt if school buildings no longer served any educational purpose.

OPTION D

- Deregionalize Elementary Schools

- Create 4 elementary school districts (BSE/ Colrain/ Sanderson/ Heath)

- Stay regionalized in grades 7-12

The sense of the Subcommittee was that this option did not warrant additional analysis.

OPTION E

- Invite Hawlemont into the District, with incentives to offset concerns about local control, such as

some form of hybrid school committee structure

- Retain PK only at Colrain and Heath (with parents responsible for transportation)

- Redistribute remainder of elementary students to BSE, Sanderson and Hawlemont based on geography, not town lines

- Move all grade 6 to Mohawk to become part of the middle school

- Work with Colrain and Heath to re-purpose available space in elementary schools

The sense of the Subcommittee was that this option should be analyzed further. However, as with Option C there are several threshold issues to address including:

1) whether DESE would allow "special treatment" for Hawley/Charlemont; and

2) the advantages to Mohawk of having another small elementary school in the District.

It was noted that all of the options to be further analyzed share common characteristics, including 1) bringing 6th grade students into the Mohawk middle school; 2) assigning elementary students to the (remaining) schools closest to their homes rather than simply by town lines (and requiring parents opting for intra-district choice to send their child to a different District school to provide transportation) and 3) working with towns with reduced or eliminated elementary schools to avoid the MSBA clawback and identify sources of funding for re-use opportunities.

**Review Information Meeting with MSBA**

Since both members of the Subcommittee who were present also attended the meeting with MSBA, this item was passed over.

**Discuss Initial Meeting of Massachusetts Rural District Superintendents**

Since both members of the Subcommittee who were present also attended the meeting with the rural Superintendents, this item was passed over.

**Review Mass. Association of School Superintendents List of Unfunded Mandates**

Since both members of the Subcommittee who were present had individually reviewed the list of unfunded mandates (distributed by Superintendent Buoniconti), this item was passed over.

**Report on Geographic Area of Franklin Tech School Students**

Ken Campbell will report on this item at an upcoming meeting.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by Lark Thwing, the Subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting at 6:55 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, April 14 at Sanderson (Ashfield) at time TBD.

Submitted By:

Martha Thurber