**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**MOHAWK’S BEST FACILITIES AND FINANCE SUBCOMMITTEE**

**June 1, 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:**  Wednesday, June 1, 2016 **Time:** 6:00p.m. **Place:** Superintendent’s Conference Room at Mohawk

**Committee Members in Attendance:** Martha Thurber, Lark Thwing; John Payne arrived at 6:30 pm.

Committee Members Not in Attendance:  None

**School Committee Members in Attendance:**  None

**School Administration:** Superintendent Michael Buoniconti and Business Manager Mike Kociela

**Others in Attendance:**  Lynn Kelsey [Buckland]

**Documents:**

June 1, 2016, Agenda

May 18, 2016 Draft Mohawk’s BEST Facilities & Finance Subcommittee Minutes

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

**Citizen Comment:** Citizen comments were encouraged throughout the meeting.

**Approve Minutes:** On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by Lark Thwing, the Committee approved the minutes from the May 18, 2016 meeting.

**Review Consolidation Scenarios:**

1. **Pre-Kindergarten in Heath Elementary School and Colrain Central School. Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 5 at Buckland-Shelburne Elementary School and Sanderson Academy. Grades 6-12 at Mohawk**
2. **Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 5 at all District Elementary Schools. All District Grades 6-8 at Buckland-Shelburne elementary School. Grades 9-12 at Mohawk**
3. **Heath leaves Mohawk Trail Regional School district and joins Hawlemont Regional School District at Pre-Kindergarten – 6th Grade. Grades 7-12 Stay at Mohawk**

Mike Kociela presented the Subcommittee with preliminary analyses of six different scenarios, including several that had not been previously reviewed. The Committee reviewed the scenarios in aggregate, comparing and contrasting pupil counts, classroom configurations and cost savings. The scenarios reviewed included:

Scenario #1 – All Elementary Schools retain Pre-K through Grade 2; Grades 3-5 at BSE only; all Grades 6-12 at Mohawk

Scenarios #2 – Pre-K only at Colrain and Heath; Grades pre-K through 5 at BSE and Sanderson only; all Grades 6-12 at Mohawk

Scenario #3 – Heath joins the Hawlemont District for Grades pre-K to 6 and becomes a 7-12 member of Mohawk; pre-K only at Colrain; pre-K through Grade 5 at BSE and Sanderson; all Grades 6-12 at Mohawk

Scenario #4 – Heath joins the Hawlemont District for Grades pre-K to 6 and becomes a 7-12 member of Mohawk; pre-K through Grade 2 only at Sanderson and Colrain; Grades 3 through 5 at BSE only; all Grades 6-12 at Mohawk

Scenario #5 – New Central Elementary Complex Constructed for all pre-K through Grade 5; all Grades 6-12 at existing Mohawk MS/HS

Scenario #6 – Pre-k through Grade 5 at Colrain, Heath and Sanderson; BSE pre-K through Grade 8 (all Grades 6 through 8 at BSE); all Grades 9-12 at Mohawk with available space used to accommodate various collegiate/vocational programs.

Given that 1) Option 6 would require BSE to accommodate 461 students, well beyond the school’s estimated maximum capacity of approximately 400, and the comparatively modest levels of savings produced (before accounting for necessary renovations), the subcommittee agreed not to analyze this option further.

Discussion then turned to the current status of Heath’s discussions, if any, with the Hawlemont District about joining that District. Martha Thurber noted she believed there was a meeting of the Heath Task Force on May 26at which this topic was to be discussed. Lynn Kelsey said she had been at that meeting, but that discussion had focused on the group’s dissatisfaction with not being included as a group in a discussion (following the May 18 BEST meeting) about personnel turnover at the Heath School and the concept of having Heath students attend Hawlemont. Lark Thwing said he would get in touch with Heath’s School Committee reps to find out the status/timing of any Heath – Hawlemont talks.

Martha Thurber noted that the BEST committee had asked her to email BOS and Finance Committee heads in Charlemont and Hawley to assess whether, given the level of community opposition expressed at the May 18 BEST meeting, there was any value in BEST’s assessing any scenarios involving Hawlemont’s joining the Mohawk District. She said two people had responded, both saying that while they felt any such scenario was unlikely to be acceptable to townspeople, they would like to see analysis of the financial impact. The subcommittee then discussed the problems likely to be associated with Hawlemont’s Grade 6, under any scenario. Michael Buoniconti noted that when all other (Mohawk District) 6th graders move to Mohawk MS, the students who remain at Hawlemont for Grade 6 likely will fall behind academically and need to catch up once they move to Mohawk in Grade 7. However, he expressed pessimism that Hawlemont would move its 6th grade to Mohawk, or that Charlemont and Hawley citizens would support a combining of the two Districts. After discussion, the subcommittee agreed not to pursue further any scenarios involving Hawlemont at present.

The subcommittee then discussed whether there would be potential transportation issues under Scenario 2. Superintendent Buoniconti noted that the District does not currently provide transportation for pre-K students and that parents bring their pre-K children somewhat long distances today, e.g., Plainfield residents bring their pre-K students to Ashfield/Sanderson.

In the absence of knowing Heath’s plans regarding Hawlemont, the subcommittee agreed that Mike Kociela should proceed with the “next level” of analysis for Scenarios #1 and #2 only. This would include making some assumptions about transportation logistics; including the operating costs for partially used buildings; and analyzing more deeply ongoing personnel costs. It was agreed that Mike Kociela would assume that the Mohawk District would pay the operating costs for partially closed buildings for 5 years while towns worked to find re-use options and renovate the space accordingly.

**Set next meeting Date and Agenda:**

The subcommittee set its next meeting date as Wednesday, June 8 at 9:00 a.m. at Mohawk.

**Adjournment:** On a motion by Martha Thurber, seconded by John Payne, the Subcommittee voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Submitted By: Martha Thurber

Next Meeting: June 8 at 9:00 a.m. at Mohawk