ROWE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ROWE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
December 3, 2014
MINUTES

Date: December 3, 2014
Time 5:00 p.m.
Place: Superintendent's Conference Room at Mohawk Trail Regional School

Members in Attendance: Lisa Danek Burke and Susie Zavotka

Members Not in Attendance: Lisa Miller

Also Present: The Mohawk Trail Regional School District Budget Subcommittee - (Robert Aeschback, Nina Martin-Anzuoni, Emily Robertson, Martha Thurber, Lark Thwing), Superintendent Michael Buoniconti, Business Administrator Michael Kociela, School Committee Secretary Judy Willis, and John Snyder (BSE Parent/Organizer BSE Flow)

Call to Order: Lisa Danek Burke called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m..

Lisa Danek Burke thanked the Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) Budget Subcommittee for inviting the Rowe School Committee to meet and discuss the potential of Rowe joining Mohawk at the 7-12 level. Lisa Danek Burke further addressed the Budget Committee stating that 7th-12th graders from Rowe have attended school here at Mohawk from the beginning. However, since the time that the Rowe School Committee refused to negotiate a shared expense agreement with Mohawk & Hawlemont and subsequently joined the Northern Berkshire School Union for superintendent services, the one re-occurring question from parents has been this: "Can we still send our students to Mohawk?". At the same time, the Rowe Voters are saying "we want to pay our fair share for our students at Mohawk". The State of Massachusetts financial formulas no longer benefit the Mohawk District with Rowe as a Non-Member and it makes sense to pursue changing the Regional Agreement to make Rowe a Mohawk Member Town Grades 7-12. The best way for Rowe to be involved in the education of it's Middle School/High School students is to be part of the District, part of the process, and part of the solutions. In closing, Lisa Danek Burke stated she believes the Rowe voters will consider and hopefully support this endeavor, and having Rowe part of the Mohawk District 7-12 is in the best interests of ALL OUR students.

Superintendent Buoniconti reviewed the documents reflecting the current Rowe tuition calculation and projected assessments if Rowe were to become a member of Mohawk at the Secondary Level. The Mohawk member town assessments would decrease and Rowe's assessment would be slightly higher than the current tuition level. Superintendent Buoniconti indicated that he'd like to see Rowe join Mohawk at the

Secondary Level rather than look at changing the tuition calculation. Rowe has always been a part of Mohawk at the Secondary Level and Superintendent Buoniconti would not like to raise all of the controversial issues that surfaced a couple of years ago. Lisa Danek Burke noted that the reasons for Rowe to leave the District no longer exist and it makes sense for Rowe to be at the table 7-12. Superintendent Buoniconti explained how the assessments are determined, using minimum contributions set by the state and the five-year rolling enrollment average to determine the splits on the above minimum amount. Mr. Aeschback indicated that he felt most of the Mohawk District towns would support allowing Rowe to join the Mohawk District. He also feels that most of the Mohawk District towns would also support changing the tuition calculation formula. Either of these changes will involve changing the MTRSD Regional Agreement. Superintendent Buoniconti suggested including an action item on next week's Mohawk School Committee meeting to invite Rowe to join the Mohawk District at the Secondary level. The Rowe District would need to notify the Mohawk District that they are interested in joining Mohawk at the secondary level. At that point, the district would generate warrant articles that would need to be submitted to towns by March 1, 2015, to be included on the annual town meeting warrants. All eight towns would need to vote in favor of Rowe joining Mohawk at the secondary level as would the Town of Rowe. This would be a positive step with a sense of community building rather than a potential divisive situation that proposing changes to the tuition calculation in the Regional Agreement could create. Superintendent Buoniconti and/or Mike Kociela would attend a Rowe Special Town meeting if their presence is requested. Lisa Danek Burke felt that this type of warrant article should be included at the Rowe Annual Town meeting rather than at a special town meeting. Susie Zavotka asked if it was possible to have an informational meeting for Rowe citizens prior to asking them to vote to join Mohawk at the 7-12 level. Superintendent Buoniconti responded that he and Mike Kociela could certainly participate in an informational meeting in Rowe.

On a motion by Emily Robertson, seconded by Lark Thwing, the Budget Subcommittee unanimously **voted to ask the full committee to consider inviting Rowe to join the Mohawk Trail Regional School District at the secondary level**

Executive Session: None.

Adjourn: On a motion by Suzie Zavotka, seconded by Lisa Danek Burke, **the Rowe School Committee adjourned at 5:31 p.m.**

Next Meeting Monday December 22, 2014, 5:30 pm, Rowe Elementary School

Respectfully Submitted by Lisa Danek Burke Lisa Danek Burke

NOTE: Excerpts from the Minutes of the Mohawk Budget Subcommittee Meeting, 12/3/14, submitted by Judy Willis, School Committee Secretary, were used in compiling these Minutes.

Approved 12-22-14

EXHIBIT I

RECREATIONAL AND VOLUNTEERS ACTIVITIES RELEASE FORM

I, the undersigned (insert name), do hereby consent to my participation in voluntary or recreation programs of the Town/City of _____ (insert name of municipality).

I also agree to forever release the Town/City _____, and all their employees, agents, board members, volunteers and any and all individuals and organizations assisting or participating in any voluntary or recreation programs of the Town/City ("the Releasees") from any and all claims, rights of action and causes of action that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from personal injuries to myself or property damage resulting from my participation in the Town/City of _____ voluntary activities or recreation programs.

I also promise, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all legal claims and proceedings of any description that may have been asserted in the past, or may be asserted in the future, directly or indirectly, arising from personal injuries to myself or property damage resulting from participation in the Town/City of _____ voluntary activities or recreation programs.

I further affirm that I have read this Consent and Release Form and that I understand the contents of this Form. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to choose not to participate in said programs. By signing this Form, I affirm that I have decided to participate in the Town/City as a volunteer or in its recreation programs with full knowledge that the Releasees will not be liable to anyone for personal injuries and property damage that I may suffer in voluntary activities Town/City or recreation programs.

Participant Signature:

_____

Date:

_____