

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School – Library
November 7, 2018 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Farrell - Chair
Jay Paterson – Vice Chair
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins – Clerk – departed at 8:23 p.m.
Chris Hull
Victoria Pompei

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Scott Griggs, Principal
Jennifer W. Nye, Principal
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director – departed at 6:36 p.m.
Donald McMahon, Co-Director of Special Services
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech Michele Braun Pat McAskill Dottye Ricks

1. Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair, Mrs. Farrell, called the Wednesday, November 7, 2018, Regular meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., which was held at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library. The flag salute followed.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 10.1 Employment of Employees (under Executive Session)

3. Visitors and Communications

None. Ms. Ricks may be offering input under Agenda Item 6.1 Act 46

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. Approval of Minutes – October 17, 2018 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the October 17, 2018 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Friends of the Winooski Presentation

A document titled ‘Preliminary Design Proposed - Stormwater Improvements – Barre Town Elementary School’ (dated 09/27/17) was distributed. Michele Braun from Friends of the Winooski addressed the Board providing an overview of the preliminary design proposal. Ms. Braun provided historical information relating to the proposed project. The design was funded by a grant in response to a Storm Water Master Plan from Barre City. There are approximately 20 issues that need to be addressed to help fix the issue. A grant funded study identified the installation of a bio-infiltration basin on BTMES property as the most effective way to address stormwater run-off from BTMES property. The design allows for water to slowly seep into the ground. Grant funds were used to cover the cost of the preliminary design. The design presented this evening is 30% complete. Grant funding is available to cover the costs associated with a design that is 100% complete. Before proceeding with a complete design, Ms. Braun is requesting a commitment from the Board that they are willing to go ahead with the project. It was noted that the proposed improvements would entail creation of an open area with grass that could be fenced in. The design does not include the creation of a ‘pond’. Ms. Braun advised regarding legislation that will most likely mandate that storm water run-off is addressed. Ms. Braun addressed questions and concerns raised by the Board, including; student safety, removal of trees, town zoning and permitting requirements (including notification to neighboring property owners), anticipated maintenance and longevity of the improvement, the possibility of an increase in mosquitoes, input from VSBIT, and cost. Ms. Braun advised that the project would be grant funded, with no cost to BTMES. Ms. Braun advised that two other projects are proposed for adjoining land (the recreation area and the back of the cemetery). The Selectmen and Town Manager are aware of the projects. Ms. Braun advised that should the Board approve moving forward, a final design will be presented once it is 90% complete. There is a similar project (that can be viewed) at the base of the Norwich Ski Area. Mr. Evans recommends moving forward with this project, which will be 100% grant funded, rather than delaying it and having to complete it under a State mandate.

On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to continue moving forward with the project, with consideration of what has been discussed.

5.2 Presentation of Budget Draft #1

Eight documents were distributed; BTMES FY20 Budget Considerations (11/07/18), 'Estimated per pupil spending based on info. from FY19', BTMES Budget Draft #1 (11/06/18), BSU FY20 Budget Considerations (11/01/18), FY20 BSU Assessment Information (Draft #1 – 11/01/18), BSU FY20 Budget Draft #1 (11/01/18), the BSU Special Education Assessment document, and the BSU District and SU Unaudited Fund Balances June 30, 2018 Report (dated 11/07/18).

Mrs. Perreault began the discussion with an overview of the BTMES FY20 Budget Considerations document, advising of fund balances (General, Tax Stabilization, and Capital Improvement funds), Equalized Pupil data (from December 2018), Child Counts from December 2017, and FY19 Per Pupil Spending (BTMES is \$12,591). Information that is pending includes; Equalized Pupil Counts (should be received in early December), transportation aid, Commissioner announced yield/rate, and the CLA. Salary and benefit increases will be dependent on the outcome of negotiations. It is known that health insurance (the Gold Plan) will be increasing 11.8%. Additional increases include the previously discussed; addition of 1 FTE Literacy Interventionist, a School Resource Officer, 1 FTE Technology Integrationist, 2 FTE Regular Education Para-Educators, 1 FTE Clerical Position, Substitute Benefits, the increase for Building Maintenance, snow plowing, student lunch bills, and the VSTRS Assessment. It was noted that the Transportation increase (for field trips) should be added to the document. Additionally, Mr. Evans advised that the Board may wish to add in the possible work to the front canopy (\$150,000). Discussion was held regarding the addition of an SRO, including \$25,000 funding from the Town and a decrease to the line item if a COPS Grant is received. The COPS Grant is a 3-year phase out grant. Mr. Hull feels the budget should not be discussed until after the State Board of Education issues its decision on Act 46. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins doesn't want any items moved to the BSU Budget, and does not want to hold discussion on moving items to the BSU Budget until after the State Board of Education's decision. Mrs. Perreault advised that the Unified Chart of Accounts will break out expenses by school (except for SPED and Transportation, which will have to be broken out differently). Mrs. Perreault advised that the new SPED reimbursement formula is anticipated to decrease the overall BSU SPED revenue by \$184,473. Mrs. Perreault advised that using FY19 Equalized Pupil Counts, the proposed draft budget results in a 10.9% budget increase (over FY19). Under the proposed draft budget, per pupil spending is \$13,954.

Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the BSU Budget Considerations document, including; an increase in the Communications line item, the Act 166 Coordinator position, and the possible lease of 2 Suburbans (to supplement STA transportation).

Mrs. Perreault advised regarding how assessments will be made for Special Education and other BSU expenses, and advised that the new reimbursement formula for Special Education will likely result in an estimated loss in revenue amounting to approximately \$86,000 (BTMES only). Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of ongoing initiatives that SPED Directors are working on. Mr. McMahon advised regarding the addition of a counselor to reduce dependence/usage of contracted services, and advised that SPED caseloads vary based on student needs. A review of caseloads has identified some inconsistencies. Mr. McMahon is working to make plans as effective and efficient as possible. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the estimated cost per pupil (\$13,953), advising that it was calculated using equalized pupil numbers from FY19.

Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the BSU Assessment Information document. Lengthy discussion was held regarding the 'breakdown' of BSU District-wide Assessments for SHS and CVCC. The 32% Assessment for SHS needs to be broken down (split between SHS and CVCC) for budgeting purposes. The amounts listed for SHS and CVCC total \$944,104 (the same amount that is assessed to BTMES for its 32% of the total District Wide Assessments). CVCC pays 'rent' to SHS and is also assessed a portion of Spaulding's District Wide Assessments. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the calculations used for the BSU Special Education Assessment. Mr. Paterson reiterated that as the BSU Budget grows, the BSU Finance Committee will have more work to do.

Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the BSU District and SU Unaudited Fund Balances, noting that there has been a change in the BTMES General Fund Balance. The General Fund Balance is now \$597,188, of which \$100,000 is reserved for FY19. This change brings the total difference between the BCEMS and BTMES fund balances to approximately \$67,000.

The Board did not have any 'direction' to share with Administrators or the Business Manager. Mr. Pandolfo advised that budget overviews will occur at the Tri-Board Meeting.

5.3 Revisit Board Goals

A document titled 'Developing School Board Goals' was distributed. Mrs. Farrell provided an overview of the document she created for presentation to the Board, advising of her goal to have the Board oversee overall activity at the school while staying within Statute, to see that the school is well run. Mrs. Farrell requested comments and questions from the Board, asking if Board Members had any additions or enhancements to the document. Mrs. Pompei advised that she believed the 13 goals identified at earlier meetings, were to be the topic of discussion. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins believes work on Board Goals should be put on hold until a final decision is made on Act 46. Mrs. Farrell advised that regardless of the outcome of Act 46, even if a merger is forced, the Board is responsible for continuing its work. Discussion of Board Goals was tabled.

6. Old Business

6.1 Act 46

Mr. Hull believes that since the deadline for submitting a Section 9 Proposal has passed, the Board's options are limited, but he feels it would be beneficial to submit a letter to the State Board of Education. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins believes that public sentiment and voting may be considered during the State Board of Education's decision making process. Because of student counts, Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins does not agree with Barre Town / Barre City being in the 'Traditional Union High School Districts' category in the Decision Points document. Mr. Hull reiterated his belief that BTMES is doing a lot to comply with the law and feels that BTMES is run efficiently. After brief discussion, it was agreed that it is premature to hold discussion regarding how to proceed if the State forces a merger. The State Board of Education is holding a meeting at the Barre Elks Club on Thursday, November 15, 2018. The meeting begins at 8:30 a.m., with public comment being heard at 8:45 a.m. Public comment will be heard for 60 minutes. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the Agenda for the meeting and advised that all information is available on the Agency of Education's web site. The Board agreed that they should draft a letter to the State Board of Education. The letter will be submitted prior to the meeting. Mrs. Pompei shared ideas she has drafted (a copy will be e-mailed to Mrs. Farrell). It was agreed that the letter should be short and contain bullet points. Board Members shared their ideas with Mrs. Farrell, who will draft the letter. Mr. Pandolfo cautioned that the letter can be drafted and shared electronically for a 'thumbs up/thumbs down', but that it will be a violation of Open Meeting Laws for the Board to be 'discussing' the letter via e-mail. If additional 'discussion' is necessary, the Board will need to hold an open meeting in which to hold their discussion. Ms. Ricks agrees that a letter should be sent to the State. Ms. Ricks was advised that comments from community members will be allowed at the State Board of Education's meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to draft a letter to the State Board of Education regarding the Board's position on Act 46.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that decisions made by the State Board of Education (regarding mergers) have been provisional. No decisions are final until the State's Final Plan is released. No official action can be taken until the Final Plan has been released. There will be an opportunity for further discussion at the Tri-Board Meeting, which will be held on 11/15/18.

7. Board Reports

7.1. Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's Report dated October 26, 2018 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; the Barre Education Coalition, Administrative Evaluations, Health Insurance, Volunteer Record Checks, and Act 46 (including the revised web site). Mr. Pandolfo advised that a Tri-Board Meeting would be held on Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. This meeting will also include a meeting of the BSU Board. Agenda Items include; the BSU Budget, possibly other budgets, and Act 46. Two additional documents were distributed; Barre Town 2018 Bill Grand List Parcel Reports (for parcels 006/.36.00 and 006/036.01). Mr. Pandolfo highlighted the Grand List Parcel Reports that document the land transfer and values. These documents are the final closure on the land transfer item.

7.2 Principals Report

The BTMES Administration Report for November 7, 2018 was distributed. The Report contained information on Behavior Data, Crops by Kids Garden, Enrollment Report (a copy of the November Report was distributed), the Holiday Gift Drive, Luncheons, the new digital 'Note Home', Professional Learning Groups, Report Cards (were sent home 11/02/18), Staff Development Day (11/12/18), and upcoming events. The Thanksgiving vacation will run from Wednesday, 11/21/18 through Friday, 11/23/18. Mrs. Nye circulated a document on the Barre Community Writing Contest and advised of several winners from BTMES. Mrs. Nye and Mr. Griggs reported that the cafeteria dishwasher that has been out of service for 2 to 3 weeks, and advised regarding the use and cost of disposable trays and silverware and acquisition of a part that was purchased to fix the problem. Parents were reminded to pay outstanding cafeteria bills. Water testing (14 samples) was conducted and all appears to be fine. The Monthly Enrollment Report and November Newsletter were distributed. Mr. Griggs advised of the Youth Environmental Summit. A document titled 'BSU Elementary and Middle School Professional Development Plan 11/12' was distributed. A brief overview was given on the Professional Development planned for November 12, 2018.

7.3 Committee Reports

7.3.1 Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee –

The Committee has not met recently. The next meeting date is to be determined.

7.3.2 Verbal Reports of BSU Committees

Minutes from all BSU Committee meetings were previously sent to all Board Members.

BSU Curriculum Committee -

The Committee met on October 29, 2018. Discussion included; updates on A.L.I.C.E. Training/Implementation, a report on Professional Development, and distribution of the Elementary and Middle School Report Card Guide.

BSU Policy Committee -

The next meeting is Monday, November 19, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU 2nd Floor Conference Room

BSU Finance Committee -

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

BSU Facilities Committee -

The next meeting is Tuesday, November 20, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at BCEMS (location rotates).

BSU Communications Committee -

The next meeting of the Communications Committee is Thursday, November 8, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at the BSU Office.

7.4 Financials

The BTMES General Fund Expenditures Report and the BSU Expenditures FY-19 Report were distributed (both dated 11/01/18). It is too early in the year for FY19 year-end projections. No discussion was held.

8. Other Business

None.

9. Future Agenda Items and Upcoming Meetings

The Tri-Board Meeting is Thursday, November 15, 2018 at 6:00 p.m.

Board Members are encouraged to attend the CVCC Open House prior to the Tri-Board meeting.

Two BTMES Regular Board Meetings have been scheduled:

Wednesday, December 5, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTEMS Library.

Wednesday, December 19, 2018 meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

Agenda Items:

Revisit Goals

FY20 Budget

Act 46

Assessment Scores/Quality Review

10. Executive Session

10.1 Employment of Employees

Employment of Employees was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 8:42 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

On a motion by Mr. Hull, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin