

**REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**  
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School – Library  
January 3, 2018 – 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chad Allen - Chair  
Jay Paterson – Vice Chair  
Alice Farrell - Clerk  
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins – departed at 9:35 p.m.  
Kristin McCarthy

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

John Pandolfo, Superintendent  
Scott Griggs, Principal  
Jennifer W. Nye, Principal  
Donald McMahon, M. Ed., BSU Director of Special Services

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Video Vision Tech	Dave Delcore-Times Argus	Joanne Adams	Glenda Allen	Melissa Anderson
Heather Battistoni	Jen Beams	Sally Beebe	Krissy Bellavance	Annette Bisson-Rossi
Ainsley Burroughs	Mary Bowers	James Carpenter	Jack Carrier	Jackie Cassel
Amber Cheney	JoAnne Codling	Tamara Cooley	Jennifer Coté	Lauralea Curavoo
Scott Dolan	David Ferch	Nicole Fuller	Sarah Goodrich	Alison Grogan
Sarah Hill	Holly Hoyt	Jenny Hyslop	Katie Jarvis	Kelsey LaPerle
Anne Leeds	Abigail Lindhiem	Melissa Lindhiem	Shelby Lindley	Ano Lobb
Isaac Lobb	Cara Lovell	Margaret Mehuron	Diane Maurice-Brault	
Pat MacAskill	Seth Marineau	M. L. McLaughlin	Ted Mills	Michael Pope
Sue Pratt	Merrin Rousseau	Tim Sanborn	Amy Scalabrini	Barbara Shipman
Lauren Singer	Heather Slayton	Diane Soloman	Megan Spaulding	Emily Thomas
Laura Thygesen	Jen Trombly	Jess Van Orman	Rachael Van Vliet	Brent White
Brittany Wood				

**1. Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance**

The Chair, Mr. Allen, called the Wednesday, January 3, 2018, Regular meeting to order at 6:00 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 6.6 Labor Relations Agreement

**3. Visitors and Communications**

Teacher Representative Anne Leeds addressed the Board and read a prepared statement on behalf of the Teacher Union Members. Teachers have been working without a contract for 6 months. Teachers urge the Negotiations Committee to meet again to work towards a contract settlement. Teachers wish to agree to a settlement that is fair to teachers and the community and urge the Negotiations Committee to work with the tools provided in the Fact Finding Study, and use the Fact Finding Report as a roadmap to a settlement. The teachers are committed to work with the Committee until a settlement is reached.

Mr. Paterson, representing the BSU Negotiations Committee, read from a prepared statement advising that the Negotiations Committee has been working towards reaching a reasonable settlement. Mr. Paterson advised that the Negotiations Committee has proposed meeting dates and have heard no response from Teacher Representatives, thus delaying a possible settlement. Additionally, Mr. Paterson advised that a 7 1/2 hour work day is not unreasonable, and that the wage proposal by Teacher Representatives is not sustainable. The Negotiations Committee offered a reasonable health care proposal, which has also been rejected by Teacher Representatives. The Negotiations Committee respectfully requests that the Teachers' Negotiation Team come back to the table for negotiations to reach a reasonable settlement.

Communications continued with multiple parents and staff members speaking against proposed budget cuts. Discussion centered mainly on elimination of the PSTL Program (Problem Solving Through Literacy), and cuts to the Band and Spanish Programs. All who spoke supported continuation of the programs which they feel are most beneficial to students, and urged the Board not to make

the proposed cuts. The Board was asked to look into other possible cuts should budget cuts be necessary. In response to a parent concern, Mr. Allen stressed that the proposed reductions were in no way related to negotiation tactics. Due to the projected tax increase resulting from a significant deficit in the State Education Fund, unfunded mandates, and reductions in grant funding, the Board felt that some budgetary reductions were necessary to help ease the tax burden. It was further clarified that the proposed budget reductions were introduced for discussion purposes and that no cuts have been finalized. The Board has not approved the draft budget. It was noted that BTMES has benefited from having one of the lowest cost per pupil rates in the state and that there are very few areas that can be cut without impacting students. It was also noted that reductions cannot be made to services that are legally required. The Board set an increase target of between 2% and 3%. The Board supports teachers and staff and values their contribution to the school. Brief discussion was held regarding the feasibility and financial benefits of reducing student days from 180 to 175. A change in the number of student days has contractual implications and financial benefits would need additional research prior to numbers being provided. It was noted that \$25,000 was added to the budget draft to support field trips, though perhaps the number could be reduced. It was noted that field trips are beneficial to all students. Brief discussion was held regarding the recent BSU Board approval to create a Communications Specialist Position at the Supervisory Union. Many felt that the position is not warranted at this time. It was noted that funding of the Communications Specialist does involve monies from other line items, so not all of the cost is new. Brief discussion was held regarding the reduction of one Special Education Director position, and how the Board envisions the new model will work. It was noted that legislation requires that Special Education be consolidated at the Supervisory Union level. Administrators thanked community members for attending the meeting, participating in the budget process, and voicing their concerns. Administrators advised that due to the projected sizable tax increase, the Board asked them to review the budget and reduce it by \$300,000. Administrators were charged with the difficult task of reviewing the budget line by line and proposing reductions. Administrators understand that there is an impact from removing the PSTL Class, but felt that it would be possible, with advance preparation, to maximize other Enrichment Programs to reach accelerated learners. It was felt that Band students would continue to be served, and that with Spanish continuing to be held for grades 6 -8 and at the high school, the impact to students would be minimal. It was noted that the Math Interventionist position was filled for the first time this year, and reducing it to .50 FTE would allow for a refocus on grades 7 and 8, while utilizing the Math Lab to serve other grades. In response to a query regarding the need for a Facilities Director, it was noted that BTMES used to have a full time Facilities Director, and now shares one Facilities Director with the other district schools. In response to a query regarding the need for a Human Resources Coordinator, it was noted that the BSU employs over 500 individuals, thus the need. The Board expressed concern that there is very little community or parental attendance/involvement at Board meetings. The Board is concerned that if the budget is too high it won't pass. The Board is working to provide students with the best possible education, while being mindful of tax payers, which includes many who are on fixed incomes. It will be a huge undertaking to educate the community regarding this difficult budget year. Mr. Allen encouraged community members to stay in touch throughout the budget process.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

##### **4.1. Approval of Minutes – December 20, 2017 Regular Meeting**

**On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to approve, as amended, the Minutes of the December 20, 2017 Regular Meeting.**

#### **5. New Business**

##### **5.1 Tuition Rate**

A revised version of the document titled 'FY19 Announced Tuition' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the document was revised to reflect a different tuition rate for the Central Vermont Career Center. Mr. Pandolfo advised of the proposed BTMES tuition rates of \$11,021 for students in grades K-6, and \$11,021 for grades 7 and 8.

**On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously voted to approve the annual tuition rates as proposed (K-6 \$11,021 and 7/8 \$11,021).**

#### **6. Old Business**

##### **6.1 Budget Development**

Mr. Allen advised that the budget needs to be approved by the Board at their next meeting (01/17/18). The budget needs to be approved in time to allow for legal warning to voters. All questions and comments should be e-mailed to Erica Pearson. In response to a query regarding guidance from the Board (regarding budget adjustments), Mr. Allen advised that he would like the PSTL (Problem Solving Through Literacy) Program added back to the budget. Mrs. McCarthy advised she would like the proposed reductions to PSTL, Band, and Spanish Programs, added back into the budget. Additionally, Mrs. McCarthy asked Administrators to look into reductions to sports programs, possibly for supplies (but no reductions for coaches). Mrs. McCarthy advised that she is opposed to hiring a Communications Specialist at the SU level. Mr. Paterson would like to keep Field Trips and Athletics in the budget and queried regarding reductions to staff where student counts allow. Mrs. Nye advised regarding the anticipated staffing needs report. Mr. Paterson acknowledged that the budget may need to be increased some, but he prefers that it remain as low as possible. In response to a query, it was noted that Band instruction does not take the entire day, and that band instruction would remain mostly the same with the proposed .20 FTE reduction. Mrs. Farrell advised that it is very difficult finding a balance between providing students with the best possible education, and meeting the needs of tax payers. Mrs. Farrell is concerned regarding tax payers that are on fixed incomes, and cautioned that the opinions heard this evening are from parents but there are many tax payers

without children in the school, who may feel very differently about the budget and its impact on their finances. Administrators will revisit the budget and develop a number of various scenarios to present at the next meeting (including removal of Field Trips, or a portion of that line item).

### **6.1.1 VSBA Video**

The Board watched a VSBA Vermont Education Funding System video created by Spaulding High School Students Kat Norwood and Jeff Steinman.

### **6.2 Board Communications**

Mr. Pandolfo reiterated that the Board will need to present the budget to the Barre Town Select Board. The Select Board usually meets on Tuesday night. Mr. Allen will contact Town Manager, Carl Rogers, to schedule the presentation (02/06/18 or 02/13/18).

### **6.3 Proficiency-Based Learning (prior to February Presentation)**

A rather lengthy presentation is being prepared for the 02/07/18 Board Meeting. It was noted that Jackie Ramsey-Tolman (Curriculum Director), is unable to attend that meeting. The presentation may be postponed until the 02/21/18 meeting. A pre-report card letter is being drafted. The letter will contain information regarding Proficiency Based Grading, and is intended to be sent to parents in advance of report card distribution.

### **6.4 Act 46**

Letters from individuals interested in serving on the 706 Study Committee were distributed. Letters of interest were received from Marcia Biondolillo, Jeff Blow, Guy Isabelle, Michaela Martin, and Kim Whitcomb. There are 5 community members interested in serving on the Committee. To date, Barre City has 4 interested candidates. One BTMES Board Member is required to serve on the Committee. After brief discussion, Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins agreed to represent the BTMES Board.

**On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins to represent the BTMES Board on the Act 46 706 Study Committee.**

Mr. Pandolfo advised that the 706 Study Committee requires equal representation from both the City and the Town and advised that the BCEMS Board is trying to recruit a 5<sup>th</sup> interested individual. The BCEMS Board meets on Monday, January 8, 2018. It was recommended that the BTMES Board appoint the five interested candidates, with finalization of Committee Representatives to be made after the BCEMS Board meeting.

**On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Marcia Biondolillo, Jeff Blow, Guy Isabelle, Michaela Martin, and Kim Whitcomb as Barre Town Representatives to the 706 Study Committee, with finalization of appointments based on the outcome of the BCEMS Board Meeting.**

### **6.5 Open Board Seats**

A document titled 'BT Board Seats for March 2018' was distributed. There will be three open Board seats for the BTMES Board (one 1-year seat, one 2-year seat, and one 3-year seat). Mr. Allen and Mrs. McCarthy will not be running for re-election.

Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins was advised that should she wish to remain on the Board, she should file a petition with the Town Clerk, so that her name can be placed on the ballot. Petitions require the signatures of 30 registered Barre Town voters and must be submitted to the Town Clerk prior to the deadline. Petitions need to indicate which of the three open seats the candidate is running for. Mr. Allen provided a brief overview of the time commitment, number of meetings, and work that Board membership entails. Mr. Allen encouraged community members to run for Board seats.

### **6.6 Labor Relations Agreement**

Screen prints from a Power Point Presentation titled 'Barre School Boards Update of Teacher Contract Negotiations' dated January 2018, was distributed. Mr. Paterson began the presentation with an overview of the Boards' negotiation goals, which included settlement prior to the 2017 – 2018 year, high quality education for students, fiscal responsibility for tax payers, and fair wages and affordable health care for teachers. Mr. Paterson provided an overview of the negotiations timeline which documents 11 Bargaining Sessions between 07/07/16 and 11/30/17. Regarding the goal to reach settlement before the 2017 - 2018 school year. Mr. Paterson advised that teachers rejected proposed stipulations regarding timeliness of negotiations and settlement. The lack of stipulations resulted in delays such that it took over 9 months to get through Fact Finding. Regarding the goal for high quality education, Mr. Paterson advised that teachers are rejecting the proposal to work a 7.5 hour day, though Spaulding High School and CVCC teachers work 7.5 hours per day and all other teachers in our region have workdays that exceed 7 hours. The presentation included documentation of workday length for teachers in other schools in the region. Mr. Paterson advised that community members (tax payers) do not believe a 7 hour work day is reasonable. Regarding the goals to show fiscal responsibility and provide a fair wage, Mr. Paterson advised that the Board proposal at Fact Finding (a 2% New Money wage increase) was rejected by teachers. It was noted that the current salary grid is not sustainable and the Board has continuously, throughout negotiations, stressed this issue, to no avail. Mr. Paterson presented slides which contained historical information of 'typical' employee increases (for three separate 'classes' of teachers) over a period of three academic years. The increases over a three year period total 18.5%, 16.2%, and 14.7%,

which calculates to a yearly average increase of 6.2%, 5.4%, and 4.9% respectively, while the CPI average was 1%. Mr. Paterson continued the presentation comparing recent Barre teacher settlements ('New Money') vs. inflation, which showed 4 year 'New Money' totals averaging 3.5% (including additional days), and 3.1% (excluding additional days), vs. a Calendar Year CPI average of 1.1%. A historical comparison (4 years) of 'New Money' (excluding additional days) vs. Vermont State Employee wage increases, showed an average 3.1% 'New Money' vs. 2.25% for State Employees. The presentation continued with a slide titled 'Vermont Teachers are NOT Underpaid!' reporting that according to an NEA report ('NEA Rankings & Estimates – 2017'), Vermont teachers ranked 4<sup>th</sup> of 51 states in salary changes for 2016 – 2017. The next slide advised that the teacher proposal for 4.5% 'New Money' would result in increases as high as 7.25%, while the amount recommended by the Fact Finder (2.9%) would result in increases as high as 5.6%, and the Boards' proposal of 2.0% 'New Money', results in increases as high as 4.7%. The teachers have rejected the proposal. The remainder of the presentation relates to health insurance. It was noted that there were minimal changes to health insurance coverage (under required new policies that went into effect 01/01/18), and that the only items being negotiated are Premium and Out of Pocket cost sharing. Mr. Paterson advised regarding the Vermont Legislative Targets from Act 85, where employees pay 20% of premiums, and Out of Pocket amounts range from \$400 to \$1,200. Teacher savings resulting from health insurance decreases range from \$500 for a Single Plan, to \$3,216+ for a Parent + 2 children policy. Total savings on health care is equivalent to more than 1.5% 'New Money' on wages.

## **7. Board Reports**

### **7.1. Superintendent**

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated December 27, 2017 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; Negotiations, Act 46, Director of Technology Search, Administrator Evaluations, and the BSU Budget. Mr. Pandolfo also distributed a copy of the December 2017 BSU Newsletter. There were no questions for the Superintendent.

### **7.2 Principals Report**

The BTMES Administration Report for January 3, 2018 was distributed. The Report contained information pertaining to; Monthly Enrollment (a copy of the Enrollment Report was also distributed), the David Stefaniak Holiday Food and Gift Drive, Fund Raisers, Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs Training, Andrew Trottier's selection for Legislative Page, Samantha Kelley (recently hired Pre-K Permanent Substitute), School Closings (01/15/18 and 01/22/18), and upcoming events. A copy of the January 2018 BTMES Newsletter was distributed. The community was reminded that school will be closed on 01/15/18 and 01/22/18. It was noted that school enrollment has increased by 2 students. The marking period ends on January 12, 2018. Report cards will be sent home the following Friday (01/19/18). The Pre-K programs are full. Parents and Community members were reminded of the 'Bakeless Bake Sale', with proceeds being used to fund field trips. Mr. Griggs announced that Andrew Trottier has been selected to serve as a Legislative Page.

### **7.3 Committee Reports**

#### **7.3.1 Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee –**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 21, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

The January meeting is being replaced by a Regular Board Meeting which will be held on Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

#### **7.3.2 Verbal Report of BSU Committees–**

Minutes of the BSU Committee Meetings were previously distributed. Mrs. Nye provided a brief overview of the highlights of the ESSA presentation, and advised regarding discussion to alter the structure of meeting agendas. The Committee agreed that a change in agenda structure is necessary to address deficiencies identified during curriculum presentations. The January 29, 2018 meeting will focus on Spaulding High School issues of Work Based Learning and Graduation Requirements. The February 2018 meeting topic is to be determined.

### **7.4 Financials**

Four documents were distributed; the BTMES FY Expenditures/Year-end Projection Report, the BTMES General Fund Revenue Report, the BTMES General Fund Expenditures Report, and a copy of the BSU FY18 Budget. The unaudited year-end projection shows a deficit of \$242,917.

## **8. Future Agenda Items and Upcoming Committee Meetings**

BTMES Finance/Facilities/Transportation Comm. – Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the BTMES Library **(to be warned as a Regular Board Meeting).**

BSU Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, January 18, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the SHS Library

BSU Policy Committee – Monday, January 22, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU 2nd Floor Conference Room (this date may change)

BSU Curriculum Committee – Monday, January 29, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

BTMES Regular Board Meeting – Wednesday, February 7, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library

**9. Approval of Warrants**

**On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Warrants.**

**10. Executive Session**

**10.1 Personnel**

**10.2 Labor Relations Agreements**

**10.3 Principal Evaluations**

**10.4 Superintendent Evaluation**

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include a Personnel Issue, Labor Relations Agreements, Principals Evaluations, and the Superintendent's Evaluation.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the items proposed for discussion would clearly place Barre Town Middle and Elementary School at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.**

**On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Paterson, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 9:38 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.**

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

**On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 10:41 p.m.**

**On a motion by Mrs. McCarthy, seconded by Mr. Paterson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Superintendent's recommendation to approve an extended leave for a staff member for the 2017 – 2018 school year.**

**11. Next Meeting Date**

BTMES Regular Board Meeting - Wednesday, January 17, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the BTMES Library (this meeting is taking place of the January Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee Meeting).

**12. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. McCarthy, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:43 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*