

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION #61 SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Spaulding High School - Library
November 16, 2017 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

J. Guy Isabelle (SHS) - Chair
Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – departed at 8:20 p.m., returned at 8:46 p.m.
Alice Farrell (BT) - Clerk
Chad Allen (BT)
Paul Malone (SHS)
Tyler Smith (BC) – arrived at 6:56 p.m.
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Anthony Folland (SHS)
Vacant Position

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Luke Aither, Assistant Principal (SHS)
Jason Derner, CVCC Assistant Director
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech Dave Delcore-Times Argus Joseph Aldsworth Tony Amaral – School Resource Officer

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Isabelle, called the Thursday, November 16, 2017, meeting to order at 6:04 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Delete 5.4 - VMERS Plans for AFSCME and Para-Educator Agreements – will be kept in as a place holder.
Add 5.5 Update of Superintendent and Administrator Evaluations
Add 9.2 Personnel Matter under Executive Session.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – October 19, 2017 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the October 19, 2017 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

A letter of resignation from Diane Stacy was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised regarding the resignation submitted by Technology Director Diane Stacy. Ms. Stacy is an employee who has given many years of dedicated service. Ms. Stacy will be retiring on December 31, 2017. The job opening has been posted and a number of applications have already been received. Mr. Pandolfo is currently in the process of defining a hiring process and committee. The Hiring Committee should include good representation from each of the district schools as well as the BSU.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to accept, with thanks for many years of service, and with much regret, the resignation of Diane Stacy. Mrs. Spaulding would like to show appreciation to this long term employee and would like to look into doing something for her.

Mr. Pandolfo advised the Board that BCEMS Elementary School Principal, and educator of 45 years, James Taffel, will be retiring at the end of FY18. Mr. Taffel has performed a commendable job over many years and will be greatly missed.

5.2 ALICE Training

A document titled 'ALICE A response to active, dynamic threats' was distributed. Mr. Aither, Mr. Derner, and Resource Officer Tony Amaral were in attendance at the meeting to report on the ALICE training they attended. ALICE is an acronym for Alert/Lockdown/Inform/Counter/Evade. Mr. Aither advised that he, Mr. Derner, and Officer Amaral attended training last spring, and are certified trainers of the program. The program deals with a number of different threats, including; active shooter, bomb threats, and fires. Mr. Aither provided a history of how the ALICE program came into being and stressed that this program is an 'options based response' program. Mr. Aither advised that he and the others who attended the training believe that the BSU should move forward with ALICE training of staff. Officer Amaral acknowledged that there are deficiencies in the current system, with some issues being addressed now, and some that would require additional training and changes to protocol. In response to a query regarding who should receive training, it was noted that staff training should be the first priority. Training of high school students would be the second wave of training. It is thought that elementary and middle school students, though too young for the ALICE program training, would benefit from a less intense training that involves use of a book designed for younger students. Training of younger students should be discussed at BCEMS and BTMES. It was noted that training is effective in dealing with issues in settings other than schools. In response to a query, Mr. Aither provided examples of different circumstances and events where ALICE training has proved to be beneficial. On-line training takes approximately 45 minutes to one hour to complete and has a cost of \$5 per person. 'In class' training, involving real life scenarios takes 2 to 3 hours, and usually involves training approximately 30 individuals. There is no fee for this type of training. At this time there are no specific designated areas for evacuees to flee to. Designated areas may be assigned, but may change based on circumstances of an event. The priority is safe evacuation. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that some upgrades are needed, specifically, more radios and a better intercom system. The ERT team can work with the current equipment. **On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Board unanimously voted to adopt the ALICE Program and authorized administrators and safety personnel to move forward and begin scheduling of training.** It was noted that parents need to be notified of the training and that there needs to be a good communication plan in place before the notification process begins. Mr. Derner reiterated the importance of empowering staff and students to take action during emergency situations.

5.3 Financial Management Questionnaire

A copy of the 'Financial Management Questionnaire' for the BSU was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the document and advised that completion of the Financial Management Questionnaire is required by statute. Mr. Pandolfo is requesting approval for the BSU Board Chair to sign the document.

On a motion by Mr. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Board Chair to sign the Financial Management Questionnaire.

~~5.4 VMERS Plans for AFSCME and Para-Educator Agreements~~

5.5 Update of Superintendent and Administrator Evaluations

Four documents were distributed; 'Superintendent Evaluation Process 2017-2018', 'Administrative Evaluation Process 11/16/17 Update', 'BSU Admin Evaluation Feedback Survey Distribution Lists Draft 11/16/17', and 'Performance Expectations from Superintendent Evaluation February 22, 2017'. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the documents and advised regarding various deadlines within the process. Mr. Pandolfo prefers that the Curriculum Director not be involved in the process, advising that his Executive Assistant will be able to assist. Mrs. Spaulding voiced concern that there is no student or parent input for evaluations for various staff, including teachers and the Athletic Director position. It was noted that there are many different processes and procedures for conducting evaluations. The evaluation process being implemented this year is in response to the expectation outlined in the February 2017 Superintendent evaluation.

6. Old Business

6.1 Budget Development

6.1.1 Budget Draft #1 Presentation

Three documents were distributed; 'BSU FY19 Budget Considerations – November 16, 2017', 'FY19 Barre Supervisory Union Assessment Information 11/16/17', and a copy of screen shots from a Power Point Presentation titled 'Barre Supervisory Union FY19 Budget Development DRAFT #1 – November 16, 2017'.

Mrs. Perreault advised that this year's budget presentation differs from those in the past, as it highlights the positive attributes of the Supervisory Union, rather than focusing solely on numbers. Mrs. Perreault began the presentation providing an overview of the FY19 budget goals and the District's Mission, followed by a brief overview of some of the District's attributes, including; the new BSU Newsletter with highlights from the Business Office, Curriculum Director, Special Services Director, Technology Director, Early Education Director, Human Services Director, and the Facilities Director. The presentation continued with an overview of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports, and Structural changes to district budgets (due to changes for Transportation and Special Education). Board Members were advised to review the additional hand-outs for detailed budget information. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the breakdown of assessments to each district school, including assessments based on actual cost and those based on child count. Transportation costs are assessed based on actual expenses minus state revenues. Mrs. Perreault advised that the draft budget reflects a total budget increase of 6.08% and cautioned that the draft budget does not include any wage increases. Mrs. Perreault advised the

Board of the newly mandated state-wide Financial Management System, and advised that the new position of Communications Specialist is included in the budget. Comparisons of Educational Spending for Equalized Pupils in Neighboring/Comparable Schools, Union High Schools, and Technical Centers, document that the district schools and CVCC continue to have one of the lowest costs per equalized pupil.

It was noted that the deficit in the State Education Fund (estimated at \$47,000,000) is projected to result in a 7 to 9 cent tax increase. This increase does not reflect increases that will result from budget increases. Mr. Malone reported that he was recently advised that the deficit is now projected to be \$80,000,000 and queried regarding how this much larger deficit will impact the tax rate. Mr. Pandolfo advised that it is too difficult to determine the impact at this time. Mrs. Spaulding expressed much frustration regarding the cost of Special Education and advised of her belief that Special Education costs are out of control and need to be made affordable without negatively impacting regular education. Mr. Malone echoed Mrs. Spaulding's frustration regarding Special Education costs. Mr. Pandolfo advised that frustration regarding Special Education spending is shared by Administration. It was noted that some cuts have been made to the Special Education portion of the budget, but are not reflected in draft 1. Lengthy discussion ensued regarding costs for Special Education, including; the possible need to perform a total restructure of special education instructional practices. Mrs. Farrell cautioned that changes to Special Education start with changes to IEPs and cannot be started by simply deciding to reduce expenses by a set number. Mrs. Farrell stressed that the Board and Administrators can't look at the money first, but rather have to look into how we educate Special Education students. Mrs. Farrell suggested that the process of revamping Special Education costs should begin with a review of current policies and procedures. Mr. Isabelle suggested that the Board consider 'standing up to the State' and advise that the BSU can no longer continue to operate in the current way. Mr. Malone advised that Mrs. Farrell has recently agreed to join the BSU Finance Committee.

6.2 Communications Specialist Position

A draft Communications Specialist job description was distributed. A letter from Ben Merrill (contracted services provider) was distributed, and samples of literature created by Mr. Merrill were circulated. Mr. Pandolfo requested input from the Board regarding the draft job position. This would be a new position, effective for FY19. Mr. Malone and Mrs. Spaulding advised that they believe the job description is more comprehensive than they thought was needed. Mr. Allen voiced concern regarding justification of this new position during such a difficult budget year. Mr. Allen questioned whether or not the position would be cost effective and suggested that perhaps some work could be outsourced. Mr. Pandolfo advised that he has been speaking with Ben Merrill regarding possible PR work for FY18. Board Members reviewed the literature that was being circulated. Mr. Pandolfo advised that FY18 work by Mr. Merrill could be financed by using the balance from the Contracted Services line item. Mr. Pandolfo advised that there may be legal requirements regarding information that must be conveyed to the public. Mr. Pandolfo will check on what the requirements are. Mr. Pandolfo advised that he needs to contact Mr. Merrill on Friday, November 17, 2017 regarding the BSU using his services.

6.3 Board Communications

Discussion was held under Agenda Item 6.2. There was no additional discussion.

6.4 Labor Relations Agreements

A copy of a document titled 'Interim Default Health Insurance Proposal: Barre Supervisory Union and Teachers' was distributed. Teachers agreed to the interim plan on 10/25/17. The Fact Finder Report is expected back on Monday, November 27, 2017 and Mr. Pandolfo expects that the Negotiations Committee will meet with Teacher Representatives on Thursday, November 30, 2017. This meeting will conflict with the BSU Finance Committee Meeting. The BSU Finance Committee Meeting will be tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, December 5, 2017. AFSCME representatives have advised that they are ready to begin FY19 negotiations.

7. Other Business as Needed

None.

8. Reports to the Board

8.1 Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated November 16, 2017 was distributed for review and discussion. The report included information pertaining to the Superintendent's Office, the Business Office, Curriculum, Special Services, Technology, Early Education, Human Resources, and Facilities. Three additional documents were distributed; 'Timeline for 2018 VEHI Health Insurance Plans Roll Out Revised 10/01/17', 'Original Timeline for 2018 VEHI Health Insurance Plans', and a copy of a memo (dated 11/07/17) from Secretary Rebecca Holcombe. The memo is in regard to the 'Statewide Longitudinal Data System, Update Fall 2017'. This memorandum refers to a new unfunded State mandate which requires the BSU system to be compatible with the State system. Mr. Pandolfo reported that the BCEMS and BTMES Boards have agreed to form a new 706 Study Committee. The Boards must now make decisions regarding a budget and committee structure. Each of the boards needs to send a formal notice (that they are forming a new 706 Committee) to the Agency of Education by 12/26/17. Mr. Malone queried regarding a shortage of substitute teachers. Possible solutions to reduce the shortage include changes to wages and hiring of more full time substitutes. It was noted that the automated substitute system (AESOP) is very beneficial, but that there are still adjustments that need to be made. There is an issue with finding substitutes for short periods of time, as teachers are now taking small amounts of leave (1 to 2 hours). Mrs. Spaulding voiced concern regarding open para-educator positions at BCMES, noting that it has been difficult to fill and retain para-educator

positions. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding SPED paperwork and determining if goals are being met. It was noted that Cohort 2 of the District Management Group Project will soon be discussing how to be more efficient in the delivery of Special Education services. Mr. Malone queried regarding failure of promethium boards. It was noted that this technology does have a planned lifecycle and that some of the promethium boards were installed many years ago which accounts for some of them reaching their life expectancy. A copy of a letter from Governor Scott (dated 11/14/17) was distributed. Board Members were encouraged to read the letter. A copy of a letter from David Van Deusen, Staff Representative for AFSCME Council 93 (dated 11/06/17) was also distributed.

8.2 Committee Reports

8.2.1 Policy Committee

Minutes from the October 16, 2017 meeting were distributed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 20, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Upstairs Conference Room.

It was noted that the Second and Final Reading of the BSU Travel Reimbursement Policy (E11) was omitted from tonight's meeting agenda. It will be added to the December meeting agenda. The Asset Capitalization Policy will be added to the agenda for the November meeting.

8.2.2 Curriculum Committee

Minutes from the October 23, 2017 meeting were distributed. It was noted that Brenda Waterhouse needs to be added to the list of attendees on the October 23, 2017 minutes.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 27, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

8.2.3 Finance Committee

Minutes from the October 26, 2017 meeting were distributed. There was no discussion.

The next BSU Finance Committee Meeting is tentatively scheduled for – Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the SHS Library.

8.2.4 Negotiations Committee

Minutes from the October 25, 2017 Fact Finding Meeting were distributed. There was no discussion.

8.3 Financials

The BSU FY17 Expenditures/Year-end Projection Report (dated 11/16/17) was distributed. There is an unaudited projected deficit of \$17,355. A copy of the BSU Budget for FY18 was also distributed. There was no discussion.

9. Executive Session as Needed

9.1 Labor Relations Agreements

9.2 Personnel Matter

A Personnel Matter was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 9:07 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. Malone, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 9:12 p.m.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to dismiss a Barre City Teacher.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin