

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION #61 SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Spaulding High School - Library
September 21, 2017 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

J. Guy Isabelle (SHS) - Chair
Alice Farrell (BT) - Clerk
Anthony Folland (SHS)
Paul Malone (SHS)
Tyler Smith (BC) – arrived at 7:21 p.m.
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – Vice Chair
Chad Allen (BT)
Jennifer Hutchinson (BT)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Isabelle, called the Thursday, September 21, 2017, meeting to order at 6:06 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 6.7 Tri-Board Meeting
Add 6.8 Act 46 Update

3. Public Comment

It was acknowledged that a former CVCC student was running the camera for Video Vision.
Chad Allen was acknowledged for his efforts in facilitating a well-balanced, informational Act 46 meeting at BTMES on 09/20/17.
Board Members and Staff were acknowledged for the time and effort they spend working on school business.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – August 17, 2017 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the August 17, 2017 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

There were no resignations, retirements or new hires presented.

5.2 Budget Development

Three documents were distributed; a memo from Lisa Perreault (dated 09/01/17) relating to ‘FY19 Budget Development Timeline’, the BSU Budget Development Schedule for FY 2019, and the BSU FY19 Budget Development Process document (flow chart). The process is currently on schedule. Mr. Pandolfo advised of the short memo from Mrs. Perreault, and highlighted the flow chart, which is new this year. Mr. Pandolfo cautioned that there are many unknown variables, including the withhold amount (resulting from H542), contract negotiations, benefits, and decreases in CFP funding. Mr. Pandolfo advised that all boards have received copies of the timeline and flow chart documents. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding Special Education and Transportation in the SU Budget, requesting that historical information be included for the next BSU Finance Committee meeting. Mrs. Spaulding will advise Mr. Pandolfo regarding the specifics of the information she is requesting. Discussion of the Self-Assessment form will be added to the next BSU Board Meeting. BSU Board Members will be reminded to complete the form based on the BSU Budget process, rather than the district board budget process, and will be asked to come to the meeting prepared to share their thoughts. It may also be helpful for the BSU Finance Committee to also complete the assessment form.

6. Old Business

6.1 Labor Relations Agreements

A document titled 'Vermont Education Health Initiative Health and Wellness Report' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that all district boards have been advised regarding the status of negotiations. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the Negotiations Committee and AFSCME Representatives reached a conceptual agreement, which has been put in written form and is being reviewed by AFSCME representatives. It is the expectation that the written form will be approved by AFSCME representatives, who will meet with Mr. Pandolfo in the near future to confirm a tentative agreement. The next step will be to present the agreement to employees for ratification. Mediation with Para-educators is slated for September 25, 2017. Teacher representatives have agreed to a Fact Finding meeting on October 25, 2017. Mr. Pandolfo advised that staff representatives were notified on 09/10/17 that they must meet as soon as possible regarding health care. The goal of the meeting would be to give as much information as possible so that enrollment choices can be made and the appropriate paperwork be completed. Given the number of employees in the SU, it will be a huge undertaking to have everyone enrolled for January 1, 2018. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the Vermont Education Health Initiative Health and Wellness Report, which shows that the BSU claims usage is a little above the average. It was reported that the Burlington School District did reach a settlement and are back in operation. Details of that settlement are not known. The trend line in settlements is change, with areas outside of salaries and benefits being discussed, e.g. working conditions and time spent on special duties. Mr. Pandolfo advised regarding his work on the Education Health Benefits Commission, including clarification received regarding expectations of the Committee; to move to a statewide cost share system, whether negotiated or legislated. Success of the Commission will be to accomplish its goal and submit a recommendation report by 11/15/17. The VEHI governance structure also needs to be reviewed.

6.2 Promotional Campaign Proposal

A Proposal from Tony Campos was distributed. Mrs. Farrell reported that she met with Mr. Campos and confirmed that the original proposal for \$5000 is for a planning phase only. After discussion with Mr. Campos, it was felt that the original proposal did not meet the community engagement goal. Mrs. Spaulding feels that more information is necessary prior to making a decision on how to move forward. 'Big picture' basics need to be identified. Lengthy discussion ensued including discussion of; how to start two way communication on items such as budgets and policy, use of existing camera time to engage the community, engagement to promote proactivity rather than reactivity, using small 'snippets' of promotional material, rather than one long production, gathering data to determine how many community members view the meeting videos, commitments to send letters to the editor and make Facebook posts, identifying community points of interest and areas that they wish to receive more information on, plan 'call-in' sessions to answer the public's questions, Board Member time constraints (given the time consuming tasks associated with budgets, Act 46, and negotiations), hiring of a communications specialist (to manage web sites, social media and other areas of communication), lack of updates to current web sites, gathering information regarding what website information is updated and who performs the updates, 'return on investment' and making the web sites more user friendly. Mr. Malone advised regarding his amazement that many community members attending the BTMES Act 46 public forum, expressed that they were uninformed. It was noted that much promotional work was done for the Act 46 Study Committee. Mr. Isabelle would like to add the hiring of a communications specialist to budget discussions. **It is the consensus of the Board that they are not ready to proceed with a promotional campaign until more information is gathered and a more informed decision can be made regarding goals and direction.**

Mrs. Spaulding expressed frustration regarding recent lapses in communication and provided two examples; the BCEMS web site did not advertise the Back to School Night, and she was not notified regarding the College Fair for SHS students.

6.3 Board Communications

Discussion took place as part of Agenda Item 6.2.

6.4 Second and Final Reading of Transportation Policy (F9)

Copies of the policies referenced in Agenda Items 6.4 through 6.6 were distributed. Mr. Malone queried regarding answers to specific questions posed at a recent meeting. Mr. Pandolfo advised that some of the concerns regarding routes and stops had been addressed by the BTMES Board, the Transportation Coordinator and STA Representatives. Additional research of concerns is being performed. It was noted that some families continue to have concerns regarding recent bus route/stop changes, some of which may be related to adjusting to changes. Mr. Malone expressed concern that the policy names the Superintendent as the final decision maker for bus routes/stops. Regarding specific standards for determining bus routes/stops, it was noted that due to many variables, including; student age, road conditions, state/federal transportation regulations, and other factors, a specific 'standard' does not exist and would be very difficult to create. In response to a query, it was noted that BTMES publishes bus routes on-line and at the school, as well as in a letter to parents that was mailed prior to the opening of school. The BCEMS process of notification could not be confirmed at the meeting. Mrs. Spaulding requested that communication relating to BCEMS transportation (routes/stops and bus driver name) be better communicated.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously agreed to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Transportation Policy (F9), with the stipulation that procedures will be well published within the community, and agreed to ratify said policy.

6.5 Second and Final Reading of Student Clubs & Activities Policy (F33)

On a motion by Mr. Folland, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously agreed to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Student Clubs & Activities Policy (F33), and agreed to ratify said policy.

6.6 Second and Final Reading of Community Use of School Facilities Policy (H3)

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously agreed to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Community Use of School Facilities Policy (H3), and agreed to ratify said policy.

6.7 Tri-Board Meeting

The Tri-Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library. A 'Save the Date' notification has been given to the district's 4 Legislative Representatives. The Board agreed to also invite their Vermont State Senators. The Board agreed that the meeting should be limited to 2 hours and the agenda should be confined to legislative topics unless discussion of labor relations is necessary. The Board agreed that questions should be given to Representatives prior to the meeting. Questions should be funneled through each board chair, who will then forward on to the Superintendent. Topics for discussion will include educational legislation concerns and Act 46. Mr. Malone has questions/concerns relating to; unfunded mandates, budgeting based on cost per pupil, Universal Pre-k, financing of the Education Fund, implications of Act 542, and Marijuana legislation. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she would like Special Education Assessments discussed at each November district board meeting (as part of draft 1 budget discussions).

6.8 Act 46 Update

Mr. Pandolfo reported on the BTMES public forum held on Wednesday, September 20, 2017 and advised that the BTMES Board needs to deliberate and come to a decision on how they wish to proceed. All three boards will need to make a decision on how they wish to proceed. If a new 706 Study Committee is not formed, each district will need to submit their case to the Secretary of Education by 12/26/17. If a 706 study committee is formed, there is a 14 month timeframe in which voting must occur. There are four Act 46 options for each board to consider: 1. Do nothing, 2. Present a case to stay 'as is' or as the originally submitted/approved plan, 3. Form a new study committee with BCEMS, and 4. Form a new study committee with BCEMS and any other interested district. At the Tri-Board Meeting, boards could vote to start a new 706 committee. Mr. Pandolfo advised that there is no grant money available for a consultant.

7. Other Business as Needed

None.

8. Reports to the Board

8.1 Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated September 21, 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. A document titled 'Timeline for 2018 VEHI Health Insurance Plans' was distributed. A document titled 'Summary of the Education Fund' was also distributed. Mr. Smith advised he was very pleased to see that report cards are now aligned. Mr. Pandolfo highlighted the VSBA/VSA joint conference on 10/19/17 and 10/20/17, advised that there were no training sessions on Wednesday, and encouraged Board Members to attend. VSBA dues of \$8226.60 is due. The increase in dues is due in part to Act 46 consolidation. Voting is now limited to 1 vote per Supervisory Union. The one vote per district has been eliminated. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the Cohort 2 of the District Management Group Project, advising that the BSU could join the cohort even though the SU isn't merged under Act 46. Mr. Pandolfo believes that the BSU would see a return on investment if they were to join. The cost would be approximately \$20,000, spread over 3 year. **On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to join Cohort 2 of the District Management Group Project.** Mr. Pandolfo advised of an approximate \$50,000,000 shortfall in the Education Fund, and provided an overview of the 'Summary of the Education Fund' document, advising that the end result will be a very difficult budget year for the SU. Additionally, Mr. Pandolfo advised that student/teacher ratios may be under scrutiny this year. SBAC results will be presented to the district boards at their October meetings. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the Health Insurance Timeline document and advised that the SU is very far behind in the enrollment process. This lag is due to the lack of a contract settlement.

8.2 Committee Reports

8.2.1 Policy Committee

Minutes from the August 21, 2017 meeting were distributed. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 16, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Upstairs Conference Room. Policies ratified by the BSU Board will be presented as First Readings to the district boards.

8.2.2 Curriculum Committee

Minutes from the August 28, 2017 meeting were distributed. Math was the topic of discussion at the August meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 23, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library. Literacy will be the focus of discussion.

8.2.3 Negotiations Committee

Minutes from the August 29, 2017 meeting were distributed. The next meeting with para-educators is 09/25/17 (Mediation). The next meeting with teachers is 10/25/17 (Fact Finding Meeting).

8.3 Financials

The BSU FY17 Expenditures/Year-end Projection Report (dated 09/14/17) was distributed. There is an unaudited projected deficit of \$68,948. Mr. Malone announced that the first BSU Finance Committee Meeting was held on 09/14/17. Board Members in attendance were; Paul Malone (elected as Chair), Sonya Spaulding (elected as Vice Chair), Jay Paterson, Sarah Pregent, Tim Boltin, and David LaCroix. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 26, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

9. Executive Session as Needed

9.1 Labor Relations Agreements

Labor Relations Agreements, specifically, Negotiation Strategies, was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item proposed for discussion, specifically, Labor Relations Agreements Negotiation Strategies, would clearly place the Barre Supervisory Union at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 8:48 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the item proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Superintendent.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 9:08 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Negotiations Committee to settle at a default cost sharing arrangement with teachers and para-educators for health insurance.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin