

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION #61 SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Spaulding High School - Library
March 15, 2018 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

J. Guy Isabelle (SHS) – Chair
Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – Vice Chair
Victoria Pompei (BT) - Clerk
Alice Farrell (BT)
Anthony Folland (SHS)
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins (BT)
Paul Malone (SHS)
Tyler Smith (BC)
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech

1. Call to Order

The Superintendent, Mr. Pandolfo, called the Thursday, March 15, 2018, meeting to order at 6:02 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library.

2. Board Reorganization

VSBA Board Re-organization documentation was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised regarding Board re-organization, provided an overview of the slides contained in the documentation, confirmed that Board Members have taken the oath, advised regarding the Essential Work of School Boards video, announced that Board Members have already reviewed the Board Chair Attributes information, and requested nominations for the position of Board Chair.

Mr. Malone nominated Mr. Isabelle for the position of Board Chair, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding. There were no additional nominations. **The Board unanimously voted to elect Mr. Isabelle as Board Chair.** Mr. Isabelle chaired the remainder of the meeting.

Mrs. Spaulding nominated Mr. Cecchinelli for the position of Vice-Chair, seconded by Mr. Malone. There were no additional nominations. **The Board unanimously voted to elect Mr. Cecchinelli as Vice Chair.**

Mr. Malone nominated Mrs. Pompei for the position of Clerk, seconded by Mrs. Farrell. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins nominated Mrs. Farrell for the position of Clerk. Mrs. Farrell respectfully declined the nomination. The nomination was not seconded. There were no additional nominations. **The Board unanimously voted to elect Mrs. Pompei as Clerk.**

Mrs. Pompei was introduced to the Board and provided a brief overview of her background and interest in serving. It was noted that the district boards have appointed Board Members to each of the Committees. An overview the Appointments was presented. The Chair of the BSU Finance Committee will be determined at its first meeting, which is being scheduled for Wednesday, March 28, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

The Board agreed to hold a Tri-Board Meeting on Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library. The Agenda will be comprised of A.L.I.C.E Training. The BSU Board will hold a brief meeting, starting at 5:30 p.m. to conduct any business that needs to be addressed, most likely, approval of contract renewals. It was noted that a separate meeting with legislators is desired.

The Board agreed to hold Board meetings on the third Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the SHS Library.

The Board agreed to post Agendas and Minutes at the Supervisory Union, the Barre Town and Barre City Clerks' Offices, and on the BSU web site

The Board agreed to use Roberts Rules.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Board Chair to sign Teacher Contracts.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Board Chair to sign other contracts, as approved by the Board.

Board Members previously signed copies of the ‘Code of Ethics For Vermont School Board Members’ document at their district meetings, and do not have to sign copies for work on the SU Board.

It was noted that Board Members reviewed communication practices at their district meetings. Board development opportunities and Board advocacy have also been discussed at the district level. Mr. Isabelle encouraged Board Members to participate in board development opportunities. Mr. Pandolfo has additional information relating to training, and will be passing the information on to Board Members.

The Board agreed to designate the Times Argus and The World as the newspaper publications to be utilized for meeting notices, warnings and employment advertisements. Mr. Pandolfo plans to post information on Front Porch Forum and Facebook.

Mr. Isabelle reminded Board Members to make sure they are familiar with Open Meeting Laws and Executive Session requirements.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Change Agenda Item 10.1 to read ‘Employee Contracts’.

4. Public Comment

A thank you note from Diane Stacy was distributed.

5. Approval of Minutes

5.1 Approval of Minutes – February 15, 2018 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the February 15, 2018 Regular Meeting.

Mr. Malone received confirmation that the amendment to the policy, agreed to under Agenda Item 5.2 has been completed.

6. New Business

6.1 A.L.I.C.E. & School Security

Mr. Pandolfo advised that A.L.I.C.E. and School Security information has been given to the district boards and he has nothing to add this evening. The student walk-out/walk-in was successful. There was a loose level of structure, with students being allowed to discuss any matter they wanted to voice. Those wishing not to participate in the event were allowed to stay in their classrooms and were not disturbed. The event centered on giving students a voice and recognizing that they have freedom of speech. Discussion returned to the schedule for A.L.I.C.E Training. Some Board Members would like to see all staff trained at a faster schedule.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that there are not enough trainers to train all staff with the time remaining in the school year and there are contractual matters involved. Suggestions for faster training included offering a stipend to para-educators to attend a Saturday training session, holding training in after-school sessions, training in-mass, training of small groups, on-line training, having trainers do a walk-through with a video, and holding public forums. Mr. Pandolfo advised of the previously agreed upon implementation schedule, advised of staff who are currently trained (Administrators and Custodial staff), and advised that he believes the training should not be rushed. Mr. Pandolfo recommends that training be conducted right, in a thoughtful, well organized process, rather than be rushed. It was noted that in-service days for para-educators have been completed. If not all remaining staff are willing or available for training outside of school hours, it could promote strong feelings of inequity. It was noted that the new program can’t be implemented until all staff are trained. Training of students will also need to occur. Mr. Cecchinelli believes that incidents of violence are a larger risk at the high school than at the middle/elementary schools. Mr. Malone advised that the Board agreed to the implementation, but would like to see training at a faster pace if feasible and practical. It was suggested that training be held after school and that parents also be invited to attend. In response to a query, it was noted that staff are aware of the training timeline. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins suggested the training timeline be left as is if staff members are comfortable with the plan. Mr. Smith supports having some level of exposure for staff, but believes that the new protocol can’t be implemented until all staff members are trained. Mrs. Poulin advised that she is concerned that there is a level of panic/urgency regarding training, possibly related to the recent tragedy in Florida, but advised that she feels her children are very safe at the school, that good protocols are in place, she is not aware of an elevated threat level at the school, and prefers training be conducted in the planned, well thought out process. Mr. Pandolfo will be meeting with leadership of the Associations on Monday, and will query regarding interest in training early. Mr. Isabelle reiterated that the school has very good

safety protocols that have evolved over the years, and wants to assure community members that the school is safe and that safety is a priority. Mr. Isabelle believes A.L.I.C.E. Training is an additional tool to be used to enhance current procedures.

6.2 Approval of 2018 – 2019 Calendar

A copy of the proposed 2018 – 2019 School Calendar was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the calendar does not require Board approval, but rather is being presented for informational purposes. Statute requires that sending districts (districts sending students to CVCC) have a specified number of common student and staff days. The calendar, as collaboratively written with other Superintendents, meets statute requirements. Mr. Pandolfo provided clarification that the contracted flex day must be taken on one of the days labeled as ‘Flex’.

6.3 End of Year 2017 - 2018

A copy of the 2017/2018 calendar was distributed. The amended calendar advised of school cancellation days. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the original schedule included 180 student days. State Statute requires 175 student days. An option that meets statute is to have the students’ last day on 06/18/18, but the Superintendent recommends holding the last student day on Friday, June 22, 2018. High School Graduation is scheduled for Saturday, June 23, 2018. Discussion was held regarding various options moving forward, including discussion of making up ‘snow days’ during April vacation or not requiring students to make up ‘snow days’. It was noted that if students didn’t make up snow days, they still are attending school for the number of days required by statute.

6.4 First Reading on Revised BSU Transportation Policy (F9)

A copy of the revised policy was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo will confirm if statute requires students (including out of district students) to be picked up at their homes, when transportation is listed as a requirement in the students’ IEPs.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Reading of the BSU Transportation Policy (F9).

7. Old Business

7.1 Board Communications

A letter from VSBA regarding community engagement was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the letter, advising of an upcoming workshop (directed towards board members) for improving community engagement, and information relating to applying for one of the district-level technical assistance grants. Attendance at the workshop will most likely be beneficial for those wishing to apply for the grant. Under the grant, three districts will be chosen for a pilot program, with priority given to districts with a large population of students that qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch. This topic will be discussed further in April.

After brief discussion, the Board agreed that Mr. Pandolfo should move forward with scheduling a Legislative Breakfast in late March or early April.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that Ben Merrill is available and the SU will continue to use his services through the remainder of the school year in an effort to keep moving forward with community communication improvements. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of three options relating to the Communications Specialist position that was approved for the FY19 school year. It was noted that Mr. Merrill is not interested in a full time position at the BSU, but would consider doing some part time work. Discussion was held regarding using some of the budgeted money for salary and some for project expenses, or using budgeted money to focus on one large project. It may be beneficial to build an entirely new web site. It was noted that Essex School District and Orange Southwest (Randolph High School) have very informative, user friendly websites. Board Members were encouraged to view the sites. Mr. Malone believes the SU needs to create an elevated communications level that is maintained throughout the year. There is concern that a new hire (for the position of Communications Specialist) would require a significant amount of guidance and support. Mr. Smith would prefer to do a few projects very well, as opposed to having one individual make minor improvements to many small areas. It may be advisable to use the first year of the budgeted position to build a new web site, and hire a full time communications specialist in a subsequent year. The Board had mixed opinions regarding how to use the money budgeted for next year. Mr. Pandolfo will pursue all the items discussed and the Board can revisit the topic in April.

7.2 Act 46

Mr. Smith advised that the Study Committee has been discussing whether or not they should move forward with presenting a merger vote. Mr. Smith believes that the majority of the Committee supports a merger vote, but there are some outstanding questions. Mr. Smith prefers that the final decision of the Committee be unanimous. Continued discussion, including the presentation of information, will be held at the March 28, 2018 meeting. Mr. Smith has contacted a representative from the recently consolidated Northfield/Williamstown district and invited him to attend the meeting to share his consolidation experience, and the work involved. Mr. Smith would like the Committee to vote on a course of action at the March 28th meeting. If the Committee agrees to move forward with presenting a merger, the Committee will begin its review of the Articles of Agreement that were previously presented to voters.

8. Other Business as Needed

Mrs. Spaulding advised that she very recently received information regarding an Education Funding Bill (H911) that will be voted on soon. Mrs. Spaulding encourages board members to review the bill and have discussions with their representatives. The Bill, if

passed, will have a negative impact on next year's budget, and includes a provision that eliminates Act 46 tax incentives as well as changes in teacher retirement funding. Information will be forwarded to all Board Members for review. Board Members are encouraged to review the bill and contact their representatives.

Due to April vacation, the next BSU Board Meeting will be held one week early, on Thursday of April, April 12, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the SHS Library.

The Spaulding Finance Committee Meeting will also meet on April 12, 2018. The meeting will commence at 4:00 p.m. in the SHS Library.

9. Reports to the Board

9.1 Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated March 15, 2018 was distributed for review and discussion. The report included information pertaining to the Superintendent's Office, the Business Office, Curriculum, Special Education, Technology, Early Education, and Human Resources. Three additional documents were distributed; a letter from Future Planning Associates, Inc. (dated 03/07/18), VEHI's Response Letter to FPA, and a document titled '2018 Barre City Middle School Principal Search Process and Timeline'. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the decision by FPA to terminate administrative services for HRA/HAS/FSA plans came with very little notice. The process to move to a new third party administrator is moving along quickly. VEHI is assisting with research to verify that the proposed company will be able to perform the required administrative work. If verification can be made, Mr. Pandolfo anticipates the transition will be fairly seamless. It was noted that since CFP grant monies have been approved for the Curriculum Specialist (instructional coach) positions, the budget has been adjusted by \$125,000.

9.2 Committee Reports

9.2.1 Policy Committee

Minutes from the February 19, 2018 meeting were distributed. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 19, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Upstairs Conference Area. The meeting will focus on 'clean up' of district policies.

9.2.2 Curriculum Committee

The February 26, 2018 meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 26, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library. The meeting will focus on 'Spaulding High School' related topics; Flexible Pathways, Work Based Learning, Personalized Learning Plans, Community Service Graduation Requirements, and Proficiency Based Learning/Graduation.

9.2.3 Finance Committee

The committee will meet on Wednesday, March 28, 2018 at 4:30 p.m. in the SHS Library.

9.2.4 Negotiations Committee

Mr. Pandolfo is waiting for Para-educator and AFSME representatives to respond regarding proposed meeting dates.

9.3 Financials

Three reports were distributed; the BSU FY18 Expenditures/Year-end Projection Report (dated 03/18/18), the BSU Expenditures FY18 Report (dated 03/05/18), and the BSU General Fund Revenue Report (dated 03/05/18). There is an unaudited projected deficit of \$11,259. It was noted that the projected deficit estimate is very conservative. The next SHS Finance Committee Meeting will be held on Monday, March 26, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. in the SHS Library.

10. Executive Session

10.1 Employee Contracts

Employee Contracts was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 8:26 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the item proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mr. Folland, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 8:38 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to approve an employee contract.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin