

BARRE SUPERVISORY UNION #61 SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Spaulding High School - Library
April 12, 2018 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

J. Guy Isabelle (SHS) – Chair
Victoria Pompei (BT) - Clerk
Alice Farrell (BT) – departed at 7:35 p.m.
Anthony Folland (SHS)
Paul Malone (SHS)
Tyler Smith (BC)
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – Vice Chair
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins (BT)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech Dave Delcore-Times Argus Emma Riddle Linda Riddle

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Isabelle, called the Thursday, April 12, 2018, meeting to order at 6:03 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 5.5 VMERS Application
Add 5.6 Warrant Approval and Finance Policy

3. Public Comment

Emma Riddle, a sophomore at Spaulding High School, read a letter to the Board regarding the status of foreign languages and the possibility that Collaborative PE may become a required course for freshman. Ms. Riddle advised that a required collaborative PE class would prevent freshman from participating in world language classes. Ms. Riddle advised that she believes if the requirement is implemented, it will have a long lasting negative impact to the world languages program, especially the French class, whose participants are declining. As fewer students enter the foreign language program, fewer will be able to move on to the more advanced classes, and those classes and teaching positions risk being eliminated. If a proposed required PE class is implemented, incoming freshman will be limited to 3 years of foreign language, rather than 4. This would be detrimental to students, as foreign language can be a requirement for some forms of employment as well as college admission. Ms. Riddle provided a copy of her letter to the Superintendent and advised that Principal, Mrs. Waterhouse has already been given a copy. Ms. Riddle was thanked for her articulate presentation to the Board.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – March 15, 2018 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to approve, as amended, the Minutes of the March 15, 2018 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

Letters of resignation from Jayne Parker and Linda Kogut were distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that Ms. Parker is retiring at the end of the school year. Ms. Parker, School Psychologist, has worked in the school for many years, originally as a Washington County Mental Health provider and more recently, as an employee of the BSU. Ms. Parker will be retiring as of the end of the 2017 – 2018 school year. This position will need to be filled.

On a motion by Mr. Folland, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to accept, with thanks for her many years of service, the resignation of Jayne Parker.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that Mrs. Kogut is an Occupational Therapist. Mrs. Kogut's resignation is effective with the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Mrs. Kogut has also been providing OT services in the summer, and has recommended an individual to provide those services. Though this resignation will be brought to the BCEMS and BTMES Boards, formal action must take place at the BSU Board level.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to accept, with thanks for her years of service, the resignation of Linda Kogut.

5.2 Approval to Apply for CFP Grant

A document titled 'Authorization', from the CFP Application, was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the BSU Board must approve submission of the application for CFP grant funds. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of how CFP grant funds are used and advised that appropriations look good this year. It was noted that the new grant software is not yet fully operational. The BSU will accept the grant funds and act as Administrator for all districts.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the BSU to apply for the CFP Grant, to accept CFP Grant funds, and to act as Administrator for the CFP Grant.

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

Jason Derner and Officer Amaral attended additional A.L.I.C.E. training in Ohio and have new ideas to share regarding ways to secure doors, as well as a variety of curriculum work, which will help moving forward with planning for training. A training planning meeting has been held. Various methods of training include; electronic training, small group training, and simulation training. A number of public forums have been planned. Public Forums are scheduled for April 25, 2018 at 5:00 p.m., May 12, 2018 at 9:30 a.m., May 17, 2018 at 5:00 p.m., and an additional meeting in May as part of a Community Safety Night. The locations of the meetings will be announced. Mr. Pandolfo advised that there may be rumors regarding Fire Safety regulations prohibiting certain safety measures, and provided clarification that though Fire Safety officials are concerned regarding possible issues, they want to be involved in planning and there needs to be an understanding between State Fire officials and School Safety Officials regarding certain safety related items. Mr. Malone suggested that Representatives and Senators be invited to attend A.L.I.C.E. training. Mr. Pandolfo will also speak with the Barre City Council and Mayor, as well as the Barre Town Select Board regarding their interest in attending.

5.4 Copier RFP Authorization for Approval

Mr. Pandolfo anticipated presenting his recommendation at this meeting, but the RFP process has not been completed. Mr. Pandolfo is requesting that the Board authorize the Board Chair to accept the Superintendent's recommendation when it becomes available. If the Board prefers to review the recommendation and approve it as a group, a Special Meeting will be scheduled. In response to a query, the Board was advised that the cost allocation is determined based on units of usage in each building, and the cost is split accordingly. It was noted that all bids will be available in electronic format, even if they are submitted on paper.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Board Chair to sign the copier contract based on the recommendation of the Superintendent, and that Board Chairs recognize that the recommendation is made considering what is in the best interest of the schools.

5.5 VMERS Application

A letter to Jennifer Burdick (Office of the State Treasurer – Retirement Operations) was distributed for review and approval by the BSU Board to request that all para-educators that will be employed by the Barre Supervisory Union be eligible to participate in the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System. The Para-educators (currently employed for the Barre Town, Barre City, and Spaulding school districts) participate in "Group A" and the Board requests that all para-educators employed in the Barre Supervisory Union, as of 07/01/18 remain eligible to participate in the same "Group A" when they are terminated from their districts on 06/30/18 and rehired by the BSU on 07/01/18.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Superintendent and BSU Board Chair to sign the letter and request that the VMERS Board approve eligibility for para-educators in VMERS 'Group A' effective 07/01/18.

5.6 Warrant Approval and Finance Policy

Two documents were distributed; the BSU Warrant Procedure document, and the BSU Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability Policy (E1). Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the documents and advised that Warrant approval was discussed at the BCEMS meeting. The Board needs to designate one Board Member and one Alternate Board Member to examine claims against the district for school expenses and to sign warrants for payments for approved purchases and services. Starting in 2019, the designation will occur as part of Board reorganization. It was noted that if none of the designees is available to sign the Warrants, the Superintendent or Business Manager are authorized to sign them. Any other Board Member may sign the Warrants if the designees are not available.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to designate Mr. Malone as the primary BSU designee, and Mr. Isabelle as the alternate BSU designee.

6. Old Business

6.1 Board Communications

The Community Engagement Grant Workshop is this Saturday (04/14/18). Mrs. Farrell will be attending the workshop. Mr. Pandolfo is unable to attend, but will be meeting with Susan Holson on Friday (04/13/18) to ascertain the details. The BSU was contacted directly, as it was identified as an ideal candidate for participation in the pilot program.

Regarding the Communications Specialist line item in the FY19 budget, it is the Superintendent's recommendation that the third option be pursued. Option 3 involves building an entirely new web site, with remaining funds utilized to fund the expense of an individual to perform daily updates to the site. Any remaining funds would be used for additional, as of yet, undefined work. Mr. Pandolfo would like to proceed with an RFP and anticipates the work would be performed July – December 2018, with implementation on January 1, 2019. There is concern regarding overall management of the project and how information will be gathered and passed along to the individual who is building the new site. Mrs. Spaulding has concern regarding migration to a new web site. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding whether or not stipends (for those maintaining the current site) were pulled out of the budget.

Mr. Isabelle read a letter from Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins regarding her belief that there is confusion regarding the use of the terms 'district(s)' and 'Barre Supervisory Union'. Mr. Pandolfo will provide clarification/guidance for employees, administrators, etc.

6.2 Act 46

Mr. Smith provided an overview the April 10, 2018 Study Committee Meeting, which included a presentation by Peter Evans, Board Chair of the newly formed Paine Mountain School District. Mr. Evans provided an overview of his experience on the Northfield/Williamstown 706 Study Committee, as well as his experience Chairing the newly formed Board (for the merged district). The Committee is looking for a speaker from a consolidated district that has been having difficulties. The Committee would like to invite a representative from the Harwood District. The Committee will hold discussion regarding the pros and cons of consolidation and begin a review of the previously written Articles of Agreement. Mr. Smith believes the Committee is heading in the right direction, but believes that there may be a time when a date for a Committee vote will need to be set. The next meeting is Thursday, April 26, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the SHS Library. The Committee would like to have a unanimous decision regarding whether or not to put a merger vote before the two communities. Mr. Cecchinelli thanked Co-Chairs Tyler Smith and Gina Akley for their leadership.

6.3 Second and Final Reading on Revised BSU Transportation Policy (F9)

A copy of the policy was distributed. Brief discussion was held.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Second and Final Reading of the BSU Transportation Policy (F9) and agreed to adopt said policy.

7. Other Business as Needed

It was announced that Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins has questions relating to the Barre Town Annual Report, which she believes is missing information, including stipend payments. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins is questioning whether the Report has been intentionally changed, or if the omission of information is an error. Mr. Malone believes the Town Report contains inaccurate information.

8. Reports to the Board

8.1 Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated April 5, 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, Human Resources, and Facilities. In response to a query, Mrs. Farrell provided information regarding legislation that requires the district to provide services for eligible students aged 18 – 22. In response to a query regarding high turnover of para-educators, it was noted that the positions are very challenging, with a fairly low wage, and are sometimes less than full-time. The current employment rate may also play a factor. The turn-over rate for para-educators is high across the entire state. A recent contract change that allows para-educators to join the retirement system is seen as a positive incentive. Additional information is being sought to assist with remedying the high turnover issue. Para-educators are evaluated twice a year. Mr. Malone advised regarding recent legislation which will provide financial assistance for the purchase of items to increase safety (non-personnel related), and suggested that the district schools compile 'wish lists' sooner rather than later, so as to be prepared to apply for funds as soon as possible. Mr. Malone would like to investigate the possibility of installing an SU-wide connected surveillance system that is visible from a central location (the BSU Central Office). Mr. Pandolfo noted that cell service and radio services are not consistent throughout the buildings. A letter from Mudgett, Jenett & Krogh-Wisner, P.C. was distributed. The introductory letter provides information relating to the upcoming auditing cycle (for FY18). In response to a query by Mrs. Spaulding regarding using the same auditor for many years, it was noted that changing auditors is good business practice, but given the number of changes occurring, it is not advisable to switch this year. Thanks to Executive Assistant, Tina Gilbert, the tracking of the return of teacher contracts is much more efficient. Thus far there are 19 extension requests, and notification that 5 staff members are not returning. It was noted that many around the state are not happy

with the new Financial Management System chosen by the State. There are questions regarding quality of product and implementation. Though the product will be available at no financial cost, there are costs associated with implementation. The current vendor, Tyler Technologies has concerns regarding the State's hiring process. They believe they could offer the product at a cost that is close to what the implementation cost would be for the 'free' product. A decision on which vendor to use will have to be made relatively soon. The Business Manager will be discussing this issue at the VASBO conference Friday (04/13/18).

8.2 Committee Reports

8.2.1BSU Policy Committee

Minutes from the March 19, 2018 meeting were distributed.

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 21, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Upstairs Conference Room.

8.2.2 BSU Curriculum Committee

Minutes from the March 26, 2018 meeting were distributed. The March 26, 2018 meeting focused on SHS items, such as Work Based Learning, Flexible Pathways, Proficiency Based Learning/Grading, Personalized Learning Plans, and a proposed Community Service Graduation Requirement.

The next meeting is Monday, April 23, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library.

8.2.3 BSU Finance Committee

Minutes from the March 28, 2018 meeting were distributed. The next meeting will most likely be scheduled for June 2018.

8.2.4 BS Negotiations Committee

A negotiation session with AFSME representatives was held 04/11/18. Proposals were exchanged. It is hoped that a settlement can be reached in the near future. The next negotiation session is scheduled for April 25, 2018. A negotiations session with para-educators will probably be scheduled in May.

8.3 Financials

The BSU FY18 Expenditures/Year-end Projection Report (dated 03/18/18) was distributed. There is an unaudited projected deficit of \$11,259. The BSU General Fund Revenue and Expenditures –FY18 Reports were also distributed. Mr. Malone advised that the projected deficit may not exist at the end of the year.

9. Executive Session as Needed

No items were proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin