

**BARRE TOWN MIDDLE AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library
May 17, 2017 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jay Paterson – Chair

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Scott Griggs, Principal
Jaime Evans, Facilities Director
Terri Murray, Transportation Coordinator
Jennifer W. Nye, Principal
Julia Pritchard, Director of Special Services

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jennifer Hutchinson

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT:

Donna Kely

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristin McCarthy

GUESTS PRESENT:

Pat MacAskill

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Paterson, called the Wednesday, May 17, 2017, Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:05 p.m., which was held at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 4.4 - Special Education Updates

4.2 Transportation Update – Discussion will take place immediately following Agenda Item 3.2.

3. Administration

3.1 Review / Approve January 4, 2017 Committee Meeting Minutes

This item will be added to the next Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee Meeting Agenda. Mrs. Poulin will research to determine if these Minutes are available on-line.

3.2 Review / Approve April 26, 2017 Committee Meeting Minutes

This item will be added to the next Finance/Facilities/Transportation Committee Meeting Agenda.

4. Other Business

4.1 Summer Project Discussion

Mr. Evans advised that major projects will be funded from the Capital Improvement Fund. Thus far, RFPs have been sent out for the following major projects; Roof Repairs/Replacement, Paving, and Rooftop Air Conditioning. It was noted that due to financial constraints, not all of the major projects may be completed this year. Mandatory site visits for the projects have been scheduled. Bids for the paving project are due by 4:00 p.m. on May 31, 2017. Bids will be opened on June 1, 2017. The paving RFP requires that paving work commence on June 26, 2017 and be completed by August 1, 2017. The paving project includes the main parking lot and the loop around the wood chip shed. Paving of the back playground area is dependent on the cost involved.

Additionally, Mr. Evans reported that additional summer work (funded through the regular maintenance budget) will include construction of walls and replacement of carpet (4 classrooms and some hallways). It was announced that 7th grade Science teacher, Krista Battles secured a \$1000 grant that will be used to install LED lights in hallways.

4.2 Transportation Update

A copy of a letter to 'Barre Town Families,' (dated May 12, 2017) was distributed. Mrs. Nye and Mrs. Murray addressed the Committee advising regarding various methods used to advise parents of bus cancellations, including the 'Call-Em-All' service used for last minute cancellations, weekly letters home (which include known cancellations), Face Book, and the BTMES web site. It was noted that the 'Call-Em-All' system is expensive to use. It was reported that while most parents are being very understanding, some are expressing much frustration, citing additional fuel and daycare expenses, as well as the difficulty of getting their children to and from school. It was noted that absence/tardiness resulting from transportation issues is considered excused. Though Administrators and Board/Committee members are sympathetic to the transportation challenges families are facing, it was noted that BTMES is not obligated to provide transportation. Administrators exhaust all known alternatives prior to cancelling any routes and have been searching extensively for additional bus drivers. The work involved dealing with ongoing busing issues is very time consuming for all involved. Mr. Paterson would like parents to take a more active role, and check the BTMES website (daily) for updates regarding transportation issues. In response to a query, Mrs. Murray advised that a BTMES staff member is assigned to ride any bus which has a substitute driver. Families are being advised that transportation issues will most likely continue through the end of this school year, but should be resolved with the use of contracted busing effective with the next school year. Discussion ensued regarding the cost of busing for SPED students. The cost of busing Special Education students has been identified as being higher under the contracted services contract with STA. It is believed that there is a \$145,000 deficit for SPED transportation (across the SU). The model for billing SPED transportation at the district level needs to be revisited. Use of contracted services for SPED transportation may also need to be revisited. 'Transportation for Special Education' should be added to the next BSU Board Meeting Agenda. It was noted that an IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) grant assisted with the costs of SPED transportation. There is currently a 'carry forward' amount of \$90,000 (from the State), but as no amendment was submitted, those funds cannot be used this year.

It was agreed to hold a 'Parent/Driver Appreciation' event to thank families and current drivers for their patience and support. Administrators will contact Mr. Paterson with some possible dates, and he will contact an ice cream truck vendor to schedule the event.

STA will be invited to the next BTMES Board Meeting so that they may be introduced to the public.

4.3 Local Emergency Operations Plan

Mr. Evans will attend the Monday, May 22, 2017 BTMES Safety Committee Meeting, which will have representatives from the Barre Town Emergency Management Committee in attendance. Jack Mitchell, Emergency Management Chair, is the lead contact person for this potential venture.

4.4 Special Education Update

Ms. Pritchard provided an update on Special Education, including 2 additional referrals for WCMH (1 who qualifies for SPED services, 1 who probably will not qualify), 5 outplacements (2 Choice Academy, 1 STARS, 1 the New School in Montpelier, and 1 Granite Academy). It was noted that there has been an increase in needs for OT services (4 different individuals currently provide services at BTMES). It may be cost effective to hire 1 FT COTA (Certified Occupational Therapist Assistant) for next year. The COTA could be hired for approximately \$14,000 and would be overseen by an Occupational Therapist. Use of para educators and behavioral interventionists (in the classroom) has been beneficial. There are still 4 students with behavioral interventionists from WCMH. In general, BTMES is seeing an increase in the cost for SPED services (from approximately \$105,000 in 2008, to \$136,000 in 2017). Administrators see a need for increased coordination between pre-K and kindergarten staff.

Other Business:

Brief discussion was held regarding the date for the Tri-Board Retreat (possible dates are 06/08/17 or 06/15/17). It was noted that the BTMES Board will need to meet in June.

No meetings are slated for June, July, or August.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 20, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library.

5. Adjournment

The Committee agreed to adjourn at 8:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin