

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Barre Town Middle and Elementary School – Library
February 13, 2019 – 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Farrell - Chair
Jay Paterson – Vice Chair
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins – Clerk
Chris Hull
Victoria Pompei

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Scott Griggs, Principal

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech

1. Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair, Mrs. Farrell, called the Wednesday, February 13, 2019, Regular meeting to order at 6:01p.m., which was held at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library. The flag salute followed.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 10.1 Confidential Attorney-Client Communication

3. Visitors and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1. Approval of Minutes – January 2, 2019 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the January 2, 2019 Regular Meeting.

4.2. Approval of Minutes – January 16, 2019 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the January 16, 2019 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

The resumes and BSU Notification of Employment Status Forms for Ethan Cody (Special Educator) and Karen Moran (.5 FTE Elementary Health Educator) were distributed.

Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of Karen Moran's education and experience, advising that she is licensed for grades K through 6 and will need a provisional license for Health.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Paterson, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Karen Moran as a .50 FTE Health teacher.

Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of Ethan Cody's education and experience and advised that the BSU Board has approved the hiring of Mr. Cody. Mrs. Pompei advised that a parent has spoken highly of Mr. Cody.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Ethan Cody.

A letter of resignation from Principal Scott Griggs (dated 01/10/19) was distributed. Mr. Griggs is resigning effective 06/30/19. Mr. Griggs addressed the Board expressing his appreciation for the three years he has been able to serve BTMES. Mr. Griggs advised that his resignation is effective 06/30/19 and advised that it has been an honor to work with Mrs. Nye and Ms. Pearson. Mr. Griggs is excited for the future of BTMES. Mr. Griggs expressed his gratitude for the opportunity to serve in a community that values

education. Mr. Griggs previously worked in Cabot for 3 years and before joining BTMES worked for 18 years at the Central Vermont Career Center.

On a motion by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to accept the resignation of Mr. Griggs.

The Board thanked Mr. Griggs for his service at BTMES and wished him well in the future.

6. Old Business

6.1 Facility Update

A document titled 'BTMES Facilities Projects for Consideration – January 28, 2019' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the updated projects list, advising that he is fairly confident that items 2 – 4 can be accomplished prior to 06/30/19. The exterior work under item #5 can be accomplished in the summer of 2019. The \$90,000 estimate for this project is a rough estimate. A more definitive cost will be known after submission of bids. This item is for permanent repairs to the outside canopy and requires replacement of the sidewalk. Items 6 – 8 do not require immediate attention. Mr. Evans feels that the school should move forward (this year) with item #1 (purchase of truck with plow and sander). BTMES has had to hire out an additional vendor to assist with plowing and sanding. Mr. Paterson supports moving forward with the purchase in the current year, as long as funds are available. In response to a query regarding the status of sound proofing insulation in the cafeteria, Mr. Griggs advised that they are taking an incremental approach. Administrators would like to assess how the wall sound proofing is working, prior to insulating the ceiling.

6.2 Merger Update

Mr. Pandolfo distributed a document titled 'Merger Update' that was printed from the BSU web site. Mr. Pandolfo proceeded to provide an overview of the document. A public informational hearing will be held on 02/18/19, the evening before the 02/19/19 vote. The vote relates to changing the Default Articles of Agreement that relate to changes to school structure and Board configuration. The Transitional Board met on 01/10/19 and will meet again on 02/18/19 at 5:30 p.m. in the SHS Library. The 02/18/19 meeting will include approval of the draft Warnings for the Board Member Election vote which is slated for 04/09/19. The Warnings (for 4 and 9 member boards) have been drafted and petitions are available from the Barre City and Barre Town Clerks. Petitions are due to the City/Town Clerks by 03/04/19. As the 02/19/19 vote is not on a 'regular' vote date, it is important to promote the vote. The 04/09/19 Board Member election vote will also need to be promoted. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding using the 'call-them-all' system to publicize the 02/19/18 vote. Mr. Pandolfo advised that there is a cost associated with using the system and that it will only reach 'school families'. Mr. Pandolfo will look into use of the system for this purpose. The vote is promoted on the BSU web site, Front Porch Forum, and Facebook. The initial meeting of the Initial Board is proposed for 04/11/19. At the initial meeting of the Initial Board, it is hoped that they may be able to approve the budget and approve a warning for a budget vote on 05/14/19. Election of Board Members for the current Board will be held on 03/05/19. The District Boards will remain operational until 06/30/19, after which they will only perform work necessary to conclude FY19 business.

Mr. Pandolfo provided clarification regarding the two Articles to be voted on on 02/19/19. The two Articles relate to changing the Default Articles of Agreement.

Article 1 pertains to requiring voter approval to close or restructure the schools. A 'yes' vote requires a public vote for changes to school structure/closure. A 'no' vote grants voter protection for 2 years. After 2 years, the BUUSD Board can make changes without voter approval. For Article 1 to pass, it must be passed by a majority of voters in both Barre City and in Barre Town.

Article 2 pertains to board structure. A 'yes' vote will result in a 9 member board (4 BC / 4 BT / 1 At-large). A 'no' vote will result in a 4 member board (2 BC / 2 BT). For Article 2 to pass requires a majority of votes from both communities (votes in totality, but not comingled).

Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of Act 46 activity 'outside' of the BSU, advising that there are no less than 6 new bills that were introduced to the House and no less than 3 that were introduced to the Senate. Mr. Pandolfo has provided testimony regarding the impact a merger delay would have on the Barre Supervisory Union. Bill H39 relates to a 'blanket' one year delay. Regarding the lawsuits, Mr. Pandolfo believes a judge is planning to hold a status conference (hearing) in the near future. In response to a query by Mr. Hull, Mr. Pandolfo advised that he is not aware of any existing legislation relating to transitional grants.

The BSU will continue to operate under the premise that the merged district needs to be operational by 07/01/19. There is some concern that the budget may not be approved by 07/01/19. The current draft results in a 7 cent increase for both Barre City and Barre Town taxpayers. If the budget is not approved by 07/01/19, the BUUSD may borrow money to cover operating expenses (up to 87%) of the FY19 budget.

6.3 Budget FY20 Update

The 'FY20 Barre Unified Union School District Budget Highlights – January 10, 2019 – DRAFT 3' document was distributed.

Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the Projected Comparative Tax Rate Calculations advising that based on the current Equalized Pupil counts from the State (which are not frozen yet), the draft budget results in a 7 cent tax increase for both Barre City and Barre Town. It was noted that the CVCC fund balances are no longer included in the fund balance totals. Current legislation does not provide for transitional funds for districts that did not merge voluntarily. The BTMES Board will most likely not be holding further budget discussions, as the budget is the responsibility of the BUUSD Board. The Transitional Board will most likely hold budget discussions. If a budget vote is to be held on 05/04/19, it must be warned no later than 04/04/19. Mr. Paterson is concerned that the BTMES Board did not spend much time on budget development this year. Mr. Paterson believes that the Transitional Board will need to really scrutinize the draft budget. It was noted that the Transitional Board may need to hold a special meeting to discuss the budget.

Three additional documents were distributed; a letter to Secretary Daniel French (dated 01/25/19), a letter from Secretary French to Business Managers, Human Resource Officers and Superintendents (dated 01/31/19), and a letter from VASBO (dated 02/12/19). The 02/12/19 letter to the House and Senate Education Committees is an official request to modify the legislatively imposed implementation date for the SSDDMS system (Statewide School District Data Management System). Business Managers would like the implementation date moved to January 2022. Mr. Pandolfo noted that the BSU is prepared to move forward with their existing system for a single budget, effective 07/01/19. The FY20 draft budget has been built in a single module. It was noted that those who went live with the new system on 01/01/19 have experienced many unresolved issues. It was believed that Infinite Visions was the best software for the SSDDMS system, but the State chose Power School e-Finance. The cost to the BSU thus far, for the 'free' software, is \$30,000 to \$40,000.

7. Board Reports

7.1. Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated January 30, 2019 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; the new web site, the School Calendar, a Merger Update, and Negotiations. Two additional documents were distributed; a 'Certificate of Environmental Stewardship', and a document titled 'Journal of the Senate', Mr. Pandolfo advised that BTMES diverted 51,600 pounds of food scraps in 2018, and received a certificate from Grow Compost of Vermont. Mr. Pandolfo advised of H.C.R. 2, House Concurrent Resolution designating January 2019 as School Board Recognition Month in Vermont. Mr. Pandolfo thanked Board Members for their work on behalf of BTMES and advised that each Member should have received a gift certificate from VSBA (for socks). Mr. Pandolfo reminded the Board that the food service contract is going out to bid this year. A Draft RFP is currently being reviewed by the Agency of Education. After AOE approval, the RFP will be sent out.

7.2 Principals Report

The BTMES Administrative Report for February 6, 2019 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; enrollment (a copy of the report was distributed), receipt of a STEM donation from ExxonMobile Jiffy, Infinite Campus Messenger, ink/toner use, Professional Development, the Safety Grant, the January 23, 2019 Scheduling Workshop, and Staff Development Days. NAEP testing will occur on; 02/14/19 (8th grade) and 02/15/19 (4th grade). A copy of the BTMES February 2019 Newsletter was also distributed. Mr. Griggs advised that enrollment has increased from 817 to 823. There was an increase of 3 in Pre-k and an increase of 3 in K – 8. It was noted that enrollment is being reviewed as staffing for FY20 is in the planning stage. Staff members have been continuing Professional Development, finishing Developmental Design Training, and making plans for how to continue working to improve the provision of social/emotional and academic support to students. Discussions are under way regarding holding Summer School at BTMES. The annual Lip Sync competition will be held next week. In response to a query regarding feedback on Proficiency Based Grading, it was noted that parents, as they become more familiar with the new grading structure, seem to have fewer questions and concerns. It is believed that the Report Card Companion Guide was beneficial in helping parents understand the new structure.

7.3 Committee Reports

7.3.1 Verbal Report of BSU Committees -

Minutes from all BSU Committee meetings were previously sent to all Board Members.

BSU Curriculum Committee -

The next meeting is Monday, March 25, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Central Office 2nd Floor Conference Area

BSU Policy Committee -

The next meeting is Monday, February 18, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU 2nd Floor Conference Area

BSU Finance Committee -

The next meeting date is to be announced, but is tentatively planned for February 21, 2019.

BSU Facilities Committee -

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. Location is to be determined.

BSU Communications Committee -

The next meeting of the Communications Committee is Thursday, February 14, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the BSU Central Office.

BSU Negotiations Committee -

The next meeting of the Negotiations Committee is to be announced.

7.4 Financials

The BTMES General Fund Expenditures Report (dated 01/25/19) was distributed. The BSU Expenditures FY19 Report (dated 01/25/19) was also distributed. Mrs. Pompei queried regarding overages in the Curriculum portion of the budget, as well as line items for Principal Travel and Conferences, Copier expenses, and Band expenses. Mr. Griggs advised that many instruments required repairs or replacement this year. The items in question will be researched further. Mr. Paterson voiced concern that the amount listed on page 10 of the BTMES General Fund Expenditures Report is not accurate. He believes the amount should be lower. Mrs. Perreault will be working to obtain up to date numbers and provide year-end projections at the March Board Meeting.

8. Other Business

None.

9. Future Agenda Items and Upcoming Meetings

The next regular BTMES Board Meeting is Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library

Agenda Items:

Board Reorganization

Resignations/Retirements/New Hires

Merger Update

10. Executive Session

10.1 Confidential Attorney-Client Communication

Confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item proposed for discussion would clearly place Barre Town Middle and Elementary School at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 7:22 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided verbally by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 9:00 p.m.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Paterson, seconded by Mr. Hull, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin