

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**
BUUSD Central Office – First Floor Conference Area
December 5, 2019 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Anthony Folland, Chair - (BC)
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins, Vice-Chair - (BT)
Guy Isabelle – (At-Large)
Sonya Spaulding - (BC)

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Malone

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Josh Allen, Communications Director

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nancy Wolfe

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Folland, called the Thursday, December 5, 2019 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting to order at 5:35 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

2. CVCC Open House

The Committee agreed to attend the CVCC Open House at the conclusion of the meeting.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

The Committee agreed to complete Agenda Item 2 (attend the CVCC Open House) after the meeting has been concluded.

4. Public Comment

Community Member Nancy Wolfe advised the Committee that she finds it difficult to stay informed about what is going on in the schools, and queried regarding possible surveys. Mrs. Wolfe did complete and submit the Budget Survey. Mrs. Wolfe believes that many avenues are necessary to reach a broad base of community members. Mrs. Wolfe suggested that the publication 'The World' be utilized for communication purposes, as she believes many individuals read that free publication. Mr. Isabelle advised that the Committee is interested in publicizing many of the positive events that occur throughout the BUUSD. Mrs. Wolfe advised that she attempted to find curriculum information (by grade level) on-line and was unable to locate the information. Mr. Allen advised that the BUUSD has been doing a much better job at student engagement via social media. Mr. Malone advised Mrs. Wolfe regarding Work Based Learning Programs. Mrs. Wolfe suggested that it would be good for community members to be advised regarding the Work Based Learning Program and its partners. Mrs. Spaulding provided a brief overview of some of the graduation requirements. Mr. Folland advised that it is very beneficial to have a community member who supports communication attend the meeting. Mrs. Wolfe was advised regarding the cycle of full page ads in the Times Argus that highlight different facets of the schools. It was suggested that the BUUSD should consider having some paid advertisements in the Times Argus (to further promote the schools).

5. Approval of Minutes – November 6, 2019 BUUSD Communications Committee Meeting

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the November 6, 2019 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting.

6. New Business

6.1 Budget Presentation

A document titled 'Budget Communication Thoughts' was distributed. Mr. Allen provided an overview of the document, focusing mainly on Phase 1 (Before Warning). Phases 2 and 3 will be discussed at a future meeting. Phase one involves encouraging and facilitating community input during the budget building process, crafting a message to both parents and tax payers, holding 'open sessions' to allow community members to communicate with Board Members and/or the Superintendent, advertising meetings on social media, creating a school board e-mail account that allows for submission of questions/comments from the community, educate voters on the Education Funding Formula, early education of community members so that they can provide input during the budget building process (rather than hearing from them after the budget is warned), and providing information to the public prior to them receiving it from other sources. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the BUUSD has the lowest per pupil cost in the state and that she believes more needs to be spent to provide more to our students. Mrs. Spaulding believes this information needs to be conveyed to community members. Mrs. Spaulding believes more needs to be done to educate legislators and the public regarding portions of the

budget that are not within control of the Board (health insurance, Special Education services, the poverty level, and the number of transient students). It was noted that health insurance premiums are still undecided. In response to a query, Mr. Allen advised that the timing of communications with the public has not yet been defined. Discussion was held regarding various ways and places to distribute information, including: sports events, school newsletters, sending newsletters to survey responders who request them, setting up informational tables at grocery stores, bingo venues, during school drop-off / pick-up times, and making a presence at some local eateries/coffee shops. Crafting of a 'message' will be discussed at the Finance Committee Meeting. It was suggested that it may be beneficial to ascertain the percentage of residents that qualify for the State's pre-bate/rebate program. Mrs. Spaulding will perform some research into obtaining this information.

6.2 Annual Report

Mr. Allen distributed a copy of a draft template (skeleton) that he is suggesting for the Annual Report. Mr. Allen provided an overview of the draft template and advised that he would like to include some budget information in the Annual Report. Mr. Allen advised that the draft is 6 pages shorter than last year's report, which could lower the printing cost. Mr. Allen noted that last year's Annual Report was 'telling our story', and that he would like additional information included in this year's Annual Report. Mr. Allen advised that he would like the BUUSD to do a better job on distribution of the Annual Report, and that he has been researching various methods and the costs associated with them. The Colchester District's Annual Report is being distributed for 9¢ a copy. This cost does not include the cost of printing. The distribution method used by the Colchester District assures that a copy of the Annual Report gets in everyone's mailbox. It was suggested that the Annual Report also be distributed at sports events. Mrs. Spaulding would like the Annual Report to include information that encourages absentee voting. Mr. Allen will perform research to determine the per-copy cost for last year's report, as well as how many copies were printed.

6.3 Tide Logo

Brief discussion was held regarding consistency of logos. It was noted that CVCC has a "logo kit". Mr. Allen advised that he is working on creation of "style guides / media kits", one for each school and one for the district. The creation of these media kits should help assure consistency with the use of logos and colors etc. Brief discussion was held regarding the topic of re-naming the Barre Unified Union School District. Changing the name of the district will require significant effort and involvement of many parties.

7. Old Business

7.1 Mission, Vision & Strategic Goals – Barre Education Coalition

Mrs. Spaulding advised that she, Mrs. Akley, Mr. Isabelle, Mr. Malone, and Mrs. Pompei attended a conference and were introduced to "portraitofagraduate.org". This site advises on how to write mission/vision statements and has a template available. There are some costs associated with using the software, but the Board had been discussing the possibility of hiring a consultant to assist with writing the mission/vision statement and defining goals. It is suggested that the list of goals be modeled after the Board's top ten identified items. Mrs. Spaulding encouraged Committee Members to visit the site portraitofagraduate.org and advised that she will be recommending its use to the full Board.

7.2 Review "How to Get Out in the Community More" List

Mrs. Spaulding reiterated her suggestion that Board Members have name tags (to be worn at public events). Mrs. Spaulding will research examples and pricing and will bring that information to the next BUUSD Board Meeting.

8. Other Business

None.

9. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas

- **Budget Promotion**
- **Mission, Vision & Strategic Goals**
- **Annual Report**
- **Logo / Branding**

10. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Thursday, January 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., in the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

11. Adjournment

The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin