

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**

Barre City Elementary and Middle School
James Taffel Library
December 12, 2019 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Malone (BT) - Chair
Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Vice-Chair
Victoria Pompei (BT) – Clerk
Tim Boltin (BC)
Giuliano Cecchinelli (BC)
Anthony Folland (BC) – arrived at 5:36 p.m.
Guy Isabelle (At-Large)
Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins (BT)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Gina Akley (BT)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Hayden Coon, BCEMS Principal
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech	Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Madison Churchill	Eric Cotnoir	JC Cotnoir
Andy Evans	Kirsten Evans	Tyler Kimberly	Lev Kololmeitsev	Jenice Larrabee
Ben Matthews				

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Malone, called the Thursday, December 12, 2019, Regular meeting to order at 5:33 p.m., which was held at Barre City Elementary and Middle School in the James Taffel Library..

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Three items will be added for Executive Session:

10.1 Real Estate Matter

10.2 Litigation

10.3 Labor Relations Agreements

Change in order of discussion: Agenda Item 4.6.1 Student Presentation, will be discussed after Agenda Item 4.2

The next meeting date will be corrected to read 2020.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – November 14, 2019 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to approve, as amended, the Minutes of the November 14, 2019 Regular Meeting.

4.2 Approval of Minutes – November 20, 2019 Legislative Luncheon

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the November 14, 2019 Legislative Luncheon.

5. Reports to the Board

5.1 Central Office

The Superintendent's Report (dated 12/12/19) was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; the Superintendent's Office, Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, Communications, the Business Office, Special Education, Technology, Early Education, Human Resources, and Facilities. Mr. Pandolfo advised that he attended the UVM celebration for Outstanding Teachers. Michael Whalen and Alison Grogan have received National Board Teacher Certification. Myrna Miranda-O'Neill has completed her educational doctorate and will be presenting at an upcoming conference. Mrs. Miranda-O'Neil was commended for her achievement. The UPS at Spaulding High School is being upgraded. Josh Allen has set up many Twitter accounts and is pushing out much information. Mr. Allen is doing a wonderful job of providing information and promoting the BUUSD, using social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Front Porch Forum etc.).

5.2 Building Reports

5.2.1 Spaulding High School

The Principal's Report for December 2019 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; Athletics, Winter Sports, Students and Community, Staff, and Student, Athlete, and Staff Person of the Week. The SHS and Library newsletters for December 2019 were also distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

5.2.2 Barre City Elementary and Middle School

The Co-Principals' Report dated December 10, 2019 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; challenging situations/behaviors (involving parents) that are occurring on the campus, and an initiative to raise the bar on civility with students, resignation of Carmen Mears, the Barre Writing Contest, and Upcoming Events (including the Holiday Concert and Celebration – 12/18/19). Mr. Hennessey stressed the importance of transparency, and advised that administrators and staff are working 'doggedly' to promote a higher level of civility.

5.2.3 Barre Town Middle and Elementary School

The BTMES Building Report dated December 12, 2019 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; Assessments, the Barre Rock Solid campaign, the David Stefaniak Memorial Holiday Food and Gift Drive, Hour of Code, the LifeChanger of the Year Award (Shelby Lindley and Matt Leonard have been nominated), and the Middle School Winter Music Concerts (which occurred on 12/10/19 and 12/11/19). A copy of the BTMES Newsletter for December 2019 was also distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

5.2.4 Central Vermont Career Center

The CVCC Director's Report for December 2019 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; Accuplacer Pre Test Results, Professional Development, CVCC Career Day (11/04/19), and the CVCC Professional Learning Group initiative (there are 4 teams). A copy of the CVCC Perkins FY21 Summary document (dated 11/26/19) was also distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

5.3 Committee Reports

5.3.1 Policy Committee

The November meeting was cancelled.

The next meeting is Monday, December 16, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the BUUSD Central Office.

5.3.2 Curriculum Committee

The Committee met on December 11, 2019. Erin Carter, Venus Dean, and Christine Farnham presented to the Committee on curriculum, assessment (under proficiency based grading), and professional development for math programs.

The next meeting is Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. at BTMES in the Library.

5.3.3 Finance Committee

The Committee met on December 10, 2019. Discussion centered mainly on FY21 budget development, with limited discussion on the status of acquisition of property for the SEA program. Lori Hébert, Human Services Instructor at CVCC presented to the Committee regarding her belief that the Human Service Program should not be eliminated as part of budget cuts. Mr. Malone advised that the Committee had a good discussion and that difficult decisions will need to be made.

The next meeting is Tuesday, January 7, 2020, 5:30 p.m. The location of the meeting is to be announced.

5.3.4 Facilities and Transportation Committee

The Committee met on December 9, 2019. Discussion included an update on the 5-year plan, removal of the canopy at BTMES, underground piping work at SHS (related to the heating system), the BCEMS bus loop project (an RFP will be going out), discussion of a generator for BTMES, transportation, and review of a draft thank you letter to BGA (for changing the bollards).

The next meeting is Monday, January 13, 2019 at 5:30 p.m. in the BUUSD Central Office.

5.3.5 Communications Committee

The Committee met on December 5, 2019. Nancy Wolfe, a community member attended and advised the Committee regarding how she obtains information relating to the BUUSD and district schools. Discussion centered mainly on ways to communicate with members of the community, with special focus on strategies on communicating budget information. Mrs. Spaulding advised that brief

discussion was held regarding name tags for Board Members. Mrs. Spaulding has researched the cost (\$6.00 per name tag). Board Members should e-mail Mrs. Spaulding on how they want their name to appear on their name tag. Mrs. Spaulding will order the name tags. The next meeting is Thursday, January 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. in the BUUSD Central Office.

5.3.6 Negotiations Committee

Minutes from the December 3, 2019 meeting were distributed. The Committee has met twice with teachers and para-educators to discuss terms, presentation, framing, and ground rules. The Committee will meet again to trade lists of issues to discuss. The Committee will meet next week with representatives from the Association. Meetings are scheduled twice a month from December through May.

5.3.7 Regional Advisory Board

Minutes from the December 2, 2019 meeting were distributed. The outcome of the RAB Board recommendation was discussed at the Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Isabelle advised that many Board Members attended the CVCC Open House which had a great turnout of community members. The next meeting is February 10, 2020 at the Central Vermont Career Center.

5.4 Financials

A copy of the BUUSD Expense Report Summary (dated 12/10/19) was distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

6. Current Business

6.1 Student Presentation – Social Contract

Mr. Hennessey advised that working with students to develop a student led Social Contract has been the highlight of the past two weeks. Mr. Hennessey provided a brief overview of this initiative. Students addressed the Board, utilizing a Power Point presentation, and provided an overview of the student led project. The Social Contract defines expectations and what each expectation looks like. The process of writing the Social Contract involved each middle school TA. Each TA came up with ideas. The lists of ideas were combined by grade. The goal of the process was to learn everyone's opinion. Each team had a student leader that was selected by student peers. Students provided an overview of the defined expectations. The new Social Contract was presented to the entire middle school during an assembly. The Social Contract has been fully implemented in the middle school, and is starting to be implemented in the elementary school. The Social Contract is posted in every middle school TA and is also posted in many common areas throughout the school. Mr. Hennessey advised that the Social Contract is very powerful because it was defined by students rather than by staff or administrators. The Social Contract promotes respecting others' property, voice, space, and feelings. 'BCEMS is a judgement free zone!'. Students and parents were thanked for their attendance at the meeting.

6.2 Audit Presentation

Four Draft Audits were distributed (BCEMS, BTMES, SHS/CVCC, and BSU). Each Draft Audit contained a draft letter (dated 12/06/19) from Mudgett Jennett & Krogh-Wisner, PC and a draft document titled 'Financial Statements June 30, 2019 And Independent Auditor's Reports' (BCEMS draft dated December 6, 2019, BTMES, SHS/CVCC, and BSU drafts were dated 12/05/19).

Tyler Kimberly, Senior Accountant, addressed the Board, advising that he will be presenting the highlights of the FY19 Audit. The Board is encouraged to provide feedback and ask questions. Mr. Kimberly advised that the audit went smoothly, and proceeded to provide an overview of the process which started in September and is currently being 'wrapped up'. The Audit found no material weaknesses or deficiencies, and included some discussion on consolidating the districts into one entity. Several adjustments were made. The BSU had the most adjustments, which mainly related to reporting activities. Mr. Kimberly provided an overview of the Fund Balances for each entity, and advised that next year's audit would be for a single entity. The Audit went very smoothly, and Business Office personnel work well with the auditors. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins thanked Mrs. Perreault for her efforts on the Audit. Mrs. Perreault advised that it was very beneficial for Mr. Kimberly to guide the Business Office through the work involved combining into one entity. Mr. Kimberly answered questions from the Board, including one on the SHS Audit (page 7, Table 3), where it was noted that the 'years' listed in the table need to be modified. Mr. Pandolfo advised that all Board Members from the previous district Boards were sent copies of the Audits and were invited to attend this evening's meeting. The Board commended Mr. Kimberly, Mrs. Perreault, and Business Office staff for their work on the FY19 Audit.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to approve/accept all of the Audits as presented, with one change to be made in the SHS Audit (BCEMS, BTMES, SHS/CVCC, and BSU).

6.3 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Form for Cooper Bushey (BTMES physical education – elementary school) and Heather MacAskill (BCEMS Behavior Specialist) were distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the candidates' experience, and advised that Board approval is only necessary for Cooper Bushey's position.

On a motion by Mr. Folland, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of both candidates; Cooper Bushey and Heather MacAskill.

Letters of resignation from Tracy Taylor, RN, MSN (CVCC Medical Professionals Instructor), Steve Coultas (retirement) (CVCC Building Trades Instructor), Carmen Mears (BCEMS Behavior Specialist), and Dianna Martel (retirement - BTMES Classroom teacher) were distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the letters of resignation and retirement, and requested Board approval. In response to a query relating to the resignation letter submitted by Tracy Taylor, it was noted that many positions within the BUUSD require dual licenses. Mr. Hennessey advised that Ms. Mears is a graduate of both BCEMS and SHS, who has done a wonderful job with the kids, and that BCEMS has been very fortunate to have found someone to fill the position she is leaving.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to accept the resignations from Tracy Taylor, Carmen Mears, Steve Coultas (retirement), and Dianna Martel (retirement).

6.4 Field Trip Approval

A document titled 'Overnight/Out of State Field Trips' was distributed as part of the packet.

A revised version of the document was distributed. The revised document includes one additional field trip.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to approve the field trips identified in the revised Overnight/Out of State Field Trips document.

Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding the ratio of adults to students on the February 6, 2020 Building Trades, Electrical and Plumbing Trades field trip to Boston for the Construction Trade Show.

7. Old Business

7.1 Budget Development

Ten documents were distributed:

A document titled 'Impact of Budget Increase Contributors on Tax Rates – BUUSD FY21 Budget'

A document titled 'FY21 BUUSD Draft 2 Summary – December 12, 2019'

A document titled 'FY21 BUUSD Budget Development Highlights – December 12, 2019 – Draft #2'

A document titled 'BUUSD FY21 Proposed Budget, Expense Summary – 12/12/19'

A copy of the BUUSD Projected Comparative Tax Rate Calculations for Barre City and Barre Town (for Budget Year 2020 – 2021)

A copy of an e-mail from Mr. Pandolfo titled 'tax rate increase breakdown' (dated 12/11/19)

A copy of a letter from Susan Young, Secretary of Administration to Rep. Johnson, Speaker of the House / Sen. Ashe, President Pro Tempore, (dated 12/02/19) regarding the 2019 Education Tax Rate Forecast

A copy of a letter from Craig Bolio, Acting Commissioner, Department of Taxes, to Rep. Johnson, Speaker of the House / Sen. Ashe, President Pro Tempore (dated 12/02/19).

A copy of a document titled 'Commissioner of Taxes Releases FY2021 Education Yield Letter'

A document from the Vermont Department of Taxes titled 'The Education Fund and Education Finance' (dated 12/01/19)

Mrs. Perreault advised that the Finance Committee meeting was well attended and much honest and open conversation occurred. FY21 is a very challenging budget year. Mrs. Perreault advised that the new statewide health insurance plan that was recently announced, adds 1.3 million dollars to budget draft 1. Draft 2, including Universal Free Meals, results in a 12.49% increase. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the recommendation for CVCC that was presented at the Finance Committee meeting. The RAB Board has asked that CVCC tuition not increase by more than 10%. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the Draft 2 Summary document, noting the cost per pupil at each building, and advising that she proposes using \$200,000 from the Tax Stabilization Fund, as revenue for FY21. In response to a query, it was noted that Universal Free Meals is still in the draft budget, though no final decision has been made. The amount budget for UFM \$750k, is an estimate that could increase if forms are not submitted by parents. It was noted that due to stigma, high school students are less likely to turn in the forms for free/reduced meals. Mrs. Nye advised that due to changes in the Federal threshold, 75 to 100 BTMES families no longer qualify for free/reduced meals. In response to a query, it was noted that there has been no official word regarding a change to the Tax Yield number. If the Tax Yield increases, it would be beneficial to the BUUSD. Implementation of Universal Free Meals would result in a tax increase of 3¢ (\$60 per year for a 200k house). All administrators are in favor of instituting Universal Free Meals. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the Impact of Budget Increase Contributors on Tax Rates document, and cautioned against budgeting too low. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the health insurance increase of \$1,917,500 results in a 7.5¢ increase for Barre City and an increase of 8.5¢ in Barre Town. Additionally, the increase for wages, (\$1,529,000) results in a 5.9¢ increase for Barre City and an increase of 6.8¢ in Barre Town. The tax impact including Universal Free Meals is a 16.3¢ increase for Barre City and an increase of 18.6¢ in Barre Town. Brief philosophical discussion was held regarding the reasons for healthcare increases. Mr. Malone expressed concern regarding the double digit tax increase. Mr. Isabelle expressed frustration that the BUUSD had been holding down per pupil costs for years and is now going to have a significant increase due to items that are not in the Board's control. Mrs. Perreault advised that the initial student counts were due from the State on 12/01/19, and have still not been received. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the Agency of Education has lost many employees and are having capacity issues. At the legislative luncheon, Mrs. Spaulding was told that if the BUUSD has issues with the Agency of Education, they should write to the Governor. Mrs. Spaulding announced that she will write to the governor and she encourages other Board Members to do the same.

7.2 Board Organization

7.2.1 Appointment of Negotiations Committee Chair as Voting Delegate for Statewide HealthCare Bargaining

A copy of a letter from Sue Ceglowski, Executive Director of the VSBA, to Mr. Pandolfo (dated 11/14/19) was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the document, and advised that Gina Akley is the present Chair of the BUUSD Negotiations Committee. Mr. Pandolfo recommends appointing the 'Negotiations Committee Chair' to be the voting delegate for Statewide HealthCare bargaining.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to appoint the Negotiations Committee Chair as the voting delegate for Statewide HealthCare bargaining.

7.2.2 Procedures

7.2.2.1 Public Comment at Board Meetings

A draft document titled 'Barre UUSD Board Procedure – Public Comment at Board Meetings' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that he has drafted the procedures for Board review and comments. Procedures do not need to be approved by the Board. If the Board believes the draft documents are satisfactory, he will remove the word 'draft' and the documents can be posted on-line. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding the 'user friendly' flow chart that she requested for the procedure listed under Agenda Item 7.2.2.2. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins advised that the flow chart was presented at the Policy Committee meeting. A note will be added to the 'Complaints Regarding Students, Parents, Employees, School, or District' procedure, advising that a flow chart will be added. The Board agreed that the drafts are satisfactory and the word 'draft' may be removed, and the procedures posted on-line.

7.2.2.2 Complaints Regarding Students, Parents, Employees, School, or District

A draft document titled 'Barre UUSD Board Procedure – Complaints Regarding Students, Parents, Employees, School, or District' was distributed. See discussion under Agenda Item 7.2.2.1.

7.2.2.3 Board and Board Committee Operation

A draft document titled 'Barre UUSD Board Procedure – Board and Board Committee Operation' was distributed. See discussion under Agenda Item 7.2.2.1.

7.2.3 March Board Elections

A document titled 'Article 11: Initial Directors' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the document, advising that Mr. Boltin, Mr. Folland, and Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins terms end in March 2020. Mr. Pandolfo noted that the January meeting falls within a few weeks of the deadline for submission of petitions. Those wishing to run for Board seats should obtain the forms and necessary signatures and submit their petitions prior to the deadline.

8. Other Business/Round Table

Mr. Isabelle appreciates the recognition of student and staff.

Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins thanked Mr. Coon and Mr. Hennessey for the work they are involved in with students.

Mrs. Spaulding advised that Hedding Methodist Church is holding their annual Christmas dinner. Everyone is welcome to attend and/or volunteer.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that Board Members should have received an e-mail from VSBA regarding January being Board / Board Member Recognition Month.

Mr. Coon reported that the 3rd grade concert at BCEMS was wonderful, and that all Arts staff also joined the event.

Mr. Coon and Mr. Hennessey are very proud of BCEMS staff, who have recently been under a significant amount of stress. The recent stressors have had a major impact on morale and issues need to be addressed to keep the school functioning. Parents and community members need to address their concerns with administrators and stop attacking staff on social media. The recent social media attacks are unacceptable and uncalled for.

9. Future Agenda Items

- FY21 Budget
- Approval of the Announced Tuition
- Approval of the Winooski Valley & Statewide Choice of Public High School Collaborative for the 2020 – 2021 School Year (Under Act 129 (SEC. 34§ 822d 2A).
- Employee Retirements/Resignations/New Hires

Two Board meetings are scheduled for January 2020. **Both meetings will take place at the BTMES Library.**

The Board will meet on Thursday, January 9, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

The Board will meet on Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

10. Executive Session as Needed

10.1 Real Estate Matter

10.2 Litigation

10.3 Labor Relations Agreements

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include a Real Estate Matter, Litigation, and Labor Relations Agreements.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the items proposed for discussion would clearly place the BUUSD at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 7:19 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 7:42 p.m.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin