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## BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Barre Town Middle and Elementary School – Library  
January 23, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

#### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Malone (BT) - Chair  
Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Vice-Chair  
Victoria Pompei (BT) – Clerk  
Gina Akley (BT)  
Tim Boltin (BC)  
Giuliano Cecchinelli (BC)  
Anthony Folland (BC)  
Guy Isabelle (At-Large)

#### BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Rebecca Kerin-Hutchins (BT)

#### ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent  
Luke Aither, SHS Assistant Principal  
Josh Allen, Communications Specialist  
Stacy Anderson, Co-Director of Special Services  
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center  
Jason Derner, Alternative Education Administrator  
Jim Ferland, SHS Assistant Principal  
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal  
Carol Marold, Human Resources Director  
Jennifer Nye, BTMES Principal  
Erica Pearson, BTMES Principal  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager  
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

#### GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech	Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Geneva Beede	Brendan Eaton	Christine Ferrant
Lori Hébert	Susan Holson	Annette Rhoades	Heather Slayton	

#### **1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mr. Malone, called the Thursday, January 23, 2020, Regular meeting to order at 5:31 p.m., which was held at Barre Town Middle and Elementary School in the Library.**

#### **2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda**

Add 5.5 CVCC Needs Assessment RFP Recommendation  
Add 5.6 Superintendent Search  
Add 9.3 Negotiations (under Executive Session)

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Akley, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.**

#### **3. Public Comment**

Heather Slayton addressed the Board. Mrs. Slayton wanted to provide clarification regarding the profit and use of PTO fund raisers/funds. Mrs. Slayton advised that the profit for the 2018 – 2019 year was \$7,000 and that not much of the profit was used to support field trips. Mrs. Slayton proceeded to advise the Board regarding numerous programs and items that profits were used for.

#### **4. Approval of Minutes**

##### **4.1 Approval of Minutes – January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting**

**On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board voted 7 to 0 to approve the Minutes of the January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting. Mr. Isabelle abstained.**

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## 5. Current Business

### 5.1 FY21 BUUSD Annual Meeting Warning

A document titled 'Barre Unified Union School District Annual Meeting Warning for March 2, 2020' was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised the Board, that as previously discussed, the Board is required to hold an annual meeting, the Warning for this meeting is attached and being presented for approval. Mr. Pandolfo advised regarding various ways to proceed in the future, including consideration of not holding an annual meeting. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of what is accomplished at the Annual Meeting, including; election of officers, stipends for Board Directors, and approval of authorization to borrow funds. The Board may wish to consider having all of the Annual Meeting action items decided by Australian ballot, though this does create some additional work (those wishing to be officers of the Board would need to complete petitions and collect signatures from registered voters).

**On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Barre Unified Union School District Annual Meeting Warning for March 2, 2020 as presented.**

### 5.2 FY21 Budget and Warning

Four documents were distributed; a copy of an undated letter to the RAB Board from Penny Chamberlin regarding alternative reductions to the CVCC FY21 Budget, a document titled 'BUUSD Board requested alternative reductions CVCC January 23, 2020', a copy of a letter from David Laurin, Architect, to Jaime Evans (dated 01/13/20), and a draft of the Superintendent's Report to the community, which includes a document titled 'Why do Barre Town and Barre City have different Homestead Education Tax Rates? – The Common Level of Appraisal!'.

Discussion started with Article III of the Warning (CVCC Budget). The Board was reminded that previous discussion resulted in passing the CVCC budget, and that tonight's discussion relates to what needs to be cut from the CVCC budget to arrive at the approved amount. The Board will be reviewing an alternate scenario being presented by Ms. Chamberlin. Ms. Chamberlin proceeded to provide an overview of how she arrived at the original proposal, identified as Proposal "A" (elimination of one Literacy Coordinator, a Culinary Lab Assistant, and the Human Services Program, and combining the Baking Arts Program with the Culinary Arts Program). The alternative scenario, identified as Proposal "B" involves eliminating the CVCC Permanent Substitute, STEM Educator (including payroll taxes & insurance), and the Electrical/Plumbing Lab Assistant. It was noted that there has been difficulty filling the lab assistant position (over the past 5 years). Mr. Boltin, who is a baker, is very concerned with the proposed closing of the Baking Arts Program, and advised that he has hired two very good employees who completed the program. In response to a query, Ms. Chamberlin advised that she believes the costs associated with modifying the 'Lunch Box' as SHS, will be covered by income generated from the sale of Baking Arts equipment currently installed at the off-site location. Additionally, Ms. Chamberlin advised that baked goods could be delivered utilizing a van, and further advised that she does not believe the "Lunch Box" will lose much revenue as a result of combining the two programs. Mr. Malone noted that many community members are concerned that the Human Services and Baking Arts Programs will be closed, and are of the belief that once programs are cut, they will never come back. It takes approximately 18 to 24 months to start up a program. Mr. Folland expressed concern over the potential loss of the STEM Coordinator and the Literacy Interventionist positions. Ms. Chamber advised that those positions were aligned over the past few years, to assist students with meeting proficiency. Mrs. Akley reiterated her concern that once programs are gone, they do not come back, citing the need for jobs in the area, and the lengthy ramp up time (should CVCC wish to reinstate the programs). Mr. Cecchinelli queried Ms. Chamberlin regarding what she would eliminate if the CVCC budget did not pass (items identified as proposal B?). Ms. Chamberlin believes that if the budget is not passed, she will need to perform additional research prior to identifying additional cuts. Ms. Chamberlin advised that the proposed budget cuts were fiscal decisions, not personal decisions. Mrs. Pompei acknowledged the fiscal portion of the proposed cuts, but queried if the cuts were socially responsible given the massive shortage of child care and behavioral interventionists. Mr. Isabelle believes work based learning has had a negative impact on CVCC enrollment. Mrs. Spaulding thanked Ms. Chamberlin for providing the alternative scenario, and recognized the difficulties involved, working with the RAB Board to draft a budget, that is to be approved by a different Board (the BUUSD Board). Mrs. Spaulding supports proposal A.

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board voted 7 to 1 to approve proceeding with "Proposal A". Mrs. Pompei voted against the motion.**

Discussion was held regarding Article IV (Bond Vote for acquisition and rehabilitation of property to house the Spaulding Educational Alternatives Program). Mr. Pandolfo advised he has received additional information from architect Dave Laurin, who estimates it will cost more than the current warned amount (\$2,000,000). The Board approved the warned amount at the last meeting. Mr. Pandolfo suggested that the Board consider changing the amount to reflect an additional \$50,000 or \$75,000, and if so, approve amending the warning as such. Lengthy discussion was held, including discussion of; the impact of increasing the bond amount, the cost analysis, which shows a much lower cost per pupil \$33,711, versus outplaced students (usually a minimum of \$85,000), The current rent paid to EF Wall (\$85,000 annually), current Special Education reimbursement, the negative impact that Act 173 will have on Special Education reimbursement (the BUUSD will not have enough money to cover all of the students who require out-placement), the benefits of bringing out-placed students back in-house when possible, cost savings, improved control over education and re-

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introduction back into the mainstream (when possible), the proposed operational date (academic year 2021 – 2022), students who are currently receiving lesser services (because out-placement facilities are at capacity and no longer accepting new students), increased capacity to add programs, including individualized programs, with an in-house alternative program, concern that multiple large projects are being contemplated at the same time (CVCC needs assessment/possible relocation and the Alternative Program proposal), the extensive search for available real estate that meets the needs of the project, concerns of increasing the bond amount, the possibility of eventually accepting tuition paying students from other districts, parental concerns relating to current special education programs, services, and hiring of staff (now and for a new facility), and the age/grade of students who will attend the new program (high school, and possibly some 8<sup>th</sup> graders in the future). It was noted, that even with the bond, housing students in-house results in a lower cost per pupil than we currently pay. Mrs. Akley is very comfortable with the proposal and believes it is well thought out. One additional correction to the Warning (changing ‘six’ to ‘five-thirty’) was noted.

**On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board voted 6 to 2 to increase the amount in Article IV of the Warning to \$2,750,000, and to approve the amended Barre Unified Union School District Warning For March 3, 2020 Vote.**

**Mrs. Akley, Mr. Boltin, Mr. Cecchinelli, Mr. Folland, Mr. Malone, and Mrs. Pompei voted for the motion. Mr. Isabelle and Mrs. Spaulding voted against the motion.**

Mrs. Spaulding advised that she received a budget communication e-mail from Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins sent out a sign-up spreadsheet, and hopes that all Board Members will sign up to attend events for the purpose of budget promotion. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the current spreadsheet contains mainly sporting events. Mrs. Spaulding will update the spreadsheet with additional events and send out a new copy.

Mr. Pandolfo shared a copy of the letter that was sent to Barre City and Barre Town to be included in their respective town and city Annual Reports. Mr. Allen will be incorporating some of that information into the BUUSD Annual Report. The information will also be posted on the budget web page. Mr. Allen continues to work on the BUUSD’s Annual Report and will share a draft at a later date. The Budget report is also being worked on and is almost ready to go to the printer.

### **5.3 Discussion of Mission, Vision & Strategic Goals**

A document (packet) titled ‘Portrait of a Graduate’ was distributed. A document titled ‘Beginning Process to Identify BUUSD Shared Values’ was distributed. A document titled ‘Common Values Held by Educators of Barre Unified Union Supervisory District’ was also distributed. Mrs. Akley provided a brief overview of previous ‘training’, and advised that she believes ‘Portrait of a Graduate’ is a great place to start for the development of the BUUSD’s Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals. Mrs. Spaulding read from one of the distributed documents and advised that she does not believe there is a cost for school districts to use Portrait of a Graduate. Mrs. Spaulding will confirm whether or not there would be a charge associated with the BUUSD utilizing the software. Mrs. Akley does not believe work on the Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals can be accomplished at this evening’s meeting, and suggested that a separate meeting be scheduled, for the sole purpose of working on this initiative. Mrs. Spaulding will conduct the research relating to costs associated with the software and this item will be added to the next Board Agenda, so that its use can be discussed and potentially approved by the Board.

### **5.4 Field Trip Approvals**

Two documents, both titled ‘Barre City Elementary and Middle School Field Trip Application’ were distributed.

**On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the field trips as presented.**

### **5.5 CVCC Needs Assessment RFP Recommendation**

A document titled ‘Central Vermont Career Center Needs Assessment Services and Technical Assistance RFP Comparison-Recommendation – BUUSD Board – January 23, 2020’ was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised regarding the RFP process and his recommendation that CVCC contract with Lavallee Brensinger Architects for the Needs Assessment and Technical Assistance for the Central Vermont Career Center. It was noted that funding for the needs assessment was previously approved.

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Superintendent’s recommendation to contract with Lavallee Brensinger Architects.**

### **5.6 Superintendent Search**

Two documents were distributed; a document titled ‘Superintendent Candidate Screening Committee Charge’, and a document titled ‘Superintendent Search Timeline’. Mr. Malone advised that he and Mrs. Spaulding initiated some of the work to assist with starting the process, and wish to proceed by getting Board approval on the process and the involved stakeholders/participants. They have spoken with the VSBA, regarding how the process should work and who should be involved as part of the Screening Committee. The Screening Committee is planned to be comprised of 13 individuals; 4 building administrators (one from each of the 4 schools – principals and the CVCC Director), the Teachers Union President, 2 Board Members (1 from the Town and 1 from the City), 2 Central

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Office professionals, 2 parents (1 from the Town and 1 from the City), and 2 community members (also with 1 from the Town and 1 from the City).

Mrs. Spaulding advised of two items that need to be discussed. The first item is to send a letter to the AOE, requesting permission to begin a Superintendent Search. Mr. Malone has a copy of the letter and will be looking for Board authorization to sign and submit the document. The second item for the Board to discuss is the possibility of having/hiring someone to assist with the Superintendent Search process. Mrs. Spaulding advised that Susan Holson, from the VSBA is in attendance at this evening's meeting, and can speak to the Board. The Board may wish to decide if they wish to work with the VSBA for the search. Mr. Malone advised regarding some of the information contained in the letter to the Agency of Education.

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously authorized the Board Chair to sign the letter to the Agency of Education requesting that the BUUSD open a Superintendent Search.**

Susan Holson and Carol Marold were invited to join in the discussion. Mrs. Marold provided a brief overview of part of the process, including; requesting permission to begin a search, looking for a consultant, and formation the Screening Committee. Mrs. Marold advised that inquiries have gone out regarding possible interest in serving on the Screening Committee

Ms. Holson advised that the Board has several items to address prior to the Screening Committee beginning operation. One item is to approve the charge and scope of the committee. The charge must be in place before the committee begins functioning. The Board must write a job description, and then using portions of the job description, write a job posting. The Board will also approve the Screening Committee, and set a deadline. The consultant would post the job on School Spring and other appropriate places. The committee would screen applicants and decide who to hold initial interviews with, hold interviews, vet candidates, and then present a list of final candidates and their credentials to the Board. At that point, the Board takes over the hiring process. The Board will hold interviews, hold site visits, and community interactions. The entire process should take three months, and the Board should begin as soon as possible. Ms. Holson believes the next step is for this Board to hold a work session to assure that all of the correct pieces are in place so that the Screening Committee can move forward. Discussion was held regarding contracting with VSBA, including working with consultant Michael Deweese, who assisted with the last Superintendent Search. Ms. Holson suggests that she and Mr. Deweese work together to assist in the process. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding the Board having some direct discussion with Mr. Deweese. Ms. Holson advised that the proposal on the table is for her to be the lead and that communication with Mr. Deweese go through her. Mrs. Spaulding would like some of Mr. Deweese's expertise and knowledge readily available to the Board. Mrs. Spaulding believes it's important to have someone who has already held a superintendent's position advise on certain issues/questions. Mrs. Holson queried regarding how communications with VSBA and/or Mr. Deweese will take place. Ms. Holson advised regarding current superintendent openings that she is aware of and/or working on. The VSBA has not been contacted for all openings. Ms. Holson did caution that Mr. Deweese is currently putting some geographic parameters on where he will work. The Board discussed the use of a paid consultant for the purpose of assisting with the Superintendent search. The cost for utilizing VSBA for search assistance is \$8,500. The cost of utilizing VSBA for search assistance and the new Superintendent's first year evaluation is \$9,000. Ms. Holson advised that VSBA highly recommends that Boards evaluate superintendents once a year.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Folland, the Board unanimously voted to utilize a VSBA consultant to assist the Board with the Superintendent Search, at a cost of \$8,500.**

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Pompei, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Charge of the Committee as presented.**

The Board discussed selection of Board Members for the Screening Committee, and who may wish to volunteer. Ms. Holson advised that due to possible 'balance of power' issues, the Board may wish not to have Board Members on the Screening Committee. Ms. Holson believes best practice is not to have Board Members on the Screening Committee, though it is not uncommon for that to occur. Ms. Holson expressed concern that Board Members on the Screening Committee can influence decisions prior to candidates being presented to the full Board.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board voted 6 to 0 to appoint Mr. Folland and Mr. Malone to work on the Screening Committee. Mr. Folland and Mr. Malone abstained.**

After brief discussion, it was agreed that the Board should hold a work session as soon as possible to finalize the outstanding items such that the Screening Committee can commence as soon as possible. It is estimated that the meeting should take approximately one hour. The Board agreed to meet on **Monday, January 27, 2020 at 7:30 p.m. at the BUUSD Central Office.** Ms. Holson will check with Mr. Deweese regarding his availability to attend.

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## 6. Old Business

None.

## 7. Other Business / Round Table

Mrs. Spaulding suggested that the Board consider holding two board meetings per month. Mr. Malone believes two meetings per month will be necessary for the foreseeable future.

Mrs. Pompei queried regarding information relating to possible cuts to the budget, in the event the budget does not pass.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that administrators stand behind the approved budget, and that the approved budget is what is necessary to educate students in this community. Cuts would possibly result in unfairness in equity between educating BUUSD students versus other students around the state. If the budget is defeated, cuts will be necessary in the areas of personnel, infrastructure, and safety. Any cuts would be detrimental to education quality, would be difficult to recover from, and would most likely, not be consistent across the buildings. It would be premature to publicize possible details at this time. Publicizing any possible reductions raises concerns relating to employee morale and culture. Mr. Pandolfo would not like employees to find out about possible budget cuts through a Board meeting. Administrators have performed the requested work to try to identify some cuts, but discussion would be more appropriate at a future Finance Committee meeting. Mrs. Spaulding thought that the reason for hearing some of the possible cuts, would be to educate community members, so that they would vote for the budget to avoid cuts that they don't want to see. Mr. Pandolfo advised that at this point, everything is "on the table" and that community members should be aware that anything may be cut. Mr. Pandolfo stressed that discussion relating to cutting items and prioritizing cuts is a very difficult endeavor. Mr. Pandolfo reiterated that to release information this early would be very damaging to personnel. Mr. Boltin stressed that everyone should be aware that the budget increases are not from the Board, and that folks should talk with their legislators regarding legislation that has had such a financial impact on the budget.

Mr. Folland advised that due to work and family commitments, he will not be running for re-election. Mr. Folland thanked everyone for his time on the Board, advising that it has been a pleasure to work with amazing administrators and a great group of board members.

## 8. Future Agenda Items

In addition to the regular action items;

- Discussion of Mission, Vision & Strategic Goals - Portrait of a Student

## 9. Executive Session

### 9.1 Personnel

### 9.2 Administrator Evaluations

### 9.3 Negotiations

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include a Personnel Matter and Administrator Evaluations.

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Akley the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item (Negotiations) proposed for discussion would clearly place the Barre Unified Union School District at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.**

**On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Aither, Ms. Chamberlin, Mr. Ferland, Mr. Hennessey, Mrs. Nye, Ms. Pearson, and Mrs. Waterhouse in attendance for Agenda Item 9.1, and Mr. Pandolfo in attendance for Agenda Items 9.2 and 9.3, at 8:23 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. Boltin-, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 11:34 p.m.**

## 10. Adjournment

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 11:35 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*