

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING**  
BUUSD Central Office – First Floor Conference Area  
January 2, 2020 - 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) – arrived at 5:34 p.m.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

John Pandolfo, Superintendent  
Josh Allen, Communications Director

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Paul Malone

**1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mr. Folland, called the Thursday, January 2, 2020 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting to order at 5:32 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.**

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

Add 6.4 Discussion of Protocol on Responding to e-mails From Community Members

Discussion was held regarding Board and Board Committee Operations. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the draft procedural document titled Board and Board Committee Operation, which was written with input from legal counsel. A copy of this document will be presented at the next BUUSD Board Meeting. Additional discussion will be held prior to finalizing the document. There are questions relating to non-Board Member committee members, and other members of the public who occasionally attend committee meetings. At the present time, other than going into Executive Session, committees will not make motions or vote. Minutes and recommendations are being made by consensus. Research will be performed regarding community members being appointed to BUUSD Committees.

Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins and Mr. Folland are unavailable on the next regularly scheduled meeting date. The meeting date will be changed to February 11, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

It was noted that the January 23, 2020 BUUSD Board Meeting is not on the on-line calendar. Mrs. Gilbert will be advised of the meeting changes/additions.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes –**

**4.1 December 5, 2019 BUUSD Communications Committee Meeting**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the December 5, 2019 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting.**

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Budget Promotion**

A document titled ‘Impact of Budget Increase Contribution on Tax Rates – BUUSD FY21 Budget DRAFT #3’ was distributed. Mr. Isabelle believes it is difficult to discuss budget promotion when the budget numbers have not been finalized. Mr. Allen suggested promoting the budget at PTO meetings. Mr. Allen also suggested identifying employees that live in Barre, and making a concerted effort to educate those individuals on the budget. Mr. Folland reiterated budget promotion at sporting events. Mr. Isabelle advised of some opposition to pie charts that was expressed by members of the District Management Group Cohort. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the ‘Impact’ document, advising that 16.3¢ of the 16.7¢ tax increase for Barre Town is related to Health Insurance, Salaries, the CLA, and Equalized Pupil Counts provided by the State. It will be important to share this information with the community. It is important that the community be informed of budget items that the Board doesn’t control. Five additional documents were distributed; ‘Report from the Superintendent of Schools’, ‘FY2020 Budget Report’ (the 2019 web page introduction),

a document titled 'From the Superintendent...' (the 2019 Annual Report Introduction), a document titled 'Note From the Superintendent of Schools on the FY2020 Budget', and a document titled 'Report From the Superintendent of Schools' (labeled as the 2020 first draft). Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the distributed documents. It was noted that Mr. Allen has started writing 'stories' relating to the topics of; Advancement in Technologies, School Safety, Expansion of Alternative Programs, and Community Service Graduation Requirements. Mrs. Spaulding advised that budget promotion needs to be as transparent as possible, and advised that if the budget is defeated, difficult cuts will need to be made. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned regarding the Barre City Budget increase and the impact that may have on tax payers' approval of the school budget. Mrs. Spaulding advised that we must be careful relating the aspects of the budget that the Board does not control. Mr. Malone has been trying to assess public perception and is making efforts to discuss school items with the public to see how informed they are. Mr. Allen believes it will be beneficial to walk the public through the budget process and budget discussions. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins believes the public appreciates the Board's honesty. Mrs. Spaulding would like the Annual Report to highlight positive things that are happening throughout the BUUSD, and stressed the need to be honest in conveying improvements and budget talks. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding information that may be available about increases proposed for other local school districts. It was noted that under the proposed draft, the BUUSD cost per equalized pupil is still \$2,000 less than the projected state-average cost per pupil. If budget cuts need to be made, it will need to be in the area of personnel. Mr. Pandolfo advised that draft 3 does not include 'additions', and he does not feel that cuts should be discussed at this point. Mr. Pandolfo believes that discussions of possible cuts should occur post 01/09/20, after the Board has approved a budget. Administrators have been directed not to start discussing cuts at this point. Mrs. Spaulding requested information on the tax increase impact to tax payers (e.g. tax dollar increase per \$200,000 property value). Mr. Allen has started to work on obtaining this information. Research is also being performed relating to 'Income Sensitivity', and it is believed that 52% of tax payers qualify for the pre-bate/rebate. Mr. Allen advised that budget promotion should be added to the PTO and SHS Community Meeting agendas. Brief discussion was held regarding increasing the number of individuals who vote, including staff members. Mrs. Kerin-Hutchins will create a Google spreadsheet of upcoming events, including Barre City and Barre Town governmental meetings.

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 Annual Report**

Mr. Allen provided an overview of the timeline, advising that he is currently writing the content (text), and hopes to have this completed by the end of next week. Jet Service will need 2 weeks to design, print, and mail the documents. The printing cost is currently estimated at a little over \$5,000. The mailing will be sent to approximately 7,000 households. The mailing list will need to be modified, as not all residences with zip code 05641 are in Barre (some are in Berlin). It was noted that the zip codes for Graniteville and East Barre will need to be added. The Annual Report will be mailed 2 weeks before the March Town Meeting.

Mr. Pandolfo and Mr. Allen advised that there will be a 'barrage' of electronic promotion, which will include promotion of voter registration and early voting. This information will also be added to the Principals' newsletters. It was suggested that the BUUSD produce a 'voting' video.

### **6.2 Mission, Vision & Strategic Goals – Barre Education Coalition**

This topic will be on the 01/23/19 Board Agenda. Preparation work will need to be performed. Discussion will include the possible use of "Portrait of a Graduate" software, input from staff, and 'steps moving forward'. It was noted that the Board Agenda will also include an Executive Session for Administrator Evaluations. Approval of the purchase of property may also be added to the Board Agenda.

### **6.3 Logo/Branding**

Mr. Allen reported that he has been using software to create color palates for each school/building. Color palate creation work continues and will require that discussions be held at each school, and will include student input. Discussions will include the creation of "style guides / media kits". Mr. Allen will contact Ms. Chamberlin regarding the possibility of CVCC students assisting with the project.

### **6.4 Discussion of Protocol Responding to e-mails From Community Members**

Recently Board/Committee Members have been receiving e-mails from community members. Discussion needs to be held regarding the protocol for who responds to these types of e-mails. It was noted that the BUUSD Board Chair is the spokesperson for the Board. It was suggested that the Board may wish to consider having Committee Chairs respond to e-mails relating to their committee work. Mr. Pandolfo will draft a procedure for discussion at the Board Meeting.

## **7. Other Business**

Brief discussion was held regarding the 01/23/2020 BUUSD Board Meeting;

Will Video Vision be present to record the meeting?

If Video Vision records the meeting, is it necessary for the scribe to be in attendance, or shall Minutes be produced from the video.

## **8. Items For Future Agendas**

- Budget Promotion
- Annual Report
- Mission, Vision, & Strategic Goals – Barre Education Coalition

- Logo/Branding

**9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., in the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

**10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:18 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*