

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
BUUSD Central Office – First Floor Conference Area  
February 4, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sonya Spaulding (BC) - Chair  
Victoria Pompei (BT) – Vice Chair  
Gina Akley (BT)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Anthony Folland (BC)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Guy Isabelle  
Paul Malone

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

John Pandolfo, Superintendent  
Josh Allen, Communications Specialist  
Stacy Anderson, Co-Director of Special Services  
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal  
Donald McMahon, Co-Special Services Director  
Erica Pearson, BTMES Principal  
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dave Delcore – Times Argus                      Ben Matthews                      Pat McAskill

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Tuesday, February 4, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:40 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

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

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes –**

**4.1 Meeting Minutes - January 7, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting**

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the January 7, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 FY20 Year-end Projection**

Five documents were distributed; the BUUSD FY20 Year-end Projection Report (dated 02/04/20), the BUUSD Expense Report (dated 01/20/20), the BUUSD Revenue Report (dated 01/20/20), the BUUSD Expense Report (for CVCC – dated 01/20/20), and the BUUSD Revenue Report (for CVCC – dated 01/23/20). Mrs. Spaulding and Mrs. Pompei advised regarding line items they had questions on, including; wages for printing services, the BTMES Assistant Principal vacancy, CVCC enrollment, the BCEMS Counselor position, bus riders, and contracted services. A question relating to an overage in spending for roof construction will be forwarded to the Business Manager. Mr. Pandolfo advised that there is some Medicaid reimbursement for services provided by Green Mountain Behavior Consulting, but not for services provided by Washington County Mental Health. Mrs. Pompei expressed concern that the BUUSD is only 100 days into the academic year, and the percentages reported as ‘left to spend’ seem low (BTMES 5.28%, SHS 15.94%, BCEMS 4.58%, and CVCC -6.82%). Mr. Pandolfo advised that the Business Manager is very conservative with her projections. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that administrators are very cognizant of the bottom line and work to keep the schools within budget. Mr. Pandolfo advised that rising Special Education expenses are very difficult on the budget and hopes that the proposed land purchase will help stem expenses in the future.

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 FY21 Budget**

A document titled 'BUUSD Budget Cut Considerations – FY2020' was distributed. The document identifies, by school, a prioritized list of items that may be considered for reduction in the future. The Committee discussed the list in order, by school. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the document, advising that he does not like the options being presented, advising they impact academics and safety. It is troubling to think about lowering the amount spent per pupil when the BUUSD already has the lowest cost per pupil in the state. It was noted that if the BUUSD were to tuition out its students, the cost per pupil would be greater. Mr. Pandolfo queried why athletics were not considered for reduction. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding the impact of cutting the hockey program, and whether or not students would be allowed to play for another school. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that students could potentially play at another school, but only if those teams have open spots. If students were to play hockey for a different school, the difficulties surrounding transportation need to be considered. The loss of a Pre-K Classroom at BTMES would significantly lower the number of students who could attend pre-k (one classroom holds two classes per day (one in the morning and one in the afternoon)). In response to a query regarding why the BCEMS SRO isn't on the list of proposed reductions, Mr. Hennessey advised that the BCEMS SRO position is integral given the needs of the Barre community. Concern was raised regarding the possible impact of the loss of Technology Integrationists at SHS and BTMES. Discussion was held regarding the proposed elimination of Spanish at the middle schools, and the impact it may have on students wanting to pursue a language at the high school. Mrs. Spaulding advised she has spoken with community members regarding the CVCC budget cuts (already in the budget), and that she struggles with the reductions, but noted that they do not impact a great number of people. It was noted that administrators have been very cautious in creating the list of possible cuts and that respectful discussions have been held with staff that would be impacted by the presented reductions. Mr. Pandolfo advised that teacher contracts are due out on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and queried regarding when RIF notices should be sent out. Mr. Malone voiced concern that it will be hard to attract families/students if too much is cut. Brief discussion was held regarding the loss of the tax incentive (from a forced merger, rather than a voluntary merger). It was noted that in the past, the BUUSD negotiated well for the benefits settlement; but that the recent State negotiated benefits settlement has caused much of the budget increase.

### **6.2 Communication Plan**

A document titled 'How would this proposed increase affect you?' was distributed. Mr. Allen advised that the Annual Report is being developed as planned and that a final draft will be available in the next few days. The Budget page is live on the website. A budget video will also be put on-line. Brief discussion was held regarding starting a FAQs section on the website. Mrs. Spaulding has been receiving a number of questions from community members. It was agreed to start a FAQs section. The Communications Committee meets next Tuesday (02/11/20) where additional discussion will be held. Committee Members were encouraged to keep promoting the budget. It would be beneficial to have Front Porch Forum and Facebook promotion by Board Members. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the Board Member sign-up sheet (for budget promotion) needs to be updated, as more venues should be added. It was suggested that Board Members visit senior centers and attend service club meetings. The Committee believes it might be beneficial to have a half-sheet handout that can be distributed at various events/venues.

### **6.3 Update on SEA Property**

There is no new information to report at this time.

## **7. Other Business**

None.

## **8. Items for Future Agendas**

- FY20 Year-end Projection
- April Meeting Date
- FY21 Budget/Exit Surveys
- Warrant Discussions – to be added as an ongoing agenda item

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, **March 10, 2020** at 5:30 p.m., at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Area.

## **10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:07 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*