

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**

BUUSD Central Office – First Floor Conference Area
Meeting held electronically via Zoom
March 26, 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)
Emel Cambel (BC)
Giuliano Cecchinelli (BC)
Alice Farrell (BT)
Guy Isabelle (At-Large)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
Josh Allen, Communications Specialist
Stacy Anderson, Co-Director of Special Services
Jason Derner, Alternative Education Administrator
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Annette Rhoades, Assistant Director of Special Services
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision	Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Adam Chase	Sara Chase	Randy Edmonds
Lisa Felch	Susan Holson	Prudence Krasofski	Ben Matthews	Ted Mills
Kelly Pembroke	Amanda Poor	Jean Savoy		

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Malone, called the Thursday, March 26, 2020, Regular meeting to order at 5:37 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office in the First Floor Conference Room with all participants participating on-line via Zoom.

As the meeting was held electronically, via Zoom, a roll-call vote was taken for each action item. Each Board Members was individually polled and voted to approve all motions that are listed as unanimously approved.

2. Additions and/or Deletions with a Motion to Approve the Agenda

7.2 Superintendent Search Update – discuss out of order, after Agenda Item 4.1.

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – March 12, 2020 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve, as amended, the Minutes of the March 12, 2020 Regular Meeting.

5. Reports to the Board

5.1 Central Office

The BUUSD Central Office Newsletter for March 2020 was distributed. It was noted that the Early Education Open House, scheduled for March 19, 2020 has been postponed.

5.2 Building Reports

5.2.1 Spaulding High School

The Principal's Report dated March 2020 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; Athletics, Students & Community, the COVID-19 Response, and Persons of the Week (Students, Athletes, and Staff). A copy of the SHS Newsletter for March 2020 was also distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

5.2.2 Barre City Elementary and Middle School

A document titled 'Barre City Elementary & Middle School' was distributed. The document included highlights relating to; the Social Contract, Outdoor Learning, the Walk-Run-Fun Event, 5th Grade Music, Snowshoeing, and Disability Awareness. There were no questions from the Board.

5.2.3 Barre Town Middle and Elementary School

The BTMES Building Report dated March 12, 2020 was distributed. The Report included information pertaining to; Coronavirus, the ECO Program, the Generator, School Closure (for in-service on 03/20/2020), Parent/Teacher Conferences, the Scholastic Book Fair, and Thanks to voters for supporting the school/budget. A copy of the BTMES Newsletter for March 2020 was also distributed. There were no questions from the Board.

5.2.4 Central Vermont Career Center

A document titled 'CVCC March 2020 Industry Education Glimpse' was distributed. The document included Program and Student highlights, as well as field trip information. There were no questions from the Board.

5.3 Committee Reports

The Board agreed that Committee meetings should resume. Committee meetings will be held electronically, utilizing Zoom. Meetings will resume in April, using the regular committee meeting schedule unless otherwise noted.

5.3.1 Policy Committee

The next meeting is Monday, April 20, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

5.3.2 Curriculum Committee

The next meeting is Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

5.3.3 Finance Committee

Minutes from the March 10, 2020 meeting were distributed.

The next meeting is Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

The regular meeting date 04/07/2020 is reserved for superintendent candidate interviews.

5.3.4 Facilities and Transportation Committee

Minutes from the March 9, 2020 meeting were distributed.

The next meeting is Monday, April 13, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

5.3.5 Communications Committee

There will not be a meeting in April. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 7, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom.

5.3.6 Negotiations Committee

The next meeting date is to be determined.

5.3.7 Regional Advisory Board

Minutes from the February 10, 2020 meeting were distributed.

The next meeting is May 4, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. at CVCC in the Plumbing & Heating, Room 26, though this is subject to change.

A copy of the Agenda for this meeting was distributed.

5.4 Financials

Year-end Projection Reports for the BUUSD and CVCC (both dated 03/10/2020) were distributed.

Mrs. Spaulding is hoping to see some information regarding how the school closures and on-line learning will impact the budget.

6. Current Business

6.1 School Closure Update

Two documents were distributed; 'Vermont Attorney General's Office Guidance on the Vermont Meeting Law, Physical Distancing and COVID-19', and 'Vermont Legislative Joint Fiscal Office – Education Finance Issues Raised by COVID-19'. Mr. Pandolfo advised that a new press release was just received from the Governor's Office. Governor Scott has just announced that he has dismissed schools from in-person instruction for the remainder of the academic year. Additional guidance has come out and more will be announced and shared in the future. Mrs. Farrell queried regarding possible opportunities for small groups of children to meet in homes. Mr. Pandolfo has not heard any discussion on that topic, but will be sharing information as it is provided. In response to a query, Mr. Pandolfo advised that he believes the lunch program, a critical component, will continue. There are currently no plans to

stop the program, though there may be a change to the delivery system/schedule. In response to a query regarding a focus to assure that all students have access to the internet, Mr. Pandolfo advised that staff members are currently working on that matter and to assure that all students (grades 5 – 12) have devices. Analysis is still being performed relating to students in grades 4 and below (devices and Wi-Fi access). Mr. Pandolfo advised that there is still much to be figured out, utilizing guidance from the State. There remain many unanswered questions. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview relating to the time and energy related to the Childcare Program, including student counts, staffing (volunteers working quarter day shifts, resulting in much contact between children and different adults). Staffing is a major concern and it has been determined that the program can't be staffed beyond next Wednesday, (04/01/2020). All but one of the parents who use the program have alternatives for childcare. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the BUUSD has done all it can to provide childcare, but it is no longer feasible to run the program. Custodial staff have been cleaning the buildings, including the childcare rooms. As meals are being prepared at BCEMS, there is still a need for ongoing cleaning of some areas. The BUUSD needs to continue to maintain its buildings, and is doing well with minimal staff. Building access points are now limited, and staff only access the buildings for essential tasks. The BUUSD is following all guidelines put forth by the State. In response to a query, it was noted that plowing continues. Teachers are creating packets of work for younger students/parents. Teachers are in touch with students/parents, and are working on having a reasonable amount of contact. In response to a query regarding concern over students who are not in a 'safe environment', Mr. Pandolfo advised that administrators and staff are also concerned, and are "stepping up to the task", working to monitor these types of situations. Lisa Felch, a first grade teacher who is also on the Leadership Team reported that teachers are required to have contact with students 3 times per week, and are logging comments. Contact is via Zoom, telephone, and other electronic means. PLG meetings are being held and staff members are connecting with families as much as possible. Mr. Pandolfo advised that Ms. Felch's summary of student/parent contact is typical at all schools. Mrs. Akley acknowledged that the BUUSD is asking a lot of its teachers, parents, and students, and that though everything won't be perfect, it is currently working. Many parents are feeling much pressure, and should be advised that they are not expected to recreate school at home. Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding whether the State would be developing any policies relating to learning from home. Mr. Pandolfo reiterated that new information is coming out constantly. Amanda Poor queried regarding the Phoenix Program and graduation. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the ultimate decision will be made by the Governor or the Secretary of Education, but he believes something will be worked out. Regarding the fiscal impact, Mr. Pandolfo advised that he doesn't anticipate it will hit the BUUSD bad in FY20, and he is more concerned with the fiscal impact in FY21. Mrs. Farrell advised that the State is working with individuals from other states who have had similar schooling issues in the past (due to natural disasters).

6.2 Resignations/Retires/New Hires

Letters of resignation from Joanne Campisi, John C. "Chris" Cunningham, Victoria Everett, and Amy Ross were distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the resignations.

On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to accept the resignations of Joanne Campisi, John C. "Chris" Cunningham, Victoria Everett, and Amy Ross.

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Benjamin Thomas (BTMES 6th grade) and Sophia Chamberlain (BTMES Speech/Language Pathologist) were distributed.

Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the candidates' education and experience.

On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Benjamin Thomas and Sophia Chamberlain.

6.3 Non-Renewals

There are no non-renewals to present.

6.4 2020 – 2021 Calendar

A copy of the Regional Calendar for the BUUSD for Academic Year 2020 – 2021 was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the superintendents who use CVCC coordinate creation of the schedule. The schedule presented this evening is the final schedule and will be submitted to the Agency of Education.

6.5 TIME Grant

A copy of an e-mail from Penny Chamberlin to Tina Gilbert (dated 03/18/20) was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the grant that would be used for equipment for the Emergency Services and Medical Professions Programs. Mr. Pandolfo is looking for Board approval so that a grant application may be submitted. It is unknown why Ms. Chamberlin's letter advises that she will be applying for a second grant, when the letter also states that only one grant can be received.

On a motion by Mr. Cecchinelli, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve submission for the TIME grant as described in the documentation included with the Board packet.

6.6 FY21 Perkins Summary

A document titled ‘Center Vermont Career Center – Perkins FY21 Summary’ (dated 03/18/20) was distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided a brief overview of the summary document.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve the FY21 Perkins Summary.

7. Old Business

7.1 Personnel Committee Discussion

A document titled ‘About School Board Personnel Committees’ was distributed. Mrs. Farrell provided a brief overview of the document, advising that she believes the Board as a whole, does accomplish many of the tasks outlined in the document and that she does not believe there is a need to form a committee. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that he brought this topic up for discussion because of past discussions relating to how teachers do their jobs and the process and effectiveness of staff evaluations. Mr. Cecchinelli reminded the Board regarding very long previous discussions on this topic. Mr. Pandolfo suggested the Board consider allowing the Negotiations Committee to pick up some of the topics outlined in the document (when not working on negotiations). Mr. Malone polled the Board regarding their preference. The Board did not reach a consensus and some Board Members raised concern of conflicts of interest if the Negotiations Committee was involved in some of tasks/items. It was agreed to table discussion until a future meeting.

7.2 Superintendent Search Update

A copy of a March 24, 2020 Press Release was distributed. Mr. Malone advised that the Search Committee interviewed three candidates and that Board Members should have received packets containing resumes and the questions that were posed to candidates during Committee interviews. Ms. Holson advised that the Committee interviewed three candidates and that all three candidates will be presented to the Board. Ms. Holson advised that the list of candidates was provided to the Agency of Education, and they have advised that there are no licensing issues with any of the candidates. Board interviews are scheduled for April 7, 2020. The Board should convene at 5:30 p.m., and interviews will begin at 6:00 p.m. One hour is allotted for the interview of each candidate, with a 15 minute break between interviews. The meeting and all interviews will be done via live-stream. Live-stream forums will be held on April 6, 2020 for interviews with staff and faculty. Feedback will be collected after the forums and will be presented to the Board. The Committee’s interview questions will be provided to the Board. Ms. Holson advised that the packet of information will also include an Executive Summary. The Board should compile a list of questions. Approximately 10 to 12 questions is appropriate for a one hour interview. Questions should be concise and open ended. A dialogue format is more informative. It was confirmed that Ms. Holson will attend the interviews and be present for the discussion and deliberative process. Mrs. Akley voiced concern that the format is very challenging and queried regarding interviews being productive. Ms. Holson advised that the interviews were managed quite well, with one individual asking all of the questions. Ms. Holson encourages Board Members to use computers during the interviews, rather than their phones or tablets, citing that computers have more features. Ms. Holson advised that she will inform Board Members regarding questions that they cannot ask during interviews. Mrs. Marold reiterated that the Committee’s interview system worked well, and advised that she and Mr. Allen are working on setting up the forums, including upgrading Zoom to allow for up to 100 participants. Mrs. Marold will be sending out information for each meeting and will send a final e-mail once all of the forums have been set. In response to a query regarding the possibility of utilizing the auditorium, for in-person interviews (utilizing social-distancing guidelines), Mr. Malone advised that per the Governor’s request on distancing, on-line interviewing is the best platform.

7.3 Vision, Mission & Strategic Goals

7.3.1 Portrait of a Graduate

Mrs. Spaulding advised that she has no additional information at this time. This item will be added to a future agenda.

8. Other Business/Round Table

Mrs. Spaulding advised that she is very impressed with the level of community member participation via Zoom, and thanked staff and administrators for their efforts during this challenging time.

Mr. Boltin advised that he believes the schools/teachers are doing a great job transitioning over to on-line learning, and advised that it is important to expediently put out as much information to students/parents as possible.

Mrs. Farrell queried regarding anything that the Board, administrators, or staff can do to help relieve the anxiety of parents and students.

Mrs. Akley agrees with all of the comments expressed by fellow Board Members, and reiterated that she believes the BUUSD is doing a great job keeping everyone connected. Mrs. Akley is glad to be a part of the BUUSD.

Ms. Cambel has been awed with the commitment of the Board and staff and is very impressed with how well individuals have made accommodations.

Mr. Isabelle echoed the thoughts of the other Board Members.

Mrs. Pompei believes the BUUSD has done a great job communicating with the public and recognized the individuals (employees and volunteers) who are running the food program.

Mr. Malone advised that Administrators and the Superintendent have done a phenomenal job.

Mr. Pandolfo thanked Administrators, Staff, Ashley Young (liaison for the food service program), food service volunteers, food service provider Aladdin, STA, and recognized Sara Chase. Mr. Pandolfo recognized that working through the pandemic has been a tremendous undertaking, involving much effort, and advised that it may be beneficial to slow down and 'take a breath'. Mr. Pandolfo also recognized the 'big picture' noting that the pandemic has caused disruption to the lives of many, including health care professionals, hospitals, governmental employees, and other various individuals, advising that everyone has a role.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that the number of meals going out to students is now close to 600. Robo-calls were made last Friday (03/20/20) and Monday (03/23/20), to assure that those without internet access are kept informed.

Mr. Allen encouraged Board Members and members of the public, to look at some of the photos that parents have been posting on Facebook.

9. Future Agenda Items

The next three meetings are scheduled as follows:

Tuesday, April 7, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom – This is a Special Board Meeting for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the position of Superintendent

Thursday, April 9, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom – Regular Board Meeting

Thursday, April 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom – Regular Board Meeting

Agenda Items:

- Board Reports (may be included in School Closure Update)
- Resignations/Retirements/New Hires
- School Closure Update – Share Information Regarding What is Working Well
- Mission/Vision Statement (information may not be available for the April 9, 2020 meeting)
- Personnel Committee
- Policies

10. Executive Session

10.1 Non-Contracted Increases

Non-Contracted Increases was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item 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. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Pandolfo in attendance, at 7:36 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the item proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Ms. Cambel, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 8:43 p.m.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Pompei, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin