

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Via Conference Call (Zoom)  
June 2, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sonya Spaulding (BC) - Chair  
Victoria Pompei (BT) – Vice Chair  
Emel Cambel (BC)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Gina Akley (BT)

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Paul Malone

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Stacy Anderson, Co-Director of Special Services – joined at 5:36 p.m.  
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center  
Hayden Coon, BCEMS Principal – joined at 6:36 p.m.  
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal  
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources  
Jennifer Nye, BTMES Principal  
Erica Pearson, BTMES Principal  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager  
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

David Delcore – Times Argus

David Wells, Incoming Superintendent (joined at 5:40 p.m.)

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Tuesday, June 2, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held via video conference.

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

Add 5.4 American Gift Funds Contribution to After-school Programs

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 May 5, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the May 5, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Summer Projects RFP Updates**

A document titled ‘BUUSD FY21/21 RFP Schedule, Facility Projects, etc...Spring/Summer 2020, June 2, 2020’ was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that the Revenue Anticipation Note will be presented for approval at the next Board meeting. The recommendation is to contract with Community Bank as they have offered the highest net yield rate.

UPS Technology Back-up - Mr. Ajanma and Mrs. Perreault met today regarding the RFP that was sent out. Some responses have been received. Additional information will be provided later in June.

BTMES Canopy Removal – The RFP went out today. There are 4 contractors interested in bidding on this project. A recommendation will most likely be presented for approval at the July Board meeting.

Fuel Acquisition – Mrs. Perreault advised that usually around this time of the year, RFPs go out for fuel oil, propane, and wood chips. The BUUSD is currently under a 2 year contract (with Catamount - \$64/ton) for wood chips. Mrs. Perreault has reached out to Irving, and may not go out to bid for fuel oil and propane this year given the fact that we are receiving such a good rate.. Last year only one

vendor submitted a proposal for propane (Irving). Last year we went out to bid and only one vendor responded. Based on public bid law, a contract may be renewed if the price is below the consumer price index. As of yesterday, the price was \$1.55 gal. Mrs. Perreault will recommend that the Board stay with Irving and that an RFP not go out. In response to a query, Mrs. Perreault advised that she is not sure if propane can be purchased through FMDA. The BUUSD has not bought propane through FMDA in the past and Mrs. Perreault does not know if they still purchase propane. Mrs. Perreault will check into this matter.

Electric Buses - There is currently a 10 month wait for new buses. The new buses are most likely delayed until spring of 2021. Mrs. Perreault has been holding weekly meetings on this matter and has been in constant contact with STA. The RFP has been delayed due to concerns from STA Corporate Office.

Closing of Bake Shop - Ms. Chamberlin advised that the silent auction for Bake Shop and Culinary Program equipment netted \$6,000. These funds will be used for plumbing associated with moving equipment to the Lunch Box. Mr. Evans and Mr. Young (BUUSD electrician) are performing the electrical work involved with the move. Movers will be coming to transfer equipment from the Bake Shop to the Lunch Box on Thursday. CVCC anticipates being completely out of Sidewalk Village by 06/19/20.

SHS Underground Piping – Mr. Evans has reached out to vendors. The RFP is in progress.

In response to a query, Mrs. Perreault advised that Mr. Derner has not contacted her regarding any equipment that may need to be purchased as part of the SEA Project.

## **5.2 Food Service Update**

A document titled 'BUUSD Food Service Report – June 2, 2020' was distributed. Mrs. Pompei advised that she understands the food distribution (during COVID school closure) is set to end on 06/12/20, and queried regarding meals for the summer. Mrs. Perreault advised that there is not enough funding to continue the meal program the way it is currently run under COVID. Mrs. Perreault advised that BCEMS typically runs a summer food program, and will continue with that program this summer. The summer meals program is run a bit differently than what has been done recently. Buses will not be delivering meals, but rather meals are distributed at various sites throughout the area. In Barre City, anyone 18 years old or younger can pick up food at one of the various locations. There is an application that needs to be revised for the BUUSD to run this program. The lunch program has been reconciled from 07/01/19 – 03/17/20, and there is a \$60,000 profit under the current fixed price contract. These funds can be used to maintain/improve kitchens, and student related activities (teaching healthy food habits, etc.) Some additional money has also been made during the COVID school closure meal deliver program (anticipated to be approximately \$50,000). Mrs. Perreault, and Ms. Young, will meet with a food service provider representative, Monica Tolman (Aladdin) on 06/03/20 to hold discussion regarding closure of the current food program (school closure meal deliveries) and on what the food program will look like for July and August. Regarding next year's meal program, Mrs. Perreault advised that there is constant information being provided by the AOE and the AOE is still working on waivers and some sort of financial relief. At this point, the BUUSD is trying to stay informed regarding State guidelines. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that there will be unanticipated expenses related to serving meals to students under new COVID related guidelines. Mrs. Perreault is hopeful that CARES funding might assist with those charges. Mrs. Spaulding is very impressed with the number of meals that have been served and that a profit was made. Mrs. Perreault was involved in some of the meal delivery runs and advised that families were very appreciative of this program.

## **5.3 Efficiency Studies (Administrative Offices, Custodial, and FMDA-SWISH Info.**

An untitled document showing comparisons of 'central office' staffing for multiple districts was distributed.

Administrative Offices –

Mrs. Perreault advised of the document pertaining to administrative structure to assist with advising about roles in the various schools' administrative offices as well as the Central Office. This document may assist with explaining budgetary differences. It was noted that the BTMES Assistant Principal position remains open, and there is no intent to fill it at this time. An alternate method will be utilized for this position, and it will be reconsidered in January (when newly licensed individuals become available). Mr. Malone queried regarding whether BTMES had considered having a Dean of Students. Mrs. Nye advised that some discussion has been held with the Superintendent and it has been decided to proceed as previously discussed, elevating two behavior specialists (one middle school, one elementary school). Ms. Chamberlin advised that she does not plan to fill the vacant receptionist position, office staff will take over the responsibilities. Discussion was held regarding the Substitute Coordinator position and how it is filled differently at each school. Mrs. Nye advised that BTMES was not able to successfully fill the position of sub coordinator, so they are using a different model. Multiple individuals assist with substitute coordination at BTMES. Mr. Hennessey stressed that substitute coordination is very challenging. BCEMS currently has a full time sub coordinator, but is looking to restructure next year, most likely to a structure similar to BTMES. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that SHS had difficulty keeping the full time sub coordinator position filled and has also restructured how sub coordination is performed. Mrs. Perreault and administrators answered various questions regarding placement of employees within each school's staffing structure, as not all three are configured the same. Discussion was held regarding SPED Administration. There will be only one SPED Director next year. There will be two Assistant Directors. One para-educator position will not be filled. Filling the administrative assistant position is yet to be determined. Mrs. Anderson provided a historical overview of the changes to SPED administration over the past few years. Time will be spent over the summer to determine if there is a need to hire to fill that position (administrative assistant). Mrs. Anderson provided an overview of the

structuring of the SPED administrators for FY21. Mrs. Spaulding would like some time spent on identifying similarities and differences in structures, and would like to see what could be done more efficiently and mindfully, exploring how other schools are operating. Mrs. Perreault advised that there has been discussion regarding the benefits of having more joint budget development sessions for FY22. Mrs. Nye believes that since the merger, there has been much more coordination between the schools. In response to a query regarding the Act 166 Coordinator, it was noted that the BUUSD is the fiscal agent/coordinator for this position, and does receive some reimbursement from other districts.

#### Custodian –

An untitled document, listing custodial staff for each building was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that there are custodians and maintenance personnel. There is one lead-maintenance individual at each school building. BTMES and BCEMS have 1 or 2 maintenance personnel (each), and SHS has one maintenance individual.

Mrs. Pompei advised of building square footage discussed at the previous meeting, and advised regarding some custodial/maintenance information she obtained using Google. Mrs. Pompei advised that she has found information that advises that one custodian (in an eight hour day) should maintain 25,000 – 31,000 square feet. Mr. Evans had recommended adding one custodian to SHS and BCEMS, but has been discussing not filling those positions. The addition of these custodians was approved in the budget. Mrs. Nye advised that 6 or 7 years ago, VSBIT performed an audit which included the number of custodians that should be in the buildings. Mrs. Nye is wondering if the information they provided is still relevant, or has been updated. It was noted that BTMES has more carpet than the other buildings, which may contribute to the higher budget amount. BTMES is in the process of replacing carpet with tile. Mrs. Waterhouse noted that SHS custodial staff also maintain the Central Office and the Wall Street Complex. Mrs. Spaulding would like to see industry standards relating to custodial work. Mrs. Waterhouse advised that SHS numbers this year are a bit off due to replacing a 40 year employee with a new “first year” employee. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding any discussions being held relating to being more creative when hiring. Mr. Wells asked if the Committee would like Mr. Evans to prepare some type of report for a future meeting. Mrs. Spaulding supports this idea, as the BUUSD is on the verge of big budget issues. Mrs. Spaulding believes folks should ‘think outside the box’, identifying ways in which the BUUSD could save money. Mrs. Perreault advised that one person has left and their position has not been filled. Mr. Malone would like to use an industry standard to determine staffing, and hopes that doing that would result in cost savings. Ms. Pearson cautioned that the Committee needs to consider elevated levels of cleaning because of COVID. Student population (pre-school vs high school) can also impact cleaning requirements/protocols and needs. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding an additional variable; exterior grounds. It was agreed that Mr. Evans and the Facilities Committee need to be involved in long term planning and possible restructuring.

#### FMDA – SWISH Information –

Three documents were distributed; a document titled ‘Background on FMDA from Chris Locarno’, A copy of the FMDA RFP, and a document titled ‘FMDA Bylaws (Established 2010) As amended and approved by the membership on May 20, 2019’. Mrs. Perreault advised the FMDA has been working hard to obtain the best/deals. With SWISH the BUUSD is receiving the best deals and the best quality of required “green cleaning” products. SWISH also provides training in the use of products, proper techniques for use of machinery/products, instruction on use and maintenance of machinery, provides maintenance on machinery, and provides required MSD’s, Material Safety Data sheets for every product used by the BUUSD. This year’s RFP process was delayed due to COVID, but SWISH was recently awarded the contract. Mrs. Perreault advised that the BUUSD’s SWISH representative, Leon Beede, is very knowledgeable and provides excellent service. Mrs. Pompei feels there should be better communication between the three buildings, and going forward, feels that the schools need to install the most effective SWISH products, rather than the ones currently being used. Brief discussion was held regarding ‘preferred’ products. Mrs. Spaulding suggested having a preferred list for SWISH (similar to the arrangement with WB Mason). Since a preferred list was put in place at WB Mason, she feels that purchasing is working more consistent and believes has been more cost effective. Mrs. Pompei believes dispensers should be replaced with dispensers that use the most cost effective products. Mrs. Perreault would like to get all building ‘leads’ together for discussion and coordination. Mrs. Spaulding queried whether or not SWISH will replace dispensers for free. Mr. Malone suggested that it may be beneficial to do a certain amount of ‘stockpiling’ in preparation for next year. Mr. Malone questioned purchases he is seeing while there is a freeze on spending. Mrs. Perreault advised that some COVID related items had to be ordered, and that some of the items that are arriving may have been on back-order. It was also noted that summer cleaning is ramping up and we need to be sure that we get all of the supplies we need. Mrs. Pompei queried how COVID expenses are justified. Mrs. Perreault advised that no clear guidance was received regarding what will be considered reimbursable under COVID. No approved list of approved COVID supplies has been provided to the BUUSD. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of coding for COVID supplies/services, advising that administrators are trusted to code qualifying items appropriately for identification later. Mrs. Spaulding will contact Mr. Cecchinelli regarding Facility Committee items discussed during this meeting.

#### **5.4 American Gift Funds Contribution to After-school Programs**

Mrs. Perreault advised that she received a call from Lyman Amsden, who is on the Board of the American Gifts Funds. American Gift Funds has very generously contributed thousands of dollars for after-school programs (FY19 \$140,000 and FY20 \$70,000). The first donation funded two after-school program sessions in FY19. Total expenditures for the FY19 program were \$35,790. Due to COVID closure, there is currently no after-school program. Mr. Amsden advised that he wants to use \$80,000 of the funds received

by the BUUSD, to help support the Barre City pool project (which had a shortfall of \$100,000), and has instructed Mrs. Perreault to send \$80,000 of the American Gift Funds to Barre City to be used on the pool project. The BUUSD still has a balance of \$81,000 and next year, American Gift Funds will contribute another \$70,000, for a balance of \$151,000.

Mr. Malone provided some historical information regarding American Gift Funds contributions. The Scholarship Trust fund used to receive three \$10,000 scholarships. Those scholarships stopped when AGF began funding the after-school program. This year, the Scholarship Trust received two \$10,000 scholarships from AGF. The Scholarship Trust Fund Board met yesterday (06/01/20).

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 FY20 Projections**

BUUSD Fund Balances – June 2, 2020

BUUSD FY20 Year-end Projection Report – June 2, 2020

BUUSD Expense Report – dated May 20, 2020

CVCC FY20 Year-end Projection Report – dated – June 2, 2020

CVCC FY20 Budget – dated 05/20/20

BUUSD Revenue Report (CVCC) – dated 05/20/20

Mrs. Perreault reported that the year-end projections have not changed since last month. The deficit is listed as \$833,000, but there are some reserves. The BUUSD came into the year with a negative fund balance of \$316,000, but the BUUSD does have the tax stabilization fund and Capital funds, as well as holding back \$200,000 for FY21. Essentially, the deficit is on the budget vs expenses, vs revenues. The deficit is really a \$74,000 deficit because we have funds to off-set the negative amount. It is wise to look for savings in FY21, which will also help in FY22. Mrs. Perreault wants the Committee to understand that even though there is a deficit listed, the BUUSD will not have a negative balance in its checking account. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that next year there will be a big deficit and there will be no money in the fund balance. Mrs. Perreault advised that this year there was a significant increase in the budget because we budgeted realistically for positions we felt were really needed. In the past, budgets were cut because the Boards were looking for a specific budget increase target that resulted in an unrealistic budget. Though this year's budget was built appropriately, we are looking for some savings in anticipation of the FY22 budget, which we believe will be problematic.

Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that the deficit is mainly caused by SPED expenses, and hopes that in the future we can be more creative in how SPED services are delivered, so that the costs will be lower. Mrs. Spaulding is also concerned that disruptions caused by COVID, may result in additional issues with students, resulting in greater expenses. Mr. Malone also reiterated that SPED costs are high and there seems to be no upper limit on SPED expenses. Mrs. Anderson reiterated that the goal of the SEA project, is to lower the need for expensive 'out-placement programs'. At the same time, for the lower grades, discussions are being held regarding restorative classroom programs as well as other options for social and emotional needs, with the long term goal, to lessen the need for outplacements and more expensive supports. Mr. Coon advised that as the result of some changes, money is being saved, but it is hard to track. Some new programs may have resulted in keeping student in-house, but other expenses are also increasing. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that spending freezes impact regular education only, so any cuts impact regular education, never SPED. Mr. Wells advised that he believes that as SPED is consolidated under the BUUSD, there will be more opportunities to look at uniform approaches and share 'best practices', instead of each individual school being their own LEA. This approach may lead to services that are better for students and result in cost savings. Uniform approaches to behavioral issues will also be beneficial and may also help reduce the number of out of district placements.

### **6.2 FY21 Budget**

Two documents were distributed; a document titled 'BUUSD Budget Cut Considerations (dated 01/02/20) and a document containing anticipated staffing needs for BTMES and BCEMS. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the Budget Cut Considerations document, advising of some possible district wide and special education reductions. This document is the beginning of what has been being discussed. There could be as many as 8 professional positions that administrators are considering not filling. This research is just the beginning of where administrators are identifying potential savings.

Mrs. Spaulding asked that all directors look for possible savings. Mrs. Nye advised that BTMES has continued with the freeze on supplies, including supplies for next year (FY21). Fall requisitions are on hold. Everything is frozen for now. Mrs. Spaulding reiterated that we must be careful on what we spend.

In response to a query, Mrs. Perreault advised that the BUUSD's COVID related expenses will be covered, but the BUUSD does not have its allocation yet. The intent of CARES money is to cover COVID expenses, though we do not know how much money will be received or when it will be received.

Mrs. Pompei queried regarding possible sale of personal printers. Mrs. Nye advised that the plan was to send the printers to ReStore as they did not have much value. Mrs. Perreault advised that a few printers may be kept as back-ups.

The Committee reviewed the Anticipated Staff Reports. Clarification was provided regarding coding (SLP – Speech/Language Pathologists, CM – Case Managers, L – Literacy, and M – Math). Mrs. Pompei was hoping to see more of a breakdown of BIs and Para-educators by grade level. Discussion was held regarding COVID restrictions on class size and how that will impact the number

of classes. BIs, paras, and other specialists will add to the classroom counts. The Committee questions how this may impact the school day in general (longer days, to hold more classes?). There are also many questions relating to transportation of students, and the possibility of needing to hire additional staff. At the present time, there is not enough guidance from the State to be able to make those decisions. Mr. Wells shares those concerns relating to planning for the opening of school during the COVID crisis, and advised regarding the planning committee that is being formed. Mr. Malone advised that his main concern is funding.

## **7. Other Business**

None.

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

Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding the necessity of having an Athletic Director at each school and the possibility of restructuring this area. Mrs. Spaulding will create a list of specific questions related to non-custodial supply purchasing, and forward the list to administrators so that they may perform research prior to the August meeting.

In response to a query, Mrs. Marold advised that there are many different substitutes and positions to put them in. Mrs. Pompei would like Mrs. Marold to provide information regarding the different reasons teachers are requesting substitutes.

### Future Agenda Items:

- Summer Projects Update
- Efficiency Studies;
  - Custodial Responsibilities and Shifts
  - Custodial Supply Purchasing (**August**)
  - Efficiency in coordinated supply purchases/procedures (non-custodial) (**August**)
  - BCEMS Athletic Director – Possible Restructuring
  - Substitutes – How Are They Being Utilized
- FY20 Projections
- FY21 Budget
- FY22 Budget Development (**August**)
- Solar Management for FY20 (**September**)

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Tuesday, July 7, 2020 at 5:30 p.m.

## **10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:46 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*