

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

Via Video Conference – Zoom
June 4, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Farrell, Chair - (BT)
Sonya Spaulding, Vice-Chair - (BC)
Guy Isabelle – (At-Large)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Josh Allen, Communications Specialist

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Paul Malone

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mrs. Farrell, called the Thursday, June 4, 2020 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting to order at 5:32 p.m., which was held via Video Conference (Zoom).

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Delete Agenda Item 6.1.1 Portrait of a Graduate

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Meeting Minutes of May 7, 2020

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

5. New Business

5.1 Budget Process Communication

Mrs. Spaulding advised that the BUUSD should try to continue maintaining a level of engagement over the summer months. Areas that could be promoted include; the SEA Project, and Summer Meals. It will be important to remain in the public with positive information. Mrs. Spaulding encouraged Committee Members to ‘brainstorm’ other ideas of things that the BUUSD should promote to the public. Mr. Allen advised that although there is a freeze on spending, he still has money in the Communications Budget, because only about half of the budget was utilized for FY21 budget promotion. Promotion can be performed at no cost on Front Porch Forum and Facebook. Mrs. Spaulding advised that it might be advantageous to promote informational items as well, e.g. bus schedules, and dates for summer packet mailings, though this information will not be available until after COVID reopening plans are finalized. Much is subject to change given the COVID-19 situation and the hiring of a new Superintendent. Mrs. Farrell reiterated the need to maintain a positive theme when promoting the BUUSD. Mr. Isabelle believes there are still a lot of outlier pieces to the FY21 budget, many pieces that will need to be connected, and he believes it will be interesting to watch budget votes from other districts. The BUUSD Board is fortunate that their budget vote was in March, prior to COVID-19. Mr. Malone advised that Barre Town tax bills are being mailed on 08/02/20, and it is anticipated that there will be a tax increase of approximately 13%.

5.2 Communication of the “New Normal” for Re-opening of Schools

The Committee will need to receive output from the COVID Planning Team to complete this endeavor. Mr. Allen provided a brief overview of the COVID Planning Team’s work, advising that there have been 2 subcommittees formed; 1 - Protections for Students and Staff, and 2 - Teaching and Learning (academics). Mr. Allen advised that representatives from each subcommittee will report information to him. In response to a query regarding Remote Learning surveys, it was noted that parent, student and staff surveys will be conducted. Mrs. Spaulding would like to see that the surveys are promoted well so that parents who don’t have an e-mail address on file with the BUUSD, will still be able to participate. It was noted that the Curriculum Committee agreed that paper copies of the parent and student surveys will be distributed wherever meals are being delivered. This distribution is in addition to the regular venues for survey promotion. Mr. Allen advised that the COVID Planning Team is responsible for the planning of three different scenarios; Traditional (on-site) Learning, Remote Learning, or a Hybrid version that includes both traditional and remote learning.

In response to a query regarding anticipated announcements from the State, Mr. Allen advised that both he and Mr. Pandolfo receive e-mails of all releases from the State, and share the information on a specified schedule. Anything of an urgent nature is shared on the day it is received. Mrs. Farrell advised that the Committee will wait for Mr. Allen to provide guidance and information.

6. Old Business

6.1 Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals

Mrs. Spaulding advised that there is not much new to report at this time. The project will be funded by the FY21 budget. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she is in the process of contacting businesses for funding of the project. Mrs. Spaulding will draft a letter to be used with businesses, and requested that Committee Members consider approaching businesses with which they have a personal relationship. Mrs. Spaulding advised of the businesses she plans to approach. Another area in which to explore funding is Work Based Learning Partners, as they have an existing relationship with Spaulding High School. No additional information has been received from Winton Goodrich. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she will also be discussing the Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals project at the Board Retreat. The conversation will include fund raising and selection of individuals (stakeholders) for the various information gathering forums. Mr. Malone advised that Tina Gilbert will be e-mailing the Retreat Agenda very soon.

7. Other Business

Mr. Isabelle advised that someone should be communicating a 'note of thanks' to businesses that contributed to graduation events for the Class of 2020. He is unsure who might be doing this, but wants assurance that it will occur. It is important to acknowledge and thank area businesses for their efforts, including banners. In response to a query from Mrs. Spaulding, Mr. Malone advised regarding distribution and recognition of scholarship awards, which will be given to students along with their diplomas. There is also a large list which documents all of the scholarships and recipients. Mr. Malone asked Mr. Allen to publish something that recognizes the students, and to post the information publicly. Mr. Allen will obtain the list of scholarship recipients from Mrs. Waterhouse or Mr. John Lewis. Mrs. Spaulding asked Mr. Allen to post something on-line to honor all of the 2020 SHS graduates (Facebook or some other type of social media). Mr. Allen advised that SHS will have a 4 minutes piece on WCAX next week. Mr. Allen produced a slide show of the graduates using pictures from 2016 through 2020. Once the piece is aired live, there will be a link available on-line. Mr. Allen will be present and taking pictures at all three days of graduation as well as attending and photographing all the 'home' graduations. The virtual graduation, which includes pictures, will also include a song and 5 speeches. The end goal has been to make the 2020 graduation as normal as possible. It was noted that students will receive individual notes from their teachers (as has been done in the past), and all of their locker contents will also be given to them at graduation. Each student has a ten minute timeslot for graduation. Mr. Malone queried regarding personnel within the schools that could be used for a larger Communications Team. Mr. Allen has much work and has had to turn down some assignments. Would it be possible to add one full time individual, or two individuals that could split the additional work and assist on larger projects, so that Mr. Allen can focus on critical projects? Mr. Malone would like to expand more in the area of communications. It was noted that budget constraints will most likely not allow for addition of staff, but it might be possible to incorporate some of the work into Work Based Learning, and/or have Graphic Design/Digital Media Arts students assist. Candidates for this work would need to have flexible schedules. Brief discussion was held regarding the departure of Superintendent, John Pandolfo.

8. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas

- Budget Process Communication
- Communication of the "New Normal" for Re-opening of Schools
- "Communications Department"

Logo/Branding – (May be delayed until after completion of Mission/Vision/Strategic Goals Statement)

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 2, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via Video Conference.

10. Adjournment

The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin