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## BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
August 6, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alice Farrell, Chair - (BT)  
Guy Isabelle – (At-Large)

#### COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Sonya Spaulding, Vice-Chair - (BC)

#### ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Josh Allen, Communications Specialist

#### 1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mrs. Farrell, called the Thursday, August 6, 2020 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting to order at 5:32 p.m., which was held via video conference (Google Meet).

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

None.

#### 3. Public Comment

Mrs. Poulin advised that she believes promotion of SHS to students from outlying areas needs to be greater. She reported that she was recently informed that the availability of transportation of out of district students was not conveyed to all parents of incoming freshmen and that there is at least one student that would have been tuitioned to SHS had their parents known that transportation was available. Mrs. Poulin advised that she strongly supports SHS and believes that the school needs much greater promotion, including at the 'high school fairs'. Over the years, much revenue has been lost because of other districts offering transportation (when SHS was not), and though it may take some time to start regaining the out of district population, the possible financial benefit is very substantial (hundreds of thousands of dollars per year). This item will be added to a future Communications Committee agenda. Mrs. Poulin also advised that her family has not received the tuition payment form for academic year 2020/2021. Mrs. Poulin will contact Mrs. Waterhouse regarding this issue.

#### 4. Approval of Minutes

##### 4.1 Meeting Minutes of June 4, 2020 Meeting

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the June 4, 2020 BUUSD Communications Committee meeting.

#### 5. New Business

##### 5.1 Re-Opening Communication

Mr. Allen advised that the BUUSD now has the capability to send text messages to families, and today, sent text messages to approximately 2,900 families, reminding them that the survey to choose virtual or hybrid learning needs to be submitted. The main communication tool being used to promote re-opening is the website. Much information is being posted, but the Communications Department is trying not to overwhelm families with too much information. Early next week FAQs pages will be posted. The FAQs pages will include many questions with dated detailed answers. Users will have the ability to comment and ask additional questions. Information will be provided regarding the various learning modules, special education, and health/safety. Additionally, there will be a FAQs page for staff, and a third page for principals. The page for principals will be a private page/reference sheet. Additional promotion is being provided via social media. In response to a query regarding holding public forums, Mr. Allen advised that a public forum should probably be postponed until more of the details are finalized. Mr. Allen advised that the BUUSD could probably hold a Google Meet forum to answer questions, and suggested that Superintendent Wells take the lead on answering questions. Mr. Allen advised that within the next few weeks, he plans to produce a video with Mr. Wells. The video will run approximately 3 minutes. The purpose of the video is to introduce Mr. Wells to the community. Mr. Allen also plans to produce another video with Mr. Wells for the All Staff School Year Kick-off. Mr. Isabelle expressed concern regarding an e-mail he received today, and advised that he believes there is confusion amongst the general public. He believes that many in the general public do not fully understand that schools' re-opening plans must follow specific directives from the State and that the directives are constantly changing as new information is learned. Mr. Isabelle believes many community members are nervous because they don't currently have all of the details involved with re-opening plans. Mr. Allen advised that the Communications Department has been writing pre-written statements to deal with various scenarios that may occur (student or staff exposure at one or more schools, etc.). Mr. Allen advised

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that classroom layout logistics are currently being worked on and that additional communications will go out soon. Other information to be publicized includes: food service details (school specific), and information pertaining to ventilation systems, etc.

## **5.2 Communications Department**

There have been previous discussions regarding hiring additional help for the Communications Department. Mr. Allen advised that he has discussed this expansion with Mr. Malone and Mr. Wells, and both support the idea. Mr. Allen provided an overview of the current make-up, advising that there are two individuals who are paid stipends to do postings for schools (Mike Emmons and Dan Smith). Mr. Allen displayed a document titled BUUSD Communications Department Mockup. Mr. Allen provided an overview of the document that shows the breakdown of duties between the Communications Specialist and the proposed Communication Assistant. The addition of an assistant would allow Mr. Allen to focus on larger items/higher priorities, and would allow for more promotion of the schools, e.g. Tide Pride etc. Mr. Allen would like to have high quality merchandise for display/sale around the town/city. Mr. Allen also advised that there is new software that will be utilized as a 'one-stop-shop'. Using the customizable application, once an item is posted to Facebook, it automatically posts to any of the district's web sites and social medial accounts.

Mr. Allen displayed a document titled Typical Year Communications Tasks and identified the various periods of the year as light work, regular work, and hectic work (e.g. February – all work is budget promotion related). Having additional staff will also allow for more promotion of sports and other school events that are often occurring simultaneously, or during a 'hectic' period, where all of Mr. Allen's work must be focused on other tasks and he is unavailable to attend and photograph or video tape events.

Mr. Allen advised that he will begin work on writing policy/guidelines regarding social media posts. There will need to be several different sets of policies/guidelines; school accounts (district run), team accounts (coach/school run), and personal accounts.

Mr. Allen advised that at the very most, the Communications Department could utilize a total of 3 individuals, but could probably perform most of the work with 2. Mr. Allen stressed that expanding the department would be most beneficial, as it would free up his time and allow him to focus on the larger projects. Mr. Allen will forward the displayed documents to Tina Gilbert so they can be posted with the agenda. This item will be posted on future agendas and will be presented to the Board.

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 Budget Process Communication**

The last meeting included discussion of free PR. Mr. Allen advised that there is not much new to report at this time. Mr. Allen will be working with Mrs. Perreault, and wants to continue last year's mailing to all households in the district. Mr. Allen plans to continue with promotional videos and for the FY2022 budget promotion, the goal is to create at least 4 very targeted videos. Mr. Allen advised that he would like to release one video per week, leading up to the vote. It is anticipated that each video will address a different item. Mr. Isabelle cautioned that the timeframe for promotion may need to start early as many voters will be voting early via absentee ballot.

### **6.2 Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals**

There is no additional information regarding interested candidates. The Committee is committed to creation of project team(s). The work involved for that process is currently being facilitated by Mrs. Spaulding. This item is on hold for now as re-opening of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic has taken priority.

## **7. Other Business**

None.

## **8. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas**

- Logo/Branding (may be delayed until after completion of Mission/Vision/Strategic Goals Statement)
- Mission/Vision/Strategic Plan
- Communications Department
- Budget Promotion
- Promotion of SHS to Out of District Students

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, September 3, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference.

## **10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:37 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*

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

Via Video Conference Google Meet

August 4, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES****COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sonya Spaulding (BC) - Chair  
 Victoria Pompei (BT) – Vice Chair  
 Gina Akley (BT) – joined at 6:00 p.m.  
 Emel Cambel (BC)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:****OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Paul Malone

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

David Wells, Superintendent  
 Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:****1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Tuesday, August 4, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:34 p.m., which was held via video conference.**

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

The meeting should be labeled as being held via Google Meet.  
 Agenda Item 5.3.2 should read FMDA, not FDMA.  
 Add 5.3.4 Staff Appreciation Expenses under Efficiency Studies

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes****4.1 July 7, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

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

**5. New Business****5.1 COVID-19 Update**

A document titled 'Barre has been awarded \$1,006,964 in ESSER funds.....' was distributed.

A document titled 'BUUSD COVID-19 EXPENSES FY21' dated 07/29/2020 was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the ESSER allocation, noting that additional information is received daily regarding funds and accounting for funds. The \$1,000,000 ESSER allocation amount is for before the BUUSD gives an equitable share to independent schools. The BUUSD is working on that process now. The award comes to the BUUSD and the BUUSD is responsible for creation of the application and the grant management system. The BUUSD is required to assure that all of the uniform guidance for Federal funds is followed (procurement etc...). The BUUSD manages the money and receives invoices from the independent schools. Mrs. Perreault provided examples of independent schools (Montessori and St. Monica's School), and advised that 'independent schools' does not pertain to the schools utilized for outplacement of students.

CRF funds will be utilized for two different types of expenditures; budgeted and unbudgeted (unplanned). The district will be made whole on unbudgeted expenses (e.g. PPE). Budgeted expenses (e.g. salary and benefit costs for employees who are spending significant time on COVID related work) will be used to supplant the State's Education Fund. Examples of budgeted and unbudgeted expenses are provided in the documentation. In response to a query, Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview between the use of ESSER and CRF funds, noting that Federal funds have many different rules and regulations that must be adhered to.

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In response to a query regarding the end of year projections, Mrs. Perreault advised that she is always very conservative and includes known encumbrances, etc. in the projections. This past year, due to COVID there were savings in a few different lines items, including transportation and Special Education. Also, though SPED went over budget, the deficit was lower because of COVID related reductions and a higher amount of extraordinary expenses that were reimbursed at a higher rate. Additionally, Mrs. Perreault advised that there will be a minimal amount left in the Tax Stabilization and Capital Funds.

In response to a query, Mr. Wells advised that the Burlington YMCA is interested in expanding care to the students in Barre. Mr. Wells will be meeting with YMCA representatives on Thursday, and will be in contact with Barre City officials regarding the possibility of utilizing space at the Barre City Auditorium. Utilizing STA to transport students to the YMCA program is also being considered. This separate 'daycare' would be considered COVID related. Mrs. Pompei expressed concern regarding co-mingling groups of students at the daycare and believes it would be best to hold daycares at the respective schools. Mr. Wells advised that the district school administrators do not believe there is adequate extra space available in their buildings, to be used for this purpose. Brief discussion was held regarding possible inequity issues, as not all students receive transportation to their non-YMCA daycares. Mr. Wells will hold discussions as reported and will report back once additional information is received. It was noted that discussion of transportation should occur under the purview of the Facilities/Transportation Committee.

## 5.2 FY22 Budget Development

A document titled 'BUUSD FY22 Budget Development Schedule – August 4, 2020' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that administrators usually receive Board input late in the budget development process (after much of the budget work has been performed), and would like to receive guidance from the Board early on in the process. It would be very helpful for the Committee/Board to identify values and goals early in the budget development process. Discussion of values and goals included; having the district be functioning as one district for everything, better alignment between buildings, improved equity for students, including some 'padding', and parsing as much as possible (without letting go of education goals/values). Mrs. Perreault advised that the BUUSD per pupil spending (approximately \$15,000) is much lower than the average across the state (approximately \$18,000). This also needs to be factored in to budget development. There is concern that there will be another large increase this year, including increases for state negotiated health insurance, and teacher contracts (which are still in negotiations). It was noted that other than salaries, COVID related expenses are tracked separately. Concern was raised that due to COVID, there are unspent budget lines in FY20, (e.g. no spring sports). Budget development needs to recognize that these budget lines should not be cut as it is anticipated that they will be needed in FY22. Concern was expressed that the community has not yet felt the full economic impact of COVID-19 and that it will be much more difficult to pass a budget next March. Mr. Wells stressed that it will be important to separate out things that the BUUSD has no control over, and not let those items/issues be a distraction. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she would like to see increases for programs for students, rather than have increases solely to fund increases for staff salaries and benefits, but do nothing to benefit students. Mr. Wells advised that the BUUSD should try to build some reserves from funds not spent because of COVID. Mrs. Perreault will share the budget development schedule with the Board, and will solicit additional feedback to share with administrators. Mrs. Perreault stressed the need to hold more joint administrative meetings for budget development, and to work towards more consistency for equity and alignment purposes. Mrs. Spaulding believes there needs to be a push to other directors to work together for alignment across all buildings. Mr. Wells advised that the COVID related work being performed involves much coordination between buildings, including setting up and planning for virtual learning. Mr. Malone suggested that if temporary cuts need to be made, perhaps reductions should be made to the 'square foot' budgeted amount.

## 5.3 Efficiency Studies

### 5.3.1 Coordinated Supply Purchases/Procedures (non-custodial)

Concern was raised that though current practices include some alignment, purchasing practices at some schools is very disjointed. Mrs. Perreault suggested that this item be discussed with administrators together in one meeting and advised that there are joint administrator meetings being planned. It was noted that each building does have a book keeper and utilizes purchasing procedures that follow accounting standards and statutes. Discussion was held regarding the possibility of having parents provide some supplies, or have a list of supplies that could be donated to the schools. Mrs. Pompei has heard from some parents, after receiving a supply list (middle school) who believe the financial burden to parents is too great. Mr. Wells cautioned that he believes statute requires that schools provide basic supplies to students, but he will seek confirmation on this issue. Mr. Wells believes supply purchasing is a good topic for discussion during budget development, and would like to see coordination by teams and across schools, to look for purchasing efficiencies. The Curriculum Committee should discuss issues related to consistency with professional development, curriculum, supplies for curriculum, and increased achievement. Alignment of purchases will be added to future Finance Committee Agendas (beginning in October). As part of budget development, Mrs. Perreault will try to improve supply line item alignment, and make it more uniform.

### 5.3.2 Custodial Supply Purchasing – FMDA Preferred List (Facilities Maintenance and Directors Association)

A document titled 'Supply question.xlsx' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault reported that she has discussed coordinated purchasing with Mr. Evans. Mr. Evans has been holding discussions with facilities personnel and they are working towards coordinated purchasing (buying the same supplies). More district-wide COVID related purchasing has been happening. In response to a concern that

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different departments have been ordering COVID supplies differently (e.g. gloves ordered by IT vs. Nurses, etc.), Mrs. Perreault advised that she believes these purchases occurred prior to the bulk ordering for the District.

## 5.3.3 Substitutes

Mrs. Perreault advised that there is concern that there may be more requests for leave and it will be difficult to predict what the substitute pool will look like. Mr. Wells advised that all teachers/staff have been advised to notify HR if they need to request a leave. There is a mixture of requests, some related to serious medical issues, and some are related to issues not as serious. There have been approximately 20 requests (from staff) for leave because of COVID-19. HR is working on these requests and is trying to determine how many of the staff members may want to teach virtual courses. Surveys were sent out to parents regarding how many parents want their students to participate in virtual learning (no in-person learning). It was noted that long term absences need to be filled by licensed teachers and there are only a limited amount of licensed substitutes available. It has become difficult to fill regular teaching positions as well. The BUUSD is trying to determine the need for substitutes. Mrs. Pompei queried regarding consideration being given for increases in substitute wages and or increases for substitutes who are returning to the district (employee loyalty). Mr. Wells advised that this has not been discussed, but that he can perform some research and present something to the Board next week. Mrs. Perreault advised that substitute wages were changed in the past based on comparisons to other schools in the area and she believes it is fairly consistent in this area. Mrs. Pompei advised that the shortened day, coupled with no increase, does not incentivize substitutes to return. Mrs. Poulin advised that she has been substituting for over a decade and receives the same pay rate as a new substitute. Mrs. Poulin advised that because of her experience and established relationships with students and staff, she is expected to do more than substitutes with less experience and believes the pay rate should be relative to experience. Mrs. Spaulding raised concern that some schools will be open 5 days a week and that may attract substitutes away from the BUUSD. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding whether or not substitutes will perform virtual teaching, and regarding the rules and regulations relating to filling long term absences. Mr. Wells will perform research regarding wages for experienced substitutes as well as wages that will assist with attracting new substitutes to the district.

## 5.3.4 Staff Appreciation Expenses

Mrs. Pompei advised that in reviewing the warrants, she noted staff appreciation expenses under the Board budget, and wondered why the Board was not involved in employee appreciation. Additionally, Mrs. Pompei advised that the 'awards' are not consistent throughout the district. Mrs. Pompei would like to see alignment of gifts throughout the district, assurance that the Board is properly acknowledging personnel, and that the Board is kept aware of recognitions. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding past practices when each district had its own budget for staff appreciation expenses. Mrs. Perreault can reach out to the various administrators to obtain information regarding their current practices. Mrs. Spaulding advised that because the expenses are taken from a Board budget line item, she feels that the Board should be more aware of the various awards/recognitions. Mrs. Pompei reiterated that she believes the gifts should also be aligned. Ms. Cambel queried regarding Board recognition of those who retire. It was agreed that this type of recognition should be added to procedures. The Committee will follow up on this topic at the November meeting.

## 6. Old Business

### 6.1 Summer Projects Update

A document titled 'BUUSD FY20/21 RFP Schedule, Facility Projects, etc...Spring/Summer 2020' dated 08/04/20 was distributed. Project #5 – SHS Auditorium Audio-Video Update – Though this project was approved by the Board in June, it has been decided, due to budget considerations, to put the project on hold.

Project # 6 – BTMES Roof – A recommendation will be presented to the Board on 08/13/2020.

Project #7 – BTMES Canopy Removal – The project is complete and within budget.

Project #9 – BCEMS Bus Loop – After the project was started, clay was discovered and much more work is involved. Change orders totaling \$28,500 have been submitted. The cost is now estimated to be \$70,000. It was noted that there is still approximately \$40,000 in the construction line of the budget and no other projects are planned at this point.

### 6.2 FY20 Projections

A document titled 'BUUSD FY20 Year End Projection Report' (dated 08/04/20) was distributed.

A document titled 'CVCC FY20 Year-end Projections (dated 08/04/20) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised that there are some changes to the previous projection as the BUUSD was still negotiating with Washington County Mental Health. The SEER Report (Special Education Expense Report) has been submitted. No significant changes are expected at this time. The BUUSD has an anticipated deficit of \$244,870. CVCC has an anticipated surplus of \$139,911. It was noted that the BUUSD does have a fund balance and that the Tax Stabilization Fund will offset the deficit.

### 6.3 FY21 Budget

There is nothing to report at this time.

## 7. Other Business

None.

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## 8. Items for Future Agendas

The Committee was asked to brainstorm ideas for additional efficiency studies, but agreed that studies should not be performed at this time, as administrators will need time to adjust to the new academic year.

- FY22 Budget Development
- FY21 Budget
- COVID-19 Update
- Solar Management for FY20
- Alignment of Purchasing (October)
- Coordinated Supply Purchases/Procedures (non-custodial) (October)
- Custodial Supply Purchasing – FMDA Preferred List (November)
- Staff Appreciation (under Efficiency Studies – November)

## 9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference

## 10. Adjournment

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:29 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*

On Mon, Aug 10, 2020 at 3:01 PM Lyman Castle <[lcastshs@buusd.org](mailto:lcastshs@buusd.org)> wrote:

Dear David,

I hope this note finds you well. You have certainly been thrown into the deep end in your first year.

I believe that Carol passed along information about my personal situation with respect to at-risk family members. I have decided that I cannot, in good conscience, put myself or my family at risk by working in the building. Therefore, I am afraid that I must resign. Against the suggestion of the VT-NEA, I am choosing to make this decision now rather than closer to the start of school so that you can, perhaps, find someone else to take my position or find a way to cover my classes. As a former department head, I know how hard it is to make personnel changes late in the summer.

Ending my career in education in this fashion was certainly not my plan, but we work with the information that we have and have to make decisions that are best for all involved. I hope you understand my motives and can appreciate the weight of this decision.

If you would like to discuss my tenure, or would like me to speak with Brenda or Nora Duane, I am happy to do so. The communication from the district office has made it clear that personnel issues should run through the Human Resources Department and your office and so I have not spoken with either Brenda or Nora about this decision. My mobile # is [\(802\) 793-6597](tel:8027936597) should you like to speak by phone.

Best,

Lyman

Recommended that we have a total of 12 members on the design team to include:				
3 representatives from each of the schools to include an administrator, a teacher or staff member, and a parent or employee				
	Admin	teacher/staff	parent/employee/student	Community member
	name	name	name	name
BCEMS/Barre City		Morgan Osinaga	Jessie Vest	Steve MacKenzie
BCEMS/Barre City		Prudence Krasofski	Calley Rock	Leslie Walz
BCEMS/Barre City		Gaib Bettis	Jen Chioldi	Nancy Wolf
BCEMS/Barre City			Miranda Tremblay	Anita Ristau
BCEMS/Barre City				
BTMES/BarreTown		Kelsey LaPerle	Josh Allen	Carl Rodgers
BTMES/BarreTown		Emily Merrill	Penny Martin(PTO)	Elaine Wang
BTMES/BarreTown		Ted Mills	Molly McFaun	Mick Kerin
BTMES/BarreTown				Maria Conti Reilly
BTMES/BarreTown				Jeffrey Glosser
BTMES/BarreTown				Kristin McCarthy
BTMES/BarreTown				
BTMES/BarreTown				
SHS		Nashanda Browman	Cassie Bell	
SHS			Angela Kiniry	
SHS				
CVCC				Jeff Norway
CVCC				