

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
October 6, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

David Wells, Superintendent  
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center  
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dave Delcore, Times Argus

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Tuesday, October 6, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held via video conference – Google Meet.

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

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 September 1, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the September 1, 2020 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Approved FY22 Budget Deadline Date**

A document titled BUUSD FY22 Budget Development Schedule – October 6, 2020 was distributed.

A document titled The Vermont Statutes Online (16V.S.A § 563) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised that 01/07/21 is the optimal date for budget approval/approval of Warnings, as this date allows for ample time to educate community members and promote the budget. “Early voting” needs to be considered when planning budget promotion. After brief discussion, it was agreed that a Special Board Meeting should be held on 01/07/21, for the sole purpose of approving the budget and Warning. Mr. Wells suggested scheduling an extra budget “working” meeting. It was noted that the Board meeting schedule for December will most likely need to be adjusted to perhaps the first and third Thursdays of the month (because of holidays). Mrs. Spaulding will advise the Board of these suggested changes.

**5.2 Alignment of Purchasing**

A copy of the BUUSD Purchasing Procedure was distributed.

A copy of the BUUSD Procurement Documentation Form For purchase made with Federal funds was distributed. This document will also be referenced under Agenda Items 5.3 and 6.3.

A document from the AOE titled ‘Considerations for Planning the Use of Federal Funds’ was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the documents included in the packet, and advised that this item is on the agenda to keep the topic on the Committee’s radar, but she has nothing specific to discuss this evening. Mrs. Akley lauded Mrs. Pompei for her ongoing efforts to find discrepancies and assist with streamlining the purchasing process. Mrs. Pompei advised that she believes the Procedures document may need to be updated to reflect that order submissions to vendors should include the District’s tax exempt status.

Additionally, Mrs. Pompei believes the document should be updated to reflect that some ‘gifts’ are purchased for welcoming new employees and for employees that are retiring. It was noted that some employees are using gift cards to make purchases, and those purchases can’t be confirmed as actually being for school supplies. Employees have been advised not to use gift cards for school

supply purchases. It was confirmed that the use of gift cards has diminished, but needs to be stopped entirely. It was noted that sometimes employees are picking up supplies while out doing other shopping, thus procedures are not always followed. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding whether the BUUSD is being as efficient and aligned as possible for purchases, including whether or not staff are utilizing the same vendor for like supplies. Mrs. Pompei reviewed a list of questions from a prior meeting, where discussion included alignment of supply budgets between schools, noting that at BTMES, parents of middle school students are asked to provide more supplies than BCEMS middle school parents. Alignment of curriculum would assist with needing/purchasing the same supplies (per grade at both schools). Mrs. Spaulding will review the list of supply/purchasing related questions and the Committee will hold additional discussion in November. Mr. Wells queried regarding the Committee's goal relating to purchasing. Ms. Chamberlin provided an overview of purchasing procedures at CVCC, and suggested that some supply monies be encumbered such that funds are available to support items that may be necessary if the schools have to return to all remote learning. Ms. Chamberlin advised that she would like to keep the CVCC accounts separate because when they are not, there is much confusion (CVCC orders supplies that are very similar or the same as supplies ordered by Maintenance and the Cafeteria). Mrs. Perreault clarified that for some vendors, there are separate accounts to assure that supplies are delivered to and invoiced to the correct program/building. Each administrator has to approve supplies for their building/programs. Mr. Wells suggested that prior to the November meeting a vendor should be contacted regarding the benefit to bulk purchasing (utilizing a supply closet) vs. on demand purchasing.

### **5.3 Coordinated Supply Purchases/Procedures (Non-Custodial)**

Discussion held under 5.2. This Agenda Item will be added to the November Agenda.

### **5.4 Understanding SPED Charges/Revenue**

Six documents were distributed; A copy of the Vermont AOE SU Level-Special Education Expenditure Report for FY2020 (including Worksheets A and B), a Salary Report (updated on 12/26/2019), an AOE document titled Instructions for FY-2020 – Special Education Expenditure Report, and a Special Education Child Count Report. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the Special Education Reporting documents, advising that her review of the documents would assist the Committee with understanding billing and reimbursement of SPED services. Part 1 of the report pertains to expenses, part 2 pertains to revenue which off-sets expenditures. Additionally, Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the reports for State placed students and extraordinary expenses. It was confirmed that on worksheet A, the BUUSD receives 100% reimbursement and on worksheet B (extraordinary expenses), the BUUSD receives 90% for amounts over \$60,000 per student. Mrs. Perreault answered questions from the Board, including questions related to contracted services, tuition, travel & conference expenses, use of in-house personnel vs. contracted personnel, and other specific line items on the reports. It was clarified that for State placed students, the BUUSD is only reimbursed at 100% if neither of the student's parents live in Barre. The majority of State placed students at BCEMS have a parent residing in Barre, thus they are not included on worksheet A. At this point, it is not known how many of the students on the lists will attend the SEA Program. Mrs. Pompei would like to see some specific data regarding the cost difference between students with services provided by in-house personnel vs. students receiving services from a contracted provider. Mrs. Spaulding would like to see specific data that can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of using in-house personnel vs. contracted personnel. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that contracted personnel do not have an incentive to help students work their way out of their IEP's, as that would mean they were no longer needed. Mr. Wells advised that case managers should be tracking and documenting progress, with the goal of seeing that students meet IEP goals, become as independent as possible, and eventually get off the IEP. It is recognized that some students will always need some level of support. Mrs. Spaulding is concerned that outside contractors are more concerned with behavioral needs than assisting students with meeting academic expectations. Ms. Cambel asked how often students get off IEP's as it is her experience that most students remain on IEPs for their 'entire school career'. Mr. Wells advised that IEPs should become 'thinner' as students advance, because some skills should have been mastered. IEPs, by regulation, are evaluated every three years, and that qualification for IEPs is based on how students' progress measures compared to their peers. Students must achieve substantially less than their peers in order to remain on an IEP. It was clarified that assessment to determine if students remain on IEPs involves input from the school based team (teachers, case managers, parents, and the LEA). These teams meet at least annually to assess student progress. Input would be requested from outside contractors regarding progress for the component (e.g. social behavior) that they were contracted to assist the student with. Mrs. Pompei queried regarding the number of field trips she sees on warrants (from outside contractors), and queried if students are being removed from the school setting excessively (for these field trips). Mrs. Spaulding recapped what needs to be achieved prior to the next meeting; Mr. Wells will touch base with Mrs. Anderson regarding a presentation to the Board, Mrs. Perreault will perform a comparison for in-house vs. contracted services, and Mrs. Pompei will add SPED Services to a future Curriculum Committee meeting agenda. This agenda topic will be added to the November Agenda.

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 Solar Management for FY2020**

Two documents were distributed; a Statement from Kendall sustainable Infrastructure, and a Statement from Green Mountain Power. Mr. Wells displayed a copy of an untitled Excel document containing Mrs. Pompei's research results. Mrs. Pompei provided an overview of her research document, and advised that she believes the BUUSD is not budgeting properly for electricity because the BUUSD paid approximately \$74,000 more than expected/budgeted. It was clarified that the actual savings is \$38,970.14. There was concern that there was a timeframe of approximately 3 months when no credits were received by BTMES. It was determined that the problem may have been the result of a 'switch not being flipped'. Mrs. Perreault will check with Michelle to see if she has additional information on that issue.

## **6.2 SEA Bid Update/Next Steps**

A document titled Spaulding Educational Alternatives – Timeline 10/6/20 was distributed. Contracts have been signed and the last permit was received today. It is anticipated that a ground breaking will occur in approximately 3 weeks. The Expense Note and Bond Bank Application should be submitted in mid-November. The draft budget is proceeding well. In response to a query, it was noted that during original planning it was not known that a full time custodian would be necessary. The cost for this position will be added to the draft budget. The first draft of the budget is anticipated to be presented to the Board on 11/12/20.

## **6.3 COVID-19 Update – Funding**

A copy of a memorandum from Secretary French (dated 09/28/2020) was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that of the three possible funding sources discussed in the past, FEMA will not be a source of funding for the BUUSD. The Agency of Education received information regarding what steps to take (completion of a survey) to determine possible eligibility for FEMA. The survey was completed and it was determined that the BUUSD is not eligible.

## **6.4 FY22 Budget Development**

A document (from the Vermont Superintendents Association) titled ‘Six Philosophical Budget Touchstones’ was distributed.

A document titled ‘FY22 BUUSD Budget Development Considerations (dated 10/06/20) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised that she included in the packet, a ‘Budget Considerations’ document, similar to the one used last year.

Mrs. Perreault will continue to highlight pertinent information. At this point there is nothing concrete to share. Mrs. Perreault has been continuing to work with administrators and directors, and the process is working well. A very preliminary Draft 1 has been created, but it will need adjustments for anticipated increases for health insurance. Mrs. Perreault will be conservative and add 15%. Open enrollment will occur in mid-October, and more accurate numbers will be available in early November. It was noted that insurance increases are usually known by this time in the year, but this year the information will be provided at a later date. Current plans and projects also need to be reviewed. The BUUSD has confirmed that the equalized pupil counts will remain the same (not being adjusted due to COVID related student population changes). Mrs. Pompei noted a discrepancy in student counts. This discrepancy may be related to pre-school student counts. Mrs. Perreault will research this matter.

## **6.5 FY21 Budget**

Six reports were distributed;

BUUSD FY21 Year-end Projection Report – September 29, 2020

BUUSD Expense Report – dated 09/29/20

BUUSD Revenue Report – dated 09/29/20

Two reports titled CVCC FY21 Year-end Projection Report – dated September 29, 2020

CVCC FY21 Budget – dated 10/02/20

Mrs. Perreault advised that the current projection is a surplus of \$593,000, less \$350,000 which will be taken from the BUUSD’s Education Spending for COVID-19 expenditures that were budgeted and repurposed (items that were already in the budget, but are now deemed as COVID related). Mrs. Perreault answered line item specific questions from the Committee, noting that she is being very conservative with her projections. Brief discussion was held regarding possibly having the Facilities Committee look into making some building related efficiencies (with monies identified as surplus). Mr. Wells recommends waiting until later in the year, when a more accurate projection can be made. Mr. Wells also suggested contacting Efficiency Vermont and other similar entities regarding possible assistance and incentives related to efficiency changes. Mrs. Pompei would prefer to plan early and spend late. Mr. Wells will advise the Facilities Committee so that they can perform some research regarding possible efficiency changes. Mrs. Pompei queried regarding summer help at BTMES, and how BTMES went over budget during COVID. Mrs. Perreault advised that there were two extra helpers who stayed on after the summer to assist with COVID-19 cleaning related work. The COVID related cleaning should be reallocated to a COVID expense line. It was confirmed that the encumbrance for substitutes at SHS is for permanent (full time) substitutes. Mr. Wells advised that the co-curricular line item has not been spent because contracts were just recently signed. In response to a query regarding use of SROs part time (given the shortened school day), Mrs. Perreault advised that her contact at Barre City has not responded yet to her inquiry regarding pro-rating. It was noted that Bus Supervision is not encumbered because it is an hourly job. Mrs. Pompei queried if Bus Supervisors should be on a different line item than Transportation Coordinators. Mrs. Perreault will research this matter. One math correction will be made to the CVCC year-end projection report.

## **7. Other Business**

Ms. Chamberlin advised that the Regional Advisory Board did hear the Phase II presentation from the architect, and are recommending moving forward with the site selection process. This topic will be presented to the BUUSD Board on 10/22/20.

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

- First Draft of FY22 Budget (November)
- CVCC Phase II (placeholder for November)
- Coordinated Supply Purchases/Procedures (non-custodial) Follow-up (November)
- Understanding SPED Expenses/Revenue Follow-up (Comparison Data from Mrs. Perreault) (November)
- FY21 Year-end Projections (December)

- Custodial Supply Purchasing – FMDA Preferred List (December)
- Staff Appreciation (December – under Efficiency Studies) (December)
- Solar Management Follow-up (December)

**9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 10, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference. This is a change from the regular schedule.

**10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 7:24 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*