

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

Via Video Conference – Google Meet
December 14, 2020 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, Chair - (BC)
Guy Isabelle – (At-Large)
Andrew McMichael

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

Tim Boltin, Vice Chair - (BC)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Luke Aither, SHS Assistant Principal – departed the meeting at 6:06 p.m.
Hayden Coon, BCEMS Principal
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director

GUESTS PRESENT:

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Monday, December 14, 2020 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 5:31 p.m., which was held via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Discussion of the street light at BTMES and the BCEMS Bus Loop Project was held and is documented under Agenda Item 7, Other Business.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – November 9, 2020 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee Meeting

The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2020 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Athletic Entrance at SHS

Two documents were distributed;

An undated letter to the Facilities Committee from Kerri Lamb

A document titled ‘New Entrance Concept’

Mr. Evans provided a brief historical overview of the installation of lights at Pendo Field, and noted that there was discussion of other major improvements that need to be made. Mr. Evans is in favor of improving the entrance, but stressed the new entrance needs to allow for large truck traffic (for electrical work and sewer line work). Mr. Evans is unsure how this project would fit into the budget. Mrs. Lamb was credited for resurrecting the new entrance project. Mr. Aither advised that when the project was discussed about a year ago, and though the Committee was in favor of the idea, they were concerned regarding putting a lot of money into the project, if the new entrance would cause additional work/costs when the new redesign of the athletic fields was constructed. Mr. Aither is concerned that this project may be something that has to be worked around and suggested it should be done at the same time the fields are overhauled, though it is acknowledged that that project may not occur for a decade or more. Mr. Isabelle believes that Mrs. Lamb advised that most of the funds for this project would be privately raised, and he believes that information of the ‘bigger plan’ be shared with potential donors. Mr. Isabelle also voiced concern that there are other projects in ‘competition’ for funding, including renovations to the SHS auditorium. Mr. Isabelle suggested that there be clarification regarding which projects will be undertaken first and how long they will take. Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding what action will be taken if Mrs. Lamb has already been successful in raising the funds for this project (turn the project down, or make some sort of accommodation). Mr. Aither suggested that the Committee take into consideration ‘lessons learned’ from the lighting project, and that perhaps there should be one individual in charge of the project.

Mr. Aither advised that his biggest concern is that if something is installed now, it will need to be taken down during the process of other projects, including the possible construction of a bridge over the river (to the student parking lot). Mr. Isabelle believes that given the status of sports last fall, it may be beneficial to wait and see what happens with sports in the future. Mr. Isabelle is very

appreciative of Mrs. Lamb's efforts, but believes it may be premature to move forward with this project at this time. Mr. Evans stressed that Pendo Memorial Field is a multi-sports use field and sports other than football also need to be considered. Improvements to the fields will be for the benefit of all sports. Mr. Evans suggested that if funds are/have been raised, that they be held by The Foundation and earmarked specifically for this project. Mr. Evans will reach out to Mrs. Lamb regarding this evening's discussion. Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding the 'bigger picture' and whether or not any plans have been drawn or if the project is in a conceptual state. Mr. Evans believes it would be beneficial to form a committee to resurrect the athletic fields' improvement project, and believes the size of the project will require fund raising and a bond. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding fundraising by The Foundation, and what projects those funds might be slated for. Mr. Evans believes there are monies in The Foundation earmarked for both the auditorium and the athletic fields. Mr. Isabelle believes it would be beneficial to ascertain what funds are available and what they are slated for. Mr. Isabelle suggested that Mr. Rousse be invited to a future meeting to provide an overview. It is believed that the athletic field work was estimated (many years ago) at approximately \$3,000,000 and included; installing artificial turf to Pendo Field, increasing the track from 6 lanes to 8 lanes, rubberizing the track, creation of regulation size softball and baseball fields, inclusion of two soccer/lacrosse fields, installation of fencing, a gravel footpath around the fields, construction of some facilities, and a major amount of drainage work. Mr. Aither also advised that the plan may have included additional lights, new bleachers, and buildings to house maintenance equipment. Mr. Aither also advised that artificial turf needs to be replaced (approximately every 10 years, depending on use). Mr. Aither believes that of the possible projects, he believes administrators would name the auditorium project as a higher priority project. Mr. Evans advised that the auditorium is almost at an unusable/non-functioning state. Mr. Isabelle suggests bringing in those who could assist with the project and provide them with a status report. Mr. Isabelle believes that right now, focus needs to be on passing a school budget.

5.2 Bus Survey for SHS Families

Mr. Aither advised that no progress has been made. The survey was designed a long time ago, but cannot be sent out until there is a potential 'drop-off' map. Thus far, Mr. Aither has not heard back from STA on the required map. Mr. Aither reported that he has reached out to the transportation company at least 6 times and has not received a response. Mr. Aither proposes that the survey go out with a map identifying the current spots/addresses for food distribution. It is believed that the coordinator of food distribution (Ashley, at the Central Office) has a list of those addresses. Mr. Evans will contact Ashley for the address list and will forward it to Mr. Aither. Mr. Aither advised of his concern that many survey responders will express an interest in transportation, but the budget will not support transportation for high school students. Mr. Aither believes the budget would need to be written to include the maximum number of stops. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding savings in this year's transportation budget and the potential to perform some test runs this year. Mr. Aither does not believe there is much savings to be found in the transportation budget, and believes that costs may have even increased due to COVID restrictions. Mr. Aither does not believe test runs could be made at this time. Mr. Coon advised there may be some flexibility due to staggered start/end times at the middle/elementary schools. Mr. Aither will pull together a map to present to the Committee. Mr. Aither left the meeting at the end of this discussion.

5.3 Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation – Storm Water Run-off Regulations

Mr. Evans has reached out to Michelle Braun (Friends of the Winooski) and she advised that she is still awaiting additional information from the State (regarding; grants, permits, dates...). Mr. Evans reiterated that storm-water retention mitigation will be required (by statute) within the next few years, though Mr. Evans has learned that there is some sort of 'opt out' fee. If an entity performs studies and it is determined that it is not feasible to install some sort of mitigation, the entity may be allowed to pay a one-time 'opt out' fee. Mr. Evans is hoping that the BUUSD can pursue this option. Mr. Evans believes that mitigation may not be possible at SHS or BCEMS. BTMES does have the optimum set up for a water retention pond, but it was noted that there may be ongoing maintenance costs associated with such a pond. Mr. Evans will advise the Committee when he receives additional information. Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding other methods, such as underground storage tanks. Mr. Evans believes any method will pose a financial hardship to the BUUSD and wants to try to find a way not to complete these projects. Mr. Evans voiced concern that State mandates are implemented prior to knowledge of the financial impact to schools. The Committee agreed that this item be placed on a future agenda when more information becomes available.

5.4 Keys for Substitutes at BTMES

Mr. Evans advised he met with Paul Belisle, Jennifer Nye and Erica Pearson, and they provided him with a history of what they have done in the past, what worked, and what didn't work. No examples were provided. Administrators advised that many times, they have had to escort substitutes out of the building (for various reasons e.g. not working well with students). Administrators advised that they do not like the idea of giving keys to substitutes, they 'have been there and done that' and it didn't work. Mr. Evans agrees with the idea that we need to have a way for teachers to lock their doors. We have learned from other schools, where intruders have wanted to come in and do harm. BTMES is a very unique building, with some open classrooms. Due to the wide open concept in parts of the building, it will take a lot of time to research, discuss, and think this matter through. Mr. Evans is concerned about spending money until the issue is thoroughly thought through. Mr. Evans advised that card access for all doors is very expensive. Discussion continues at BTMES on how to lock doors within the inner pods, though egress from the building also needs to be considered. Mr. Evans advised that there is a lot more to this issue than providing keys to teachers. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding this issue being a potential equity issue. Mr. Evans advised that they are trying to have equity in all buildings, and that SHS and BCEMS have all individual hard walled classrooms with individual doors. Mr. Evans advised that BTMES has a very small number of hard walled classrooms with individual doors. Mrs. Poulin went on record that the lack of keys poses a safety issue and that issuance of keys is a standard safety protocol at the other two schools. Additionally, Mrs. Poulin advised that BTMES has not had any

issue with substitutes not returning keys, because substitutes have never been given keys. Mrs. Poulin advised that she was involved in the initiative to have locks installed on classroom doors, knows when the locks were installed and knows that keys have never been checked out to substitutes. Mrs. Poulin believes this is some type of culture issue and that administrators don't want to trust substitutes with keys. Mrs. Poulin reiterated that having substitutes check out keys is a standard protocol and works successfully at SHS and BCEMS. Mrs. Poulin believes this is a serious safety issue for students and substitutes, and will escalate this matter to the Superintendent if necessary. Though it may be more difficult to figure out how to deal with open classrooms, Mrs. Poulin questioned how administrators will deal with the aftermath if substitutes get caught in a hallway (or the playground), and because of lack of access, harm comes to the students. Mr. Evans advised that if a teacher were on the opposite end of the building from their own classroom, when an emergency arose, the teacher would not be able to enter into a classroom and could possibly bring harm to a classroom. Mr. Evans advised that teachers do not have master keys. Teachers have keys that grant them access into one hallway. Mrs. Poulin advised that the keys checked out at SHS/BCEMS access all classrooms, but not administrative offices or janitorial closets etc... Mr. Evans advised that substitutes are issued 'master' keys as they are select individuals that may have to enter multiple classrooms on one given day. Mrs. Poulin advised that this discussion relates to providing master keys to substitutes at BTMES in the same manner that they are issued at SHS and BCEMS. Mr. Evans advised that issuing master keys to substitutes at BTMES, grants substitutes higher security to subs than regular teachers, and asked how that could be defended to the teachers. Mrs. Poulin does not believe that the issuance of keys has to be defended to BTMES staff and reiterated that the system works at SHS and it works at BCEMS and she does not understand why it can't work at BTMES. Mr. Evans advised that BTMES is structured differently with fewer hard wall classrooms. Mrs. Poulin advised that there are a good number of hard walled classrooms at BTMES. Mr. Cecchinelli would like to have BTMES administrators attend the next Committee meeting. Mr. Isabelle, in support of Mrs. Poulin, argued that while BTMES isn't all hard walled inside, it is a hard wall school, and that it should not be an issue to check out keys to employees who have gone through background checks, and been hired to work in the building. Mr. Isabelle reiterated the shortage of substitutes and reiterated that background checks have been completed on substitutes, and reiterated his question as to why this matter seems to be so difficult to resolve. Mr. Cecchinelli reiterated that he would like to hear more from administrators. Mr. Isabelle reiterated the shortage of substitutes. Mrs. Poulin advised that regardless of the number of substitutes, safety is an issue, especially during hybrid learning, when substitutes have to regularly take students outside for mask breaks. Mrs. Poulin advised that the recent shooting that was literally right over the playground chain link fence should have been a 'wake-up call'. Mrs. Poulin reiterated the gunfire was right over the fence of the playground. Mr. Cecchinelli will add this item to next month's agenda and hopes to hear a better explanation.

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business

Discussed under Agenda Item 2 (Additions/Changes to Agenda)

BTMES Light: Mr. Evans has contacted Green Mountain Power regarding the new street light at BTMES, but doesn't know if they have adjusted the light yet. Mr. Evans will follow up with Green Mountain Power. It has been reported that the current angle of the light is 'blinding' to some drivers.

BCEMS Bus Loop Project: Mr. Coon reported that the first phase of the Bus Loop Project went very well and is working great. Mr. Coon inquired regarding whether or not Phase 2 has been being discussed. Mr. Evans does not have information regarding phase 2, and advised that it will be significantly more expensive than phase 1 and will involve a significant amount of permitting. If the project were to be slated for the summer of 2021, he is not sure (given the scope of the project) whether or not it could be completed. Mr. Coon reported that the current configuration is working very well and the second phase involves additional visitor parking, and queried regarding a different approach to phase 2, or postponing phase 2 (due to budget constraints). Mr. Evans suggested that perhaps some preliminary work be performed to identify options. It was clarified that phase 2 was originally slated for 2021, but the storm water run-off project may need to be incorporated into this project, thus increasing the scope and cost of the project. This item will be added to next month's agenda.

Discussed under Other Business:

BTMES 'Lobby Office Space': Mr. Cecchinelli queried regarding the lack of an office space located prior to the lobby (at BTMES). Both SHS and BCEMS have these areas which allow for improved building security. Mr. Cecchinelli would like to brainstorm on what could be done at BTMES. Mr. Evans advised that moving office personnel closer to the exterior doors was discussed a few years ago. Discussion also included the traffic flow, including parents picking up their children. Mr. Evans advised that with the removal of the canopy, there has been some thought about re-designing/re-constructing the entrance (having personnel at the door to screen those wanting to enter the building). Mr. Evans advised that without throwing a lot of money into the project, it needs to be well thought out. This item will be shared with administrators and will be added to a future agenda. Mr. Evans will mention this item to BTMES administrators.

BTMES Generator Update: Mr. Evans advised that Barre Town officials have entered into an agreement to purchase a generator. The generator has been ordered. Preliminary work has been performed behind the BTMES building, including pouring the concrete slab.

It is anticipated that the generator will be delivered in late spring or early summer. Benoit Electric has been hired to perform the electrical work for this project and has begun preliminary work in the electric room.

8. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas

- BCEMS Bus Loop Project
- Athletic Entrance at SHS
- Bus Survey for SHS Families (Review of Map)
- Keys for Substitutes at BTMES
- Secured Entrance to BTMES

- Storm Water Run-off Project – Status Update (future date/to be determined)

Committee Members were advised to notify Mr. Cecchinelli of any additional items they would like placed on the agenda.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Monday, January 11, 2020 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference.

10. Adjournment

The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin