

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
February 16, 2021 - 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:**

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Guy Isabelle (At-Large) – departed the meeting at 6:11 p.m.

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

David Wells, Superintendent  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Tuesday, February 16, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:32 p.m., which was held via video conference.**

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

Add: 5.5 Statewide Finance and Financial Data Management System

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 Meeting Minutes – January 5, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting Minutes**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to approve the Minutes of the January 5, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting.**

**5. New Business**

**5.1 FY21 Year-end Projections**

Five documents were distributed:

BUUSD FY21 Year End Projection Report dated 02/16/21

BUUSD Expense Report dated 02/09/21

BUUSD Revenue Report dated 02/09/21

CVCC FY21 Year-end Projections dated 02/16/21

CVCC FY21 Budget – dated 02/09/21

Mrs. Perreault advised that year-end projections look favorable (approximately \$600,000 for the BUUSD and a little over \$200,000 for CVCC). Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the contributing factors: unfilled positions, health benefits (it was forecasted that more para-educators would enroll in family plans), vacant SPED para-educator positions, unanticipated revenues (facility rental from homeless meals) and some indirect costs for administration of Federal grants. CVCC received Federal COVID supplanted funds. Mrs. Perreault answered questions from the Committee, noting that not all expenses are encumbered at this time. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of grant funds (proposed and expected to be received) and deadlines relating to grant monies. In response to a query, Mrs. Perreault advised that she will provide a report of COVID funds and expenses at the next meeting. Some grant funds may be spent on intensive summer programs that will most likely serve 200 to 250 students. Summer programming, which usually is reserved for special education students, will be designed to also assist general education students who have fallen behind (due to COVID), but don't qualify for SPED. It is anticipated that the summer program will include a YMCA summer camp component. Summer programs will also include additional social work/guidance and academic support for high school students (including seniors). Mrs. Perreault answered questions relating to specific line items on the projection report.

## **5.2 Solar Management Follow-up**

A document titled 'FY20 SOLAR SUMMARY – February 16, 2021' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the summary report which documents one year's worth of savings (approximately 10%). Mrs. Perreault will contact NOVUS to ascertain why SHS savings is 6.14% (and if this number is accurate). It was clarified that this report contains information relating to solar management only (expenses and credits), and does not include the power bills from Green Mountain Power. It was noted that BTMES has a different contract than BCEMS and SHS. In response to a request, Mrs. Perreault will add 'Solar Management' as a 'standing' agenda item for future February Finance Committee meetings.

## **5.3 Early Retirement Discussion**

A document titled Early Retirement Options Sampling, February 16, 2021 was distributed. Mrs. Spaulding had requested that Mrs. Perreault obtain information relating to options for early retirement offerings. This information may be beneficial as the Board begins negotiations. Mrs. Akley suggested that if the budget vote doesn't pass, it may be beneficial to review this document expediently and research to determine if offering an early retirement option will result in savings. Mrs. Perreault advised that she did reach out to Scott Cameron regarding this matter and he advised that the Collective Bargaining Agreement does not lock the BUUSD into anything relating to this matter and he suggests keeping it that way. Article 14.2 allows the Board to offer a one-time incentive. It was noted that hiring and retaining quality teachers is difficult at this time. Mrs. Akley does not feel that broader considerations/implications were shared during the last round of negotiations. It was clarified that early retirement options can be a one-time offering and not be included in yearly contracts. Dependent on the outcome of the budget vote, the Committee may wish to revisit this matter. Mr. Wells believes that given the current COVID situation, interest may be high. Mr. Wells cautioned that recently it has been difficult to hire highly qualified teachers. Given the COVID situation there may not be a need to incentivize early retirements.

## **5.4 FY22 Budget Communication**

Thirteen documents were distributed;

BUUSD 2021 Annual Report to the Community

Barre Supervisory Union Contact Information

Superintendent's Annual Report

The Warning for the March 2, 2021 Vote

BUUSD FY20-22 Budget, Expense Summary dated 01/07/21

The BUUSD FY20 – 22 Budget, Revenue Summary dated 01/01/21

'BUUSD Budget 2021 – 2022 – Draft 3 – Projected Comparative Tax Rate Calculations – Revised'

A document titled 'Why does Barre City have a higher homestead tax rate than Barre Town?'

A document titled Three Prior Years Comparisons – Format as Provided by AOE

Central Vermont FY2020 – FY2022 Budget Expense Summary dated 01/07/21

CVCC FY2022 Budget Revenue Report dated 01/07/21

A document titled 'Please Exercise Your Right To Vote'

A copy of the CVCC 2021 Annual Report

Mrs. Spaulding provided an overview of budget communication plans that have been discussed and implemented by the Communications Committee. The Annual Report will be mailed to every household in Barre City and Barre Town. Additionally, budget information is available on the website. The website will include updated information relating to the Yield as that information becomes available. Mrs. Spaulding wants to assure that Finance Committee members are doing their part to answer questions from the community, and encourages Committee Members to answer questions they see posted on social media. Mrs. Spaulding advised regarding the upcoming budget informational meeting on 03/01/21 at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Spaulding advised that in the past, turn-out for the budget information session has been low, but there may be more individuals interested this year. Mrs. Spaulding would like to promote the informational session well and encourages Committee Members to show up to assist with answering questions. Mr. Wells will have Mr. Allen set up and promote the meeting.

## **5.5 Statewide Finance and Financial Data Management System**

A document titled 'BILL AS INTRODUCED H.91' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the document, which pertains to a recently introduced Bill. Peter Anthony and Tom Walz have inquired on this matter. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding functionality and internal control flaws with the software, advising that it has been very inefficient. A delay in implementation of this software has been requested. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding her justification of requesting this delay and advised that it is her belief that implementation should be put on hold until Power School can make the necessary updates and improvements (including, but not limited to; internal controls, automated bank reconciliation, and budgeting and student activities modules) to their software. It was noted that the State of Vermont made the decision to contract with this vendor, and it is their responsibility to see that they can fulfill the contract. Without a delay in implementation, school districts will be forced to convert to a system that is sub-par. Mrs. Perreault advised that the BUUSD's current software, though not state-of-the-art, is reliable.

## **6. Old Business**

None.

**7. Other Business**

Mrs. Pompei and Ms. Cambel were thanked for their support and efforts both on this Committee and on the Board.

**8. Items for Future Agendas**

- FY22 Budget Vote Recap
- Report of COVID Related Expenses, Funds, and Grants
- FY21 Year-end Projections
- Staff Appreciation (under Efficiency Studies)
  
- Coordinated Supply Purchases/Procedures (non-custodial) Follow-up (April)

**9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 16, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference.

**10. Adjournment**

**The Committee agreed by consensus to adjourn at 6:33 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*