

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**
Via Video Conference – Google Meet
April 6, 2021 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sarah Pregent (BC) - Chair
Renee Badeau (BT) – Vice Chair
Gina Akley (BT)
Chris Parker (BT)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

David Wells, Superintendent
Mary Ellen Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Penny Chamberlin, Director Central Vermont Career Center
Hayden Coon, BCEMS Principal
Chris Hennessey, BCEMS Principal
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Jennifer Nye, BTMES Principal
Erica Pearson, BTMES Principal
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager
Brenda Waterhouse, SHS Principal

PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus Josh Howard

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mrs. Pregent, called the Tuesday, April 6, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 5:31p.m., which was held via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

None.

3. Public Comment

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 March 16, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee Meeting Minutes

Brief discussion was held regarding protocol for voting in committee meetings, prior legal advice was to approve items by consensus with no official voting. Recent legal advice is to use Robert’s Rules of order and have voting in both Board and Committee meetings. The advice not to hold votes in committee meetings was based on the issue that a quorum of the Board was often present in committee meetings and voting could be misconstrued. It is noted for the record that only Committee Members are allowed to vote in committee meetings.

On a motion by Ms. Parker, seconded by Ms. Badeau, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the March 16, 2021 and March 22, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee meetings.

4.2 March 22, 2021 BUUSD Finance Committee Special Meeting Minutes

Approved under Agenda Item 4.1.

5. New Business

5.1 Schedule of Required Monthly Agenda Items

A document titled ‘DRAFT-BUUSD Finance Committee Monthly Agenda Items, Updated 3/31/21’ was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that the document is a guide, and that the Business Manager and Committee Chair will confer on agendas.

Mrs. Perreault advised that the RAN is the Revenue Anticipation Note and provided an overview of why it is necessary. Mrs. Perreault suggested that the Committee consider changing the May meeting date to fall after the May 11, 2021 budget vote. This item will be discussed further under Agenda Item 9.

5.2 FY22 Proposed Budget Communication

A document titled 'Barre Unified Union School District FY20-22 Budget, Expense Summary 1-7-21' was distributed. A document titled 'BUUSD Budget 2021-2022 – Draft 4 Revote May 11, 2021 – Projected Comparative Tax Rate Calculations 3/31/21' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the updated information included in the packet. It was reported that great planning occurred at the Communications Committee meeting with regards to budget promotion. Promotion will include a post card mailing and updates to the budget portion of the web site. Additional BUUSD promotion (not budget related) is occurring. Mr. Allen is spearheading a campaign titled; #IAMBarre. This is a student centered promotion that was started by parents last year. On 05/07/21, the BUUSD will have another full page ad in the Times Argus. This is the regularly scheduled ad that is provided by the Times Argus at no cost to the BUUSD. Brief discussion was held regarding the acquisition and placement of lawn signs. The Committee was cautioned that the BUUSD is allowed to remind the community to vote, but cannot advise the community how to vote. Some Board Members have lawn signs advising community members to 'Vote Yes'. It was clarified that these signs were purchased years ago with private funds and are not tied to promotion by the BUUSD.

5.3 Procedures

Three documents were distributed;
BUUSD Contract Procurement, Development, and Approval Procedures
BUUSD Purchasing Procedure
Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability Policy (F20)

Mrs. Perreault advised it would be beneficial to share finance procedures with new Board Members, advising that the procedures follow policy. Policy F20 is an over-arching Finance Department policy and most procedures do tie back to this policy. Brief discussion was held regarding efforts to consolidate purchasing as much as possible. Mrs. Akley voiced concern regarding a possible 'loophole' to the policy that requires Board approval for purchases over \$15,000. There have been instances in the past where a purchase that was thought to be less than \$15,000, ended up costing substantially more than \$15,000, and was never presented to the Board for approval. Mrs. Akley advised that given the current financial concerns, it is important to be aware of expenses and that adhering to policy and operating with transparency are very important. Mrs. Pregent suggested that the purchasing policy and associated procedures (that relate to purchases requiring Board approval), be reviewed and updated if necessary. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of additional procedures and noted that the BUUSD's insurer has their legal counsel review all contracts prior to them being signed by the BUUSD.

5.4 RFPs/Summer Projects

A document titled 'BUUSD FY22 RFP Schedule, Facility Projects, etc...Spring/summer 2021, April, 2021' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault advised that the document is a template used annually to track projects, including summer projects. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the use of the form and the information that is tracked/reported on the form. Updates to this form will be shared in future meetings. In response to a query regarding negotiating copier and transportation contracts, Mrs. Perreault advised that by statute, contracts can be renewed if the increase doesn't exceed 2.6%. Given this year's circumstances, it was felt that it would be best to discuss renewal with the existing vendors.

5.5 Staff Appreciation

A document titled 'Recognition Procedure: Service Awards and Retirement Gifts' (DRAFT dated 04/06/21)
Mrs. Perreault provided a historical overview advising that it was suggested that there be consistency amongst the buildings. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the document and requested feedback from the Committee. Lengthy discussion was held regarding the 'gift' levels and recognition awards and any differences between awards for year-of-service recognitions vs awards for retirements. Mrs. Perreault estimated that approximately \$4,000 to \$5,000 is spent on this line item annually. It was noted that the BUUSD gift does not preclude individual departments from providing gifts. Suggestions for changes were provided (clearer format, revised award amounts, years-of-service groupings, etc). The Committee agreed that the draft procedures should be reviewed/revised. Mrs. Perreault will review the draft with administrators and will present a revised version at a future meeting. It was suggested that CVCC administrators be included in the discussion of this procedure.

6. Old Business

6.1FY21 Year-end Projections

Two documents were distributed;
BUUSD FY21 Year-end Projection Report, dated 04/06/21
CVCC FY21 Year-end Projection Report, dated 04/06/21
Mrs. Pregent advised of a projected surplus of approximately \$870,000, noting some items having a significant impact; including shifting of costs to COVID funds. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding the use/handling of surplus funds; towards the end of the fiscal year, the Board could decide to move some of the monies to the Capital Improvement Reserve, or the Tax Stabilization Fund.

Mrs. Pregent reminded the Committee that budget draft 4 utilizes \$500,000 from the Tax Stabilization Fund, lowering its balance to approximately \$144,000, and advised that it may be possible to use surplus funds to replenish that fund. It may also be beneficial to move some of the surplus to the Capital Improvement Reserves fund. CVCC has a projected year-end surplus of \$300,000. Ms. Chamberlin advised that the surplus is mainly due to positions that were not filled and the receipt of \$300,000 in GEER funding. Ms. Chamberlin plans to ask the Board to put \$100,000 towards FY23 tuition reductions, and \$50,000 towards supporting the Governance Structure Project.

7. Other Business

None.

8. Items for Future Agendas

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- FY21 Year-end Projections
- Budget Re-vote Outcome
- ESSER Funding Update
- Finance Procedures
- Facilities Projects and RFP Updates

Ms. Chamberlin advised that the Perkins Grant will be presented to the BUUSD Board in May.

9. Next Meeting Date

Brief discussion was held regarding rescheduling the May meeting so that it occurs after the 05/11/21 vote.

The Tuesday, May 4, 2021 meeting has been cancelled.

The next meeting is Tuesday, May 18, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference – Google Meet.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Ms. Badeau, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin