

BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
Via Video Conference – Google Meet
May 27, 2021 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Chair
Alice Farrell (BT) – Vice Chair
Guy Isabelle (At-Large) - Clerk
Gina Akley (BT)
Renee Badeau (BT)
Tim Boltin (BC)
Chris Parker (BT)
Sarah Pregent (BC)
Abigayle Smith (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

David Wells, Superintendent
Mary Ellen Simmons, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
Emmanuel Ajanma, Director of Technology
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services
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

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Erika Dolan	Jody Emerson	Josh Howard	Prudence Krasofski
Heather Slayton	Megan Spaulding	Diane Solomon	Rachael Van Vliet	

As the meeting was held via video conferencing, a roll-call vote was taken for each action item. Each Board Member was individually polled and voted to approve all motions that are listed as unanimously approved.

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Thursday, May 27, 2021, Regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 5.6 RFP for BCEMS Partial Roof Replacement
Delete 6.1 Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.

3. Comments for Items Not on the Agenda

3.1 Public Comment

None.

3.2 Student Voice

None.

4. Consent Agenda

4.1 Meeting Minutes

4.1.1 Approval of Minutes – May 13, 2021 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the May 13, 2021 Regular Meeting, and the Minutes of the May 20, 2021 Special Meeting.

4.1.2 Approval of Minutes – May 20, 2021 Special Meeting

Approved under Agenda Item 4.1.1.

5. Current Business

5.1 New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Maeve Callewaert (BCEMS Grade 3rd/4th Teacher), Angela Richard (BTMES – Math Interventionist – 5th – 8th), Jessica Vest (BCEMS – Grade 1), Monique Brochu (BCEMS Pre-K Teacher), and Lisa Damiata (BTMES Social Worker) were distributed.

Mr. Wells provided a brief overview of the candidates presented for hire. Mr. Wells answered questions from the Board, advising that the candidate for the position of BTMES Social Worker will have a provisional license, and will be required to secure licensure/endorsement from the Agency of Education. In response to a query, it was noted that 2 of the hires are for new positions, and the rest are filling open existing positions. It was noted that based on class sizes, it is anticipated that these positions need to be filled to satisfy the classroom size policy. One position is grant funded and will be utilized to assist students who are falling behind due to COVID.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Maeve Callewaert, Angela Richard, Jessica Vest, Monique Brochu, and Lisa Damiata.

It was announced that Mr. Hennessey has accepted the offer for the one year position of Interim Superintendent.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to accept the resignation of Donna Kelty, effective May 19, 2021, and to thank her for her many years of dedicated service to the District.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Tina Lunt as the BUUSD Board Clerk, effective May 19, 2021, with a pro-rated stipend.

It was noted that the individual in the position of District Board Clerk receives a stipend. Mrs. Spaulding will contact Mrs. Perreault regarding pro-rated stipend payments for Mrs. Kelty and Mrs. Lunt.

In the near future, discussion will be held regarding how to move forward with hiring an Interim Middle School Principal for BCEMS. It was noted that the State Board of Education, Education Quality Standards require that this position be filled. Information relating to the hiring process for this position will be made public. It was reiterated that due to the size of the school and the complexity of the student population, both Principal positions at BCEMS are very much needed. Mr. Hennessey and Mr. Coon provided brief overviews of their responsibilities as co-Principals at BCMES, noting that a work week of 60 hours, probably understates the number of hours each principal puts in each week. In response to a query, it was noted that the elementary school student population at BCEMS is the second largest in the state and the second largest outside of Chittenden County and BTMES is ranked as the third largest in the state and third largest outside of Chittenden County. Mrs. Spaulding encouraged Josh Howard to accept Mr. Hennessey's invitation to meet for the purpose of discussing the Principals' roles in more detail. Additionally, Mrs. Spaulding invited Mr. Howard to join the Finance Committee for budget discussions, and to join in these discussions early on in the budget development process.

5.2 Resignations

Letters of resignation from Katie Naylor, Larkin Brown, Rhonda Forlow, Ed.D., and Carter Semple were distributed. A letter of resignation from Donna Kelty (BUUSD Board Clerk) was also distributed. Mrs. Kelty's resignation was addressed under Agenda Item 5.1.

5.3 First Reading Students Activities (Elementary) Policy - (C22) (Recommended Policy)

A copy of the policy was distributed. The Policy Committee recommends not adopting this policy. Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of discussion at the Policy Committee.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Policy Committee's recommendation, and agreed not to adopt the Students Activities (Elementary) Policy (C22).

5.4 First Reading Student Clubs and Activities Policy (C23) – (Recommended Policy)

A copy of the policy was distributed. Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the minor change to this existing policy.

Mrs. Spaulding requested a wording change. The policy will be amended with the requested change prior to being presented for a Second and Final Reading.

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve, as amended (per discussion), the First Reading of the Student Clubs and Activities Policy (C23).

5.5 FY22 Budget

Two unsigned 'Letters to the Editor' (dated 05/27/21) were distributed. Mrs. Perreault and Mr. Allen have updated all of the web site budget documents with the most current information. Mrs. Spaulding provided an overview of the Budget Communication Update documented (dated 05/27/21), including; Budget Webpage updates, absentee voting information (sent out to school families), sharing of budget voting information, monitoring and addressing misinformation that was circulating, and indirect school promotion (working with Work-Based Learning Partners, planned filming of an underclassmen awards ceremony, and additional content – photos, write-ups and videos to be used on social media). It was clarified that the BCEMS School Resource Officer position has not been eliminated from the budget. Mr. Coon was able to connect with an individual who posted erroneous information regarding this position and has provided accurate information regarding this position). It was announced that the Budget Informational Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 8, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. As there was no public attendance at the last Budget Vote Informational Meeting, Mrs. Spaulding has pre-recorded the presentation for those who would like to view the presentation early. Those who have questions should contact Mrs. Spaulding or Mrs. Pregent. Brief discussion was held regarding the letters to the editor. It was noted that the two letters have different tones, with one more factual and one more inviting in nature (recognizing what parents and students have been experiencing this past year). Concern was raised that the factual letter has a 'scolding' tone, and it is feared that the tone of the letter may cost votes. Mrs. Farrell would like to see the factual letter amended to include a more inviting tone. It was agreed that both letters are valuable and that clarification needs to be provided regarding the various increase percentages (over the FY21 budget, vs. the FY21 cost per pupil). Mrs. Akley will help wordsmith the factual letter, such that the tone is more inviting. The Board agreed to sign both letters. The factual letter will be amended and posted in the Times Argus and on the District's website. The second letter will be posted on Front Porch Forum and on the schools' Facebook pages. Mr. Allen will be unavailable, so the finalized letters will be forwarded to Mr. Wells, who will forward them to Mr. Allen's 'back-up' for posting.

5.6 RFP for BCEMS Partial Roof Replacement

A document titled BCEMS Partial Roof Replacement – Summer 2021 was distributed.

It is the Superintendent's recommendation to accept the bid from Dayco, Inc, in the amount of \$201,000

Mrs. Perreault advised that typically, several RFP's have been presented to the Board by this time, but because there is no approved budget, there has been a delay. If the budget doesn't pass, this project still needs to be completed, and can be funded by the Capital Improvements fund if necessary. To delay this project could result in damage to the building, and an increase in cost. IThe BUUSD has worked with this contractor in the past.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to accept the Superintendent's recommendation to contract with Dayco, Inc. for partial roof repairs at BCEMS.

6. Old Business

~~6.1 Vision, Mission, and Strategic Goals~~

Deleted. Kept as a place holder.

6.2 Feedback: Recovery Plan

A memorandum to the Board, from David Wells (dated 05/25/21) regarding Phase 2: Recovery Planning and Implementation, was distributed. The draft Recovery Plan was attached. Mr. Wells noted that the Plan is similar to the Plan previously presented to the Board, and is also similar to the Continuous Improvement Plan (which it replaces for the upcoming year). Items listed in the Plan will feed into the ESSER grant. Drafting the plan involved a Recovery Planning Team, and included a review of data, input from building administrators, and work to match the Plan to the Vision, Mission, & Strategic Planning initiative. The Plan is being finalized and is due to the State by June 1, 2021. The Plan addresses both academic and social/emotional issues and must address recovering from the effects of COVID-19 or preventing similar setbacks in student learning, should something interrupt learning again. Lengthy discussion ensued, including; discussion of philosophy, summer and after-school programs, use of ESSER Funds (through September 2024), future planning for when ESSER funds are no longer available, tracking of grant funded positions (both financing of and success of), investments to recoup deficits and losses and assist underserved students, a query relating to the grant funding an Equity Coordinator position, professional development, concern over the lack of enrichment programs (can't be included in this plan), oversight of programs to track effectiveness (done through reporting), how to inform parents of this plan (implementation and steps being taken), and future feedback from the State regarding the Plan and grant applications. Mrs. Spaulding has an extensive list of questions on the Plan, and has submitted a list of these questions to the Superintendent and Board Members.

7. Other Business/Round Table

The Board and administrators congratulated Mr. Hennessey on his new role as Interim Superintendent, and thanked Mr. Wells for his leadership of the District during this past year. The Search Committee was thanked for their efforts.

Mr. Hennessey appreciates the congratulatory statements, and advised that he is deeply honored and humbled that the Board has chosen him for this position.

Mrs. Waterhouse advised of a bus (transportation) survey sent out for all high school parents. It is important that parents respond to this survey as the high school is trying to determine the level of need for next year. It was noted that next year's plan includes providing transportation both to and from the high school. Pick-up / Drop-off spots will be identified once need is determined. The survey closes on Wednesday, 06/02/21.

Mrs. Waterhouse advised that graduation plans have changed, and that option 3, to be used in case of inclement weather; is to hold graduation inside. If the ceremony is held inside, only graduates (no guests) will be allowed to attend.

Board and staff members were thanked for their efforts during this difficult year.

Mrs. Farrell reminded the community that Memorial Day weekend is upon us and thanked members of the armed services as well as those in JROTC.

Voters are strongly encouraged to vote on 06/09/2021. Those who cannot vote on that date may obtain absentee ballots. The Board recognizes and appreciates the community and parent involvement throughout this year and during budget development. Community members were asked to remind the 'people in their lives' to vote.

Mr. Wells advised that Secretary of Education French has strongly hinted that in the next academic year, things will 'return to normal'. Guidance will be forthcoming on 05/28/21. Mr. Wells will share updated information when it becomes available.

Mr. Wells welcomed Mr. Hennessey to the position of Interim Superintendent, and expressed his appreciation for the warm sentiments conveyed to him this evening.

8. Future Agenda Items

- RFP's
- Policies
- Parking of Surplus Funds (discuss prior to the end of the fiscal year – discuss at Finance Committee first)
- Future Meetings – Virtual and In-person – to keep feedback / attendance of community members (TBD - Parking Lot)

Remove 'Discussion of Students Opting Not To Participate.....' from the Parking Lot. This item is included in the Recovery Plan.

9. Next Meeting Date

The next Regular BUUSD Board Meeting is Thursday, June 10, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., via video conference (Google Meet).

10. Executive Session

10.1 Personnel - Grievance

A Personnel Grievance issue was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the item proposed for discussion would clearly place the Barre Unified Union School District at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Ms. Smith, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Wells and Mr. Hennessey in attendance, at 7:38 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 8:45 p.m.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin