

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING**

Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
July 22, 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:

Chris Hennessey, Interim Superintendent
Emmanuel Ajanma, Director of Technology
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Jude Brister	Alice Flanders	Josh Howard	Prudence Krasofski
Sue Paxman	Terry Reil	Diane Solomon	William Toborg	Rachel VanVliet

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, July 22, 2021, Regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m., which was held at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Library and via video conference. Mrs. Spaulding provided an overview of the procedures/protocols for public comment.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as presented.

3. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

3.1 Public Comment

A member of the public queried regarding legal review of the law pertaining to the Sexually Transmitted Infection and Pregnancy Prevention Education Policy (C43), and any possible revote on this policy if it is deemed that the law does not remove the parental ‘opt out’ option (for high school students) for condom distribution. Mrs. Spaulding will follow up on this issue and will advise Mr. Toborg of the outcome.

3.2 Student Voice

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – June 24, 2021 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the June 24, 2021 Regular Meeting and the July 1, 2021 Special Meeting.

4.2 Approval of Minutes – July 1, 2021 Special Meeting

Approved under Agenda Item 4.1.

5. Current Business

5.1 New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Natasha Lincoln (BTMES 2nd grade), Abigale Savoie

(BCEMS School Nurse), Michelle Amato (BCMES Grade 5/6 Science), Gretchen Singer (Grades 5 – 8 BCEMS Spanish Teacher), Madison Bennett (BCEMS English Language Learners), Erica Gongloff (BTMES Pre-k Interventionist) and Olivia Kane (BCEMS Interim Assistant Principal) were distributed. Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the non-administrative candidates being presented for approval and advised that the AOE has advised that Ms. Singer does qualify for a provisional license. It was noted that ESSER funding covers the BTMES Pre-k Interventionist position until September 2024, and the candidate is aware that the position is grant funded. Mr. Hennessey answered additional questions from the Board.

On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Natasha Lincoln, Abigale Savoie, Michelle Amato, Gretchen Singer, Madison Bennett, and Erica Gongloff.

Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the BCEMS Interim Assistant Principal candidate's experience. A member of the public queried regarding the necessity of the administrative position.

On a motion by Mr. Isabelle, seconded by Mrs. Akley, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Olivia Kane for the position of BCEMS Interim Assistant Principal.

5.2 Resignations/Retirements

A letter of resignation from Heather Douglas (BCEMS School Nurse) was distributed. No Board action is required.

5.3 Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN) Recommendation Approval

A copy of the Revenue Anticipation Note, and the Resolution for Tax/Revenue Anticipation Borrowing document were distributed. Mrs. Perreault provided an overview of the RAN (also known as the Tax Anticipation Note), which is necessary to cover cash flow issues until tax money is received. The Board received input from the community and it was noted that the RAN usually results in an overall gain of approximately \$20,000.

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to approve contracting with Community Bank, N.A. for the FY 2022 Revenue Anticipation Note, in the amount of \$3,916,204 .00, and authorized the Board Chair, Mrs. Spaulding to sign the required documents. Mrs. Perreault advised that the BUUSD District Treasurer and Clerk will also sign the document.

5.4 Surplus Funds Discussion

Three documents were distributed;

BUUSD Non-Instructional Operations Fund Balance Policy (DRAFT 07/22/21)

Superintendent's Recommendation for Use of Surplus Funds (Unaudited FY21 Surplus Funds – 07/22/21 - \$2,900,000)

BUUSD FY21 Year-End Projection Report – July 22, 2021

The purpose of this agenda item is for the Board to receive a recommendation regarding surplus funds distribution. Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the recommendation of where to place these unaudited funds which involves moving; \$1,100,000 to the Capital Projects Fund, \$800,000 to the Tax Stabilization Fund (with voter approval), and to pay off \$1,000,000 of the SEA Project Expense Note. It was noted that the draft policy is included for informational purposes only, not for policy approval. Mrs. Spaulding would like the Policy Committee to discuss this draft policy, and have it legally vetted if the Committee deems it should be presented to the Board for approval. Mrs. Perreault advised that the auditors have recommended adopting a Fund Balance Policy. No decision (vote) relating to the surplus recommendation will be made this evening. The Board received input from the community. Mrs. Pregent advised that providing refunds to tax payers is not an option. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding advice received from legal counsel, and the reasons to have a Tax Stabilization Fund which can be used to offset expenses. Additional discussion was held regarding the unaudited projection, and it was noted that there were savings related to staff, supplies, and athletics, as well as staffing that was repurposed and covered by ESSER Funds. It was noted that the original projection for the SEA Project was significantly lower than the actual expenses, thus additional funding was borrowed to cover the increase. It was noted that there are many Capital projects that need to be completed, and those expenses exceed the amount being recommended for that fund. The Board agreed to table discussion until additional thought and discussion can be held regarding use of surplus funds. This item will be added to the August 3, 2021 Finance Committee Meeting Agenda. This item will be presented to the Board at the August 12, 2021 Board Meeting. It may be useful to review a prioritized list of projects that could be completed utilizing funds that may be transferred to the Capital Improvement Fund. The DRAFT BUUSD Non-Instructional Operations Fund Balance Policy will be discussed at the August 16, 2021 Policy Committee Meeting.

5.5 First Reading Professional Development Policy (B21) (VSBA Recommended Policy)

A copy of the policy was distributed. Ms. Parker provided an overview of the policy edits performed to this existing policy.

The Board received input from the public, including a request to put limitations on course reimbursement for staff members. It was noted that course reimbursement is governed by the Master Agreement. This policy does not pertain to the negotiated course reimbursement covered by the Master Agreement. Mr. Hennessey answered questions from the Board, and advised that he will be working with building principals regarding how Professional Development funding is spent. Mr. Hennessey will provide an update at a future meeting.

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Reading of the Professional Development Policy (B21).

6. Old Business

None.

7. Other Business/Round Table

Board Members agreed that the brief break from Board/Committee meetings was appreciated.

Mr. Isabelle queried regarding the number of open positions and difficulty finding highly qualified candidates this late in the year.

Mrs. Akley advised that she has received communications/questions relating to transportation for the upcoming year, and requested that Transportation be added to the next Board agenda.

Mr. Boltin advised that he has received input from community members and would like to have Critical Race Theory added to a future Agenda. Mrs. Spaulding will obtain additional information/details with Mr. Boltin prior to adding this to an agenda.

Mrs. Farrell reminded community members that free lunches are available for all students (over the summer), and encourages use of this program.

Mrs. Spaulding reported that the SHS Graduation Ceremony went very well, and she enjoyed the new configuration that placed students in the bleachers and spectators on the football field.

Mr. Hennessey advised that he has enjoyed these past few weeks, in his new role as Superintendent, and provided an update on the summer programs, crediting Mr. Wells with the implementation of these programs. Mr. Hennessey cautioned that COVID is still in existence, and that the BUUSD is waiting for the AOE to provide guidance relating to re-opening of schools this fall. Additionally, Mr. Hennessey advised that though the BUUSD has had much success in hiring new employees, there are a significant number of openings, especially in Special Education. Mrs. Anderson (Director of Special Education) will be meeting with the leadership team next week to discuss options. There are currently 7 professional openings in the Pre-k programs (an alarming number, as we approach the end of July).

Mrs. Pregent would like a re-opening update (updates from the AOE) as soon as possible.

8. Future Agenda Items

Anti-Racism Policy – Next Steps - Discussion at the Board Retreat may assist with these decisions. This item won't be added to a Regular Agenda at this time.

- Surplus Funds
- Second and Final Reading of the Professional Development Policy (B21)
- Transportation – Changes and Reasoning Behind Changes
- Re-opening / COVID Update – Guidelines/Restrictions

- Critical Race Theory – TBD – May require discussions for clarification prior to being added to an agenda.

Regarding Parking Lot Items –

Mrs. Spaulding will remove “SHS Nickname” as well as removing “Student Members” (which will be discussed at the Board Retreat).

9. Next Meeting Dates

BUUSD Board Retreat – Thursday, July 29, 2021 from 4:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

BUUSD Regular Board Meeting – Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

10. Executive Session as Needed

There were no items proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Akley, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin