

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
BUUSD Central Office and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
August 11, 2021 - 5:30 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Guy Isabelle, Chair – (At-Large)  
Gina Akley, Vice Chair - (BT)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sarah Pregent - (BC)  
Andrew McMichael

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Jamie Evans, Facilities Director

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mr. Isabelle, called the Wednesday, August 11, 2021 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 5:31p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

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

None.

**3. Public Comment**

None.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**4.1 Approval of Minutes – June 14, 2021 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee Meeting**

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the June 14, 2021 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting.

**5. New Business**

**5.1 Finance Committee Discussions Relating to Facilities**

It was noted that the Finance Committee made no final decision regarding a recommendation for utilization of surplus funds. The projected surplus is approximately 3.2 million dollars. Mr. Evans provided a brief overview of the Finance Committee discussion pertaining to how surplus funds could be utilized for facilities projects, and the Facilities Director's prioritization of projects. Mr. Evans advised that he would like to utilize surplus funds to install a sprinkler system to sections of SHS that are not currently sprinkled, the main reason being that all of the other buildings are fully sprinkled, and SHS is only partially sprinkled. Mr. Evans advised that if the District is really focusing on equity amongst the school buildings (in all areas, e.g. education, facilities...) this project is necessary to provide equity in that area (sprinkler systems). The Finance Committee held extensive discussion on sprinkler installation, and Mr. Evans did not sense any opposition to the recommendation to sprinkle SHS.

The Facilities Committee discussed the sprinkler waiver that was received in 2016 (on file at the Central Office), and more recent discussion with fire safety officials, that indicates installation of sprinklers may be required in the future, if major modifications are made to the building. Mr. Evans would like to use ESSER funds to upgrade the ventilation system, but fears loss of the ESSER funding (for this project), if the District is told they can't change the ventilation system because they aren't fully sprinkled. Mr. Isabelle recommends involving legal counsel regarding this issue, as he believes changes to existing systems, e.g. the ventilation system, does not constitute a major modification. Mr. Isabelle believes it was right for the waiver to be issued, and believes a sprinkler system might do more damage (to building contents) than good as the building is mainly built of concrete and brick. Mrs. Akley suggested that using surplus funds for installation (at BTMES) of a standardized entrance system that can be controlled and tracked (discussed at the last Facilities meeting), is worthy of exploration. Mrs. Akley believes community members would be more accepting of spending funds to resolve safety issues. In response to a query, Mr. Evans reiterated his priority list for use of ESSER funds for the SHS ventilation system, and prioritization for use surplus funds; sprinkler system, roofs, and parking lots.

Mr. Evans advised that 'Plan B' (if surplus funds aren't used for a sprinkler system) is to complete the roofing projects at BCEMS and BTMES, and to replace the parking lots at BCEMS. Mrs. Akley advised that there is much pressure from the community, to return surplus funds to the tax payers. The only mechanism to 'return' surplus monies is by putting it in the tax stabilization fund. Mrs. Akley believes a good argument/case has been made for the primary use of surplus funds to be installation of a sprinkler system, but she believes there is room and need to have 3 or 4 other smaller projects (in the \$50K to \$100K range). Even if the smaller projects couldn't be done right now, it would be beneficial to have them ready should funds become available. Mrs. Akley reiterated that the use of surplus funds has not yet been determined. Mr. Evans advised that if the entire surplus was directed to facilities, it would be money well spent, and would save money in the long run. Mr. Evans advised regarding a small fire that occurred around 6 years ago in a science room (old chemicals combusted).

### **5.2 Use of Federal Funds (ESSER) for Facilities (safety and outdoor projects)**

Mr. Evans believes the grant amount is \$4 to \$5 million dollars for (use across the District). The BUUSD needs to apply for concept approval and provide ballpark figures associated with each project. Once concept approval has been received, more detailed estimates will be obtained. Mr. Evans noted that administrators have additional projects that they are requesting funds for. Mr. Isabelle noted that Mrs. Akley has raised the issue of the 'locking system' at BTMES, and he wants to assure that that issue remains prioritized.

## **6. Old Business**

### **6.1 Summer Projects/SEA Update**

The Certificate of Occupancy inspection was 08/10/21, and a conditional Certificate of Occupancy was issued. Only one minor issue was identified, and it should be easily remedied. Now that the inspection has been completed, furnishing of the building can begin. Outstanding items for completion include: phone system installation, card access system programming, parking lot paving, touch up painting, and delivery and installation of additional furniture. Mr. Evans advised that some deliveries have been delayed and won't occur before school opens, but there is enough furniture in the building to comfortably open the school for students on 08/30/21. The Wall Street Complex has been almost completely hoed out. Movers are scheduled for 08/25/21 and 08/26/21 to move the remaining furniture/fixtures to the SEA building. Though there will be many small loose ends to wrap up, the building looks great, is functional, and is a much improved learning environment for students. Mr. Evans believes late September would be a good time to hold an Open House. Mr. Isabelle queried regarding discussion on the possibility that ESSER funds could be used to purchase an adjoining property. Mr. Evans advised that an employee has been selected for the position of custodian/grounds-keeper for the SEA property.

#### Other Summer Projects:

BCEMS - Roofing Project – The remaining materials were recently delivered. It is anticipated that the work cannot be completed prior to the opening of school. After school has reopened, the contractor will work weekends until the project is completed. New bathroom partitions have also been ordered and will be installed by custodial staff.

BTMES – New bleachers have been ordered. Materials are not expected until October and will take one week to install. Administrators have been advised that classes will need to be relocated for this week. Carpeting has been replaced with tile in the kindergarten area.

SHS – The Auditorium audio system upgrade is almost complete. Delivery of some parts has been delayed. Floor tiles have been replaced in the classrooms in the math hallway. Replacement of these tiles completes the asbestos floor remediation in the math hallway.

Electric Buses – There have been delays with delivery of parts to the manufacturer, and it is now anticipated that delivery will occur in late September or early October. Mr. Isabelle voiced concern over recent reports of fires caused by batteries from electric vehicles.

## **7. Other Business**

In response to a query, it was noted that the recent e-mail from City Counselor, Jake Hemmerick, regarding storm water run-off permits, is not a new item. The BUUSD is aware of this issue and has held discussion in the past. Mr. Evans provided a brief overview of action taken to date, and advised of next steps. Storm water run-off remediation is in the agenda 'parking lot' and this item will be added to future agendas as new information becomes available.

Mr. Evans advised regarding previous PCB testing at District schools, and advised that the BUUSD will perform any PCB testing the State may require. State requirements for PCB testing, have not been announced yet. Updates will be provided as information is received.

Track Update – It was noted that Ed Rouse (Spaulding Foundation) has much information relating to updates to the SHS athletic fields. In the past, the Spaulding Foundation has expressed interest in raising funds to support a major renovation of the SHS athletic fields. It was suggested that renewed interest (by the District), and having some 'seed money', would be beneficial for fund raising efforts by the Foundation. It was noted that the SHS Track cannot be used to host State sanctioned meets. The Committee agreed to invite Mr. Rouse to an upcoming meeting.

## **8. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas**

- COVID Related Health Requirements For Re-opening of Schools
  - SEA Open House
  - Storm Water Run-off (if new information is available)
  - PCB Update – Testing Requirements (if new information is available)
  - Prioritization of Projects Utilizing Surplus Funds
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- Track Update (with Ed Rouse in attendance) – October 2021

## **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Monday, September 13, 2021 at 5:30 p.m., at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

## **10. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Mr. Isabelle, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:41p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Andrea Poulin*