

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**
BUUSD Central Office and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
January 10, 2022 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Guy Isabelle, Chair – (At-Large)
Gina Akley, Vice Chair - (BT)
Sarah Pregent - (BC)
Andrew McMichael

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director

GUESTS PRESENT:

Josh Howard Nancy Leclerc Terry Reil

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Isabelle, called the Monday, January 10, 2022 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 5:31 p.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 – November 8, 2021 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mrs. Akley, the Committee unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the November 8, 2021 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Bus/Transportation Review

Mrs. Akley addressed the Committee regarding a situation she experiences as a parent of a pre-school student, expressing frustration regarding transportation issues for her child who attends pre-school at Barre Town, but attends daycare in Barre City. Because the daycare is in Barre City, and the Barre Town bus does not make stops in Barre City, it is necessary for her to transport her child from a BTMES bus stop, to his daycare (mid-day), even though the BTMES bus drives right by the daycare on its route. Mrs. Akley believes there are numerous parents who face this kind of transportation issue, and would appreciate it if the District could find a way to accommodate students/parents who are in a similar situation. Mrs. Akley expressed her appreciation to bus drivers and the transportation coordinator. Mr. Hennessey advised that the District would like to accommodate more students in Barre City and Barre Town (pre-k through 8), and that this situation will be looked into over the summer. In response to a query, a brief historical overview of bussing was provided, including; the State statute to consolidate transportation to one provider, route determination, based on safety and efficiency (coordinated between STA, using route software, and the BCEMS and BTMES transportation coordinators, and also involving law enforcement), the switch from two runs (for each AM and PM route), to one run (for each AM and PM route), and the ongoing shortage of bus drivers. It was noted that bus drivers are employed and paid by STA, not the District. It was also noted that due to COVID, many parents are not allowing their children to ride the buses, resulting in buses that are not full. Once COVID is no longer an issue, it is anticipated that ridership will increase and buses will be much fuller. In response to concern over the use of the Barre Town Recreational Area's parking lot during BTMES drop-off/pick-up, it was noted that cars were routed there as a safety measure because of traffic backing up on Websterville Road. Mr. Isabelle advised that he would like to see GMTA plan routes that would accommodate SHS students (who are not currently provided with bus service). It was noted that STA currently has enough bus drivers to cover the routes, but if one of them is out, it does cause issues. Brief discussion was held regarding SROs at BTMES.

5.2 Electric Bus Update

Mr. Evans advised that STA recently advised that the buses are ready to go (inspected, registered, cameras installed) and the charging stations are installed, though aren't 'on line' (programmed) yet. Mr. Evans anticipates that the buses will be in service within a few days. When these buses are put in service, two non-electric buses will be pulled out of service (a requirement of the grant). It will take a little bit of time to learn how the buses function (how many miles on a charge, how they work on hills, etc...). The long term goal is to have two electric buses for each of the two middle and elementary schools. STA does have spare buses that can be used when a bus is out of service. In response to a query, it was noted that the charging stations were relocated to allow them to be on a separate electrical service (a cost efficiency move for STA). In response to a concern that some electric vehicle batteries explode, Mr. Evans advised that given that the buses are not stored close to the school, are in close proximity to the Fire Station, and the school is fully sprinkled, VSBIT does not have concern.

5.3 Storm Water Run-off Update

Mr. Evans advised that the District has been approved for funding to cover the cost of the initial design and feasibility studies as well as construction. The grants provide 100% funding for all phases. A Notice of Intent (step one in the process of obtaining a permit from the State) is being worked on by the engineering firms. If during the feasibility studies, it is determined that a school or schools cannot accommodate installation of a retention pond, or other option, the District can pay a onetime opt-out fee, and would no longer be required to perform storm water run-off mitigation. It was noted that Mr. Evans and Mr. Hennessey have had some discussions with Barre Town officials regarding actions that the District and the Town are planning. The Town does own a number of properties that fall within the purview of the new storm water run-off regulations (all commercial land that has three acres or more of impervious surface).

5.4 ESSER Grant Applications Update

Mr. Evans advised that all ventilation systems in the schools are fully functional, but might not meet today's Healthy Building Standards. The District applied for grants, and has received conceptual approval for both BCEMS and BTMES. It is anticipated that approval will be received soon for SHS. The SHS project involves installation of sprinklers (to the portion of the building that is not currently sprinkled), and requires more paperwork. Today, Mr. Evans received the last required document (a letter from the State Fire Marshalls' Office), and he will give the letter to Mrs. Perreault, who will forward it on to the appropriate individual, to be included in the grant application.

6. Old Business

6.1 SHS Track Update

Mrs. Pregent advised that the most recent update from Mr. Rousse, is that this initiative is currently on hold.

7. Other Business

Mr. Evans advised that based on the Finance Committee's recommendation that the Board present voters with a Special Article allocating \$614,807 to the Capital Improvement fund, he anticipates that the money will be allocated to Facilities and in anticipation of that, he has reached out to architects for preliminary work on roofing projects (at BCEMS and BTMES). Mr. Evans advised that site visits with architects were conducted last week, and he is trying to get estimates and be prepared to 'put shovels to ground' if the voters approve the request to transfer funds to the Capital Improvement Fund.

8. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas

- Electric Bus Update
- Conceptual Facilities Plan for Next Year
- Storm Water Run-off Update
- PCB Testing Update

- SHS Track Update – Add to Parking Lot
- Transportation Update – Add to Parking Lot

9. Next Meeting Date

The next meeting is Monday, February 14, 2022 at 5:30 p.m., at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Akley, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 6:31p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin