

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD MEETING**

Barre City Elementary and Middle School – James Taffel Library  
and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
June 23, 2022 - 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Chair  
Alice Farrell (BT) – Vice Chair  
Chris Parker (BT) - Clerk  
Renee Badeau (BT)  
Tim Boltin (BC)  
Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC)  
Nancy Leclerc (At-Large)  
Terry Reil (BT)  
Sarah Pregent (BC)

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Jody Emerson, Director Central Vermont Career Center  
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	NBC News Channel 5	Rosemary Lynn Averill	Martha Blaisdell	Jeff Blow
Michael Boutin	Ann Carroll	Richard Cooke	Michael Deering	M. Fair
Jacob Forcier	Nicole Gallup	Kevin Galway	Sarah Helman	Josh Howard
Stacy Hubbell	Sharon Jacobs	Brian Judd	Alice Kang	Prudence Krasofski
Sherry Lewton	Paul Malone	Jessica Maurais	Laurel Maurer	Raylene Meunier
Lauren Milideo	Allison Moyes	Amanda Plante	Dean Preston	Tina Routhier
Janelle Starr	Sharon Toborg	William Toborg	Brandon Vest	

**1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Thursday, June 23, 2022, Regular meeting to order at 6:04 p.m., which was held at Barre City Elementary and Middle School in the James Taffel Library and via video conference.**

**2. Pledge and Mindfulness Moment**

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board held a Mindfulness Moment. Mrs. Spaulding read the Board Norms. Mrs. Spaulding thanked community member for their attendance and read the public comment protocols.

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

- 8.1 Superintendent's Report – Delete
- 12. Executive Session - Delete
- 6.3 First Reading Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution Policy (A20) – Take out of order – after 7.1
- 8.4 Finance Committee - Correct to show next meeting date as 08/09/22 (July meeting is cancelled)
- 8.7 Curriculum Committee – Correct to show next meeting date as 08/04/22 (July meeting is cancelled)

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

**4. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda**

**4.1 Public Comment**

Brian Judd expressed concern that not all Board Members are participating in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Judd requested that all Board Members respect the decision of the Board (to recite the Pledge), and those that don't wish to participate, not join the meeting until after the Pledge has been recited.

Mr. Deering expressed concern regarding school and community safety, and he believes that many in the community are concerned regarding discipline at the schools.

Stacy Hubbell addressed the Board, advising that her son is the individual who was recently attacked, and she expressed that she is extremely concerned regarding the safety of children in the community, noting that she feels the school 'swept the incident under the rug'. Ms. Hubbell feels there is not enough accountability on the part of the school. Ms. Hubbell would like to know how the Board will address the safety of students, bullying, and 'sweeping incidents under the rug'.

Jacob Forcier addressed the Board expressing concern over what he believes is a 'hush hush' mentality and that there is no community resolution occurring. Mr. Forcier believes the Board should actively work towards finding a way to stop the bullying and harassment.

Mr. Howard addressed the Board advising that his daughter has been subjected to bullying. Though the bullying has been reported to administrators, it continues to occur. Additionally, Mr. Howard advised that he recently viewed an on-line comment from a sitting Board Member, who advised that last year, they pulled their student from school after witnessing the chaos that was occurring in the classroom. Mr. Howard feels it is unacceptable that the Board Member never addressed the issue at the Board level. Additionally, Mr. Howard expressed concern that following recent training, some Board Members held a 'secret meeting' with the Superintendent, even though the training advised that Board Members are not to meet with the Superintendent outside of Board meetings.

An individual reported what she believes was unaddressed bullying that occurred three years ago, and is concerned that in three years' time, it appears that not much improvement has been made regarding dealing with these issues.

Mr. Toborg queried regarding whether student behavior is the cause of some of the many resignations. Mr. Toborg noted that in a recent meeting, there was concern raised that individual Board Members were 'over-stepping' their bounds, and the one example given, was that an individual requested several years' worth of financial records. Mr. Toborg stressed that oversight of finances is the purview of the Board and that getting information from the 'schools' is necessary to see that things are running properly. Additionally, Mr. Toborg believes it needs to be recognized that if administration is not doing its job protecting students, the Board needs to seriously consider whether or not the Superintendent is doing his/her job.

Mr. Boutin addressed the Board, advising that members of the public have been reaching out to him regarding their concerns and he believes that the issue of bullying and harassment be added to a future agenda, as well as a review of policies relating to bullying and harassment, as he does not believe the current policies are working. Additionally, Mr. Boutin advised that he believes the current protocols relating to public commentary make folks uncomfortable and feel dismissive. Mr. Boutin reported that when the public raises issues with Barre City Counsel, dialogue ensues.

Jeff Blow addressed the Board and asked if the Board was going to address the concerns raised by Ms. Hubbell. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the Board does not discuss items that are not on the Agenda. If the Board feels these issues need to be added to an agenda, they will be added. Mr. Blow advised that in the past, he has addressed the Board and posed several questions, none of which have been added to an agenda or answered. Mr. Blow noted that Barre City and Barre Town residents come before the Board and pose questions and never receive answers. Mr. Blow believes the issue presented this evening by Ms. Hubbell is a very pressing issue and the Board has 'dismissed' her. Mr. Blow, as a tax payer, finds it very disrespectful that the Board won't even respond to Ms. Hubbell or her concerns.

Ms. Hubbell advised that she emailed the Superintendent and requested that the item of student safety/bullying/harassment, be added to the agenda, and it is her feeling that the Superintendent does not believe this issue is worth his time.

Dean Preston advised that he agrees with Mr. Judd, that it is disrespectful for Board Members not to stand during the Pledge of Allegiance, and also agrees that it is disrespectful for the Board not to respond to public comment.

Janelle Starr queried regarding how the public can request that items be added to future agendas. Mrs. Spaulding advised that the Superintendent and Board Chair set the agenda, knowing what information is available to be discussed, what the Board is prepared to discuss, who will be present for the discussion, and what is within the purview of the Board to be discussed. Ms. Starr queried regarding any need for Board approval for establishing a PTA. Mrs. Spaulding advised that Ms. Starr needs to address this item with the principal of her respective school.

Mr. Boltin advised that in 2019 when his daughter moved to the school, he was shocked and amazed at the chaos present in her classroom. Mr. Boltin noted that he, as a parent, was discussing matters with administration, but did not receive resolution. The matter culminated with his daughter addressing the Board stating that she was "an 8<sup>th</sup> grade drop-out because of the inadequacy of the Board and the inability of the school to get it together". Mr. Boltin stressed that in the years since his daughter voiced her concerns, nothing has changed. Mr. Boltin believes instituting a strict code, would fix many of the problems immediately. It is not fair to the children and to tax payers, to send their children to sit in a chaotic classroom, where they are unable to learn due to disruptions caused

by classmates. Those who disrupt the class should be removed to allow those who want to learn to do so in an environment conducive to learning.

Mrs. Pregent addressed Mr. Judd, noting that in November she supported his effort to get the flag raised. Mrs. Pregent advised that Mr. Judd was not present during the discussion of the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Pregent respects his comments, and requests that he show her respect as well. Additionally, Mrs. Pregent advised that whoever 'screenshotted' her comments to him, would be best served to resend the comments because she never mentioned any violence in her comments.

#### **4.2 Student Voice**

None.

#### **5. Consent Agenda**

##### **5.1 Approval of Minutes – June 9, 2022 Regular Meeting**

Ms. Parker provided the closing information for the 06/09/22 meeting.

**On a motion by Ms. Parker, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the June 9, 2022 Regular Meeting.**

#### **6. Current Business**

##### **6.1 New Hires**

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Reed McCracken (SEA Social Studies) and Brendan Hickey (BTMES School Psychologist), were distributed.

Mrs. Marold provided a brief overview of the candidates and answered questions from the Board and community members. There are currently 21 open professional positions (13 regular education and 8 special educators).

**On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Reed McCracken and Brendan Hickey.**

##### **6.2 Annual Designation of Truant Officers**

A document titled 'Title 16 Education, Chapter 25 ATTENDANCE AND DISCIPLINE §1125 Truant officers' was distributed. Mrs. Spaulding provided a brief overview of the requirement that the Board appoint Truant Officers for each school and advised regarding Truant Officers' responsibilities. Mr. Hennessey's recommendations are included in the distributed document. In response to a query, it was noted that the SHS Truant Officer also serves the SEA Program. Mrs. Spaulding will confirm this matter.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Brenda Waterhouse, as Truant Officer for Barre City Elementary and Middle School, Theodore Mills as Truant Officer for Barre Town Middle and Elementary School, and Mari Goodridge Miller as Truant Officer for Spaulding High School, with all Appointments being for the 2022 / 2023 school year.**

##### **6.3 First Reading Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution Policy (A20)**

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Lengthy discussion was held, with input received from community members and the Board. It was agreed that the policy requires one additional change to advise regarding two Regular meetings per month. Mrs. Poulin will convey the amendment to Mrs. Gilbert. It was also agreed that meeting locations need to be widely publicized, including on social media posts.

**On a motion by Mr. Boltin, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board voted 7 to 1 to approve as amended, the First Reading of the Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution Policy (A20).**

**Ms. Badeau, Mr. Boltin, Mr. Cecchinelli, Mrs. Farrell, Mr. Reil , Ms. Parker, and Mrs. Pregent voted for the motion. Mrs. Leclerc voted against the motion.**

##### **6.4 Rescind – Field Trips Policy (D30)**

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the reasons for rescinding this policy, which was removed by VSBA in 2020. It was noted that though the policy is presented to be rescinded, the Board recognizes the value of field trips and supports their continuation.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mr. Boltin, the Board unanimously voted to rescind the Field Trips Policy (D30).**

### **6.5 Rescind – Budgeting Policy (F30)**

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker advised that the Board recently adopted Policy F20 (Fiscal Management and General Financial Accountability Policy). Policy F30 was recently removed by VSBA. It was noted that the VSBA, in their weekly updates, will begin providing information regarding why policies are written, amended, or rescinded.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mrs. Farrell, the Board unanimously voted to rescind the Budgeting Policy (F30).**

### **6.6 Food Service Contract Approval**

A copy of a letter from George Carone, District Manager, Lexington Independents (dated 06/14/22) was distributed.

A copy of a document titled BUUSD Summer Meal Service Delivery Sites & Schedule was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview, of the annual contract renewal and advised that the District is currently going into year 4 of a 5 year contract. Annually, the minutes must reflect that the Board has approved renewal of the contract for the upcoming year. The contract is a 'per plate' type of contract. It was noted that the cost for meals at the SEA building is increasing and is higher than the cost at other schools. The SEA building did not exist when the initial contract was written. Brief discussion was held and Mrs. Perreault answered questions from the community and the Board. Mrs. Perreault will work with Lexington to adjust meal prices so that they are equitable between the schools. If necessary, some of the \$400,000 fund balance will be used for off-set purposes. It was noted that under the current contract, the District makes a profit. It was clarified that the Board is approving renewal of the contract, not the meal prices. It was noted that the Board meeting packet includes information pertaining to summer meals.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to approve the renewal of the contract with Lexington Independents.**

### **6.7 CVCC Truck Purchase**

A copy of Proposal C3443 from Key Chevrolet GMC was distributed.

The proposal is for a 2022 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 (CK10543) 4WD Crew Cab 147" Work Truck for \$46,535.

Ms. Emerson addressed the Board and provided an overview of the proposal, the procurement process used, use of surplus funds (for the purchase), and use of the proposed vehicle. Mrs. Farrell, who is a member of the CVCCSD Board answered questions and expressed her support of the vehicle purchase. It was clarified that the surplus funds are CVCC surplus funds, not BUUSD surplus funds, and that all CVCC assets (including this vehicle) and any remaining funds, revert to CVCCSD on 07/01/22.

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Ms. Badeau, the board voted 7 to 1 to approve the CVCC Truck Purchase as proposed. Ms. Badeau, Mr. Boltin, Mr. Cecchinelli, Mrs. Farrell, Mrs. Leclerc, Ms. Parker, and Mrs. Pregent voted for the motion. Mr. Reil voted against the motion.**

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1 Review Board Meeting Start Time**

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the past change in meeting start time, and the reason this item is being revisited.

Lengthy discussion was held, with input from community members and the Board. At the conclusion of the discussion it was deemed that the majority of the Board prefers to keep the meeting start time at 6:00 p.m. As the Board is already on record as voting for a 6:00 p.m. start time (during Board Re-organization), no vote is necessary.

## **8. Reports**

### **—8.1 Superintendent Report**

A copy of the Superintendent's Report (dated 06/17/22) was distributed.

A document titled BUUSD – Great Schools Partnership Support 2021 – 22 (prepared by Jean Haeger) was distributed.

A copy of a letter from the Superintendent to the Board (dated 06/22/22) was distributed.

### **8.2 Building Reports: SHS, CVCC, BCEMS, BTMES, and SEA**

Copies of the Building Reports were distributed.

Mr. Boltin advised that his daughter attends BCEMS and lauded her team for the tremendous job they have done working with her.

Mr. Boltin and Mrs. Pregent highlighted the wonderful step-up ceremony held for BCEMS 8<sup>th</sup> grade students.

Mrs. Pregent, Ms. Parker, and Mrs. Spaulding highlighted the SHS graduation ceremony, including the band performance. The ceremony was very touching and highlighted the wonderful things happening at the high school. Ms. Parker expressed her appreciation for all the work in the SEA Program, assisting students with meeting graduation requirements. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she attended ceremonies for all schools and lauded staff for their commitment to students. Mrs. Spaulding noted that the audio system at the Barre City Auditorium appears to be in need of an upgrade.

### **8.3 CVCCSD Board Report**

Mrs. Farrell advised that there is nothing additional to report (the CVCCSD Board has not met since the last report was provided). The July meeting is cancelled. The next CVCCSD Board meeting will be in August.

### **8.4 Finance Committee**

Minutes from the June 21, 2022 meeting were distributed.

Mrs. Leclerc advised that the committee discussed ESSER Fund expenditures, Summer Projects, costs for upcoming ESSER funded projects (which will be provided in late July), FY22 year-end projections, and preparation for FY24 budget development.

The July 21, 2022 meeting is cancelled.

The next meeting is Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

### **8.5 Facilities & Transportation Committee**

Minutes from the June 13, 2022 meeting were distributed.

Mr. Cecchinelli reported that the Committee discussed the addition of granite benches and planters (at SHS), which have been put on hold, but are anticipated to be installed prior to the upcoming academic year, discussion with an EEI representative (a report will be provided by EEI at the 07/25/22 meeting), and electric buses. In response to a query from Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Cecchinelli advised that the dirt piles by the girls' softball field should be removed in the near future (as part of the riverbank brush removal project).

The next meeting is Monday, July 25, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

### **8.6 Policy Committee**

Ms. Parker advised that the last meeting was held in May, and noted that the VSBA will be providing policy change information on a more regular basis. In response to a request from a community member, Ms. Parker advised that the Committee would be receptive to hearing input and would perform research based on the individual requests.

The June and July meetings are cancelled.

The next meeting is Monday, August 15, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

### **8.7 Curriculum Committee**

The Committee has not met since the report was submitted.

The next meeting is Thursday, July 7, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

### **8.8 Negotiations Committee**

The Committee has not met since the last update was provided. Mrs. Pregent hopes to begin meeting shortly after the next school year begins.

The next meeting date is to be determined.

## **9. Other Business/Round Table**

Mr. Toborg queried regarding the formation of a Discipline Committee.

Ms. Parker highlighted the robust Summer Program.

Mrs. Pregent, in response to comments made at the previous meeting, advised that Board Members are allowed to socialize outside of meetings, and that it should not be insinuated that if Board Members are seen chatting outside of a Board meeting, that they are conducting Board business. She believes that to drop a 'random ball' like that at a public meeting is damaging to the Board's relationship with the public, and she personally feels intimidated, like she is being watched.

Mrs. Leclerc advised that she attended the BTMES Step-up celebration, and that the students did a super job. Mrs. Leclerc also attended the SHS graduation, and advised that the SHS Band, Mrs. Waterhouse, and speakers did a tremendous job. Mrs. Leclerc also gave a 'shout-out' to the SHS baseball team for winning the State Championship and to the girls' lacrosse team for an outstanding season.

Mr. Reil congratulated the SHS graduating class, BCEMS and BTMES 8<sup>th</sup> graders who are 'stepping up', and also the SHS baseball team. Mr. Reil advised that he met with Jason Derner and spent an afternoon at the SEA Building, noting that the SEA Program has a lot of amazing things going on and should be celebrated.

Mrs. Spaulding congratulated the SHS baseball team as well as the other sports teams for their accomplishments. Additionally, Mrs. Spaulding advised she wanted to publicly apologize to Ms. Hubbell for 'losing her cool' with a parent, advising that she sometimes feels very flustered when there is a large group of people. Mrs. Spaulding recognizes that the family is involved in a very difficult situation, and reiterated her apology for her unprofessional behavior. Mrs. Spaulding noted that for the Board to work more successfully, it is important to complete the evaluation forms. Mrs. Spaulding encourages all Board Members to complete the

evaluations in an effort to gain some sense of where the Board's weaknesses are, so that the Board can potentially receive some training to help overcome some of the challenges and obstacles.

#### **10. Future Agenda Items**

Mrs. Pregent advised there is an active policy pertaining to discipline - Policy C20.(last updated in 2017). Mrs. Pregent would like administrators at each school to review their corresponding procedures and advise regarding whether or not procedures are being followed. Ms. Parker believes a review of the policy and procedures would allow for identification of action items. Mrs. Pregent would like administrators to come up with a cohesive plan that they are willing to implement and follow. Ms. Badeau advised that in most schools, restorative justice is just one element of disciplinary systems, but it is not the only response. Ms. Badeau would like the Board to hear more information on the various disciplinary elements/responses/consequences in place. Mrs. Poulin reminded the Board that when Pietro Lynn (District Counsel) was discussing procedures, he advised that the Board needs to read the procedures, know the procedures, and see that they are being followed. It was noted that the District is still working on creation of written procedures and once they are written, the Board can read them and have a clearer picture of what is going on. Mrs. Farrell noted that at some point, the Board needs to evaluate the Superintendent, and she queried regarding any solid goals and expectations that are documented and can be used as part of the evaluation process. Mrs. Farrell believes that the setting of goals and expectations has fallen to the side during COVID. Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding the process/protocol for communicating with the community, and if/how the information is shared with the entire Board (both community questions etc., and the District's response).

- Superintendent's Report (from 06/17/22)
- New Hires
- Second Reading Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation & Distribution Policy (A20)
- Annual Designation of HHB Report Recipients - for Policy C10
- Special Education Summative Report
- RFP Approval for SEA Vehicles
- Staff Exit Survey Report Update (in Executive Session)
- Enrollment and Home Study Report
- How to Address Safety and Student Behavior Discussion

There are many items in the Parking Lot, slated for July and it may not be possible to add all items to the Agenda. Mrs. Spaulding will confer with the Superintendent and advise Mrs. Gilbert regarding what to include on the July Agenda.

#### Add to Parking Lot:

- Solid Goals and Expectations for the Superintendent
- Independent Fund Raising
- Reconstitution of PTAs/PTOs (including storage space within school buildings)
- PBIS/Disciplinary/Incident Reporting
- Responding to Community Questions/Comments/Concerns/Requests for Additions to the Agendas
- Revisit Listening Sessions

#### **11. Next Meeting Date**

Regular Meeting - Thursday, July 14, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at the BTMES Library and via video conference (Google Meet).  
The July 28, 2022 Regular Meeting is cancelled.

#### **~~12. Executive Session as Needed~~**

No items were proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

#### **13. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:02 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*