

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING**

Spaulding Education Alternatives Building (SEA) and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
October 13, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.  
Building Tour precedes the meeting at 5:15 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent  
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services  
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Peter Anthony	Stacy Boltin	Michael Boutin	Alan Burnor
Mike Deering, II	Flor Diaz Smith	Jody Emerson	Sarah Helman	Josh Howard
Prudence Krasofski	Patrick Leene	Dan Morrison	William Toborg	Hayes Walker
Sara Walker	Jeff			

**1. Call to Order**

**The Chair, Mrs. Spaulding, called the Thursday, October 13, 2022, Regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding Education Alternatives Building (SEA) and via video conference.**

**2. Pledge and Mindfulness Moment**

The Board held a mindfulness moment. Mrs. Spaulding read the Meeting Norms. Mrs. Spaulding thanked community members for their attendance and read the public comment guidelines.

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

Change number of Agenda Item 8 (Executive Session), to ‘10’  
Change number of Agenda Item 9 (Adjourn) to ‘11’  
Change Agenda Item 8 to ‘Other Business/Round Table’  
Change Agenda Item 9 to ‘Future Agenda Items’

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

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

**4.1 Student Voice**

None.

**4.2 Public Comment**

Mr. Boutin advised that he has heard that the Union is doing interviews with staff, and he wants to know if the results will be provided to the Board and to the public. If this information is not available to the Board and the public, Mr. Boutin encourages the Board to enlist a third party entity to conduct a survey beginning with the lower levels of the workforce. This type of survey would help identify the cultural feeling of the District. Mr. Boutin believes it’s important for the Board to know what is going on at ground level.

Mr. Howard advised that he is in possession of an email (dated 08/31/22) from Mrs. Spaulding. The subject of the e-mail was the Board Meeting being held that evening. Mr. Howard read the email.

Mr. Toborg commented on what he believes to be one of the greatest virtues, humility, noting that it is important to recognize that all individuals, parents, students etc. . . have worth and have the ability to 'bring good points'. Mr. Toborg voiced concern regarding curriculum that may be at odds with parent's values. Mr. Toborg reiterated his request that all curriculum, including lessons and materials be available to the public.

Mr. Morrison expressed his appreciation for the smooth transition his children have had returning to school and advised that he feels his children's needs are being met at BTMES.

## **5. Consent Agenda**

### **5.1 Approval of Minutes – September 19, 2022 Special Meeting**

**On a motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the September 19, 2022 Special Meeting and the September 22, 2022 Regular Meeting.**

### **5.2 Approval of Minutes – September 22, 2022 Regular Meeting**

Approved under Agenda Item 5.1

## **6. Current Business**

### **6.1 New Hires**

The resume and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Form for Hunter Cummings Washburn (BCEMS 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Classroom Teacher) was distributed. Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the candidate, and answered questions from the Board.

**On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Hunter Cummings Washburn.**

### **6.2 VSBA Resolution – Elect Voting Delegate and Alternative**

A document titled '2022-23 VSBA Resolution – Board Report – August 10, 2022' was distributed.

A document titled '2022-2023 VSBA Bylaws' was distributed.

A document titled 'Vermont School Boards Association (VSBA) 2021 – 2022 Resolutions' was distributed.

Mrs. Spaulding advised that the Board needs to appoint a voting delegate and an alternate, to vote on behalf of the BUUSD at the VSBA Annual Meeting. Mrs. Farrell agreed to be the voting delegate. No alternate was identified.

**On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Alice Farrell as the voting delegate for the Barre Unified Union School District, at the VSBA 2022 Annual Meeting.**

The Board discussed 6 resolutions submitted by VSBA member boards that will be voted on at the VSBA Annual Meeting. Each resolution indicates if VSBA has recommended passing the Resolution. It was noted that the first two Resolutions were withdrawn by the submitter (Missisquoi Valley School District). Mrs. Farrell documented the Board's questions and concerns and will convey that information at the Annual Meeting.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board voted 5 to 2 to support the VSBA recommendation to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #3, Remediation Funds for PCB & Radon Contamination in Schools.**

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

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to support the VSBA's recommendation to pass as a continuing Resolution, Resolution #4, Public Funds Accountability**

**On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board voted 7 to 1 to support the VSBA's recommendation to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #5 Governance Standards.**

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

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, the Board voted 5 to 4 to support the VSBA's recommendation to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #6 Universal Meals.**

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

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to support VSBA's recommendation that Regular Resolution I.O., Governance of Career & Technical Education (CTE) Schools continue with the proposed amendment.**

Brief discussion was held regarding proposed Bylaw changes.

**On a motion by Ms. Parker, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board unanimously voted to support the recommended Bylaw changes as presented.**

Mrs. Spaulding does not believe the Board needs to take action on any of the other existing Resolutions listed on the Review of Regular Resolutions page.

Mr. Malone has additional questions and comments that he will provide to Mrs. Farrell. Mrs. Farrell will notify the Board of the result of actions taken at the VSBA Annual Meeting.

### **6.3 Warrant Procedure – Authorize Superintendent/Business Manager to Sign Payroll**

A copy of the Warrant Procedures (dated 08/17/22) was distributed. Brief discussion was held. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the Warrant review process currently in place, noting that the warrants are usually available for review on Thursday morning.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Superintendent and the Business Manager to sign payroll warrants.**

### **6.4 Financial Management Questionnaire**

A document titled 'Financial Management Questionnaire – BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT' was distributed. Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the document which is required by Statute. Board Members have reviewed the form which was developed by State Auditors. Mrs. Perreault answered questions from the Board.

**On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Ms. Parker, the BUUSD Board unanimously voted to approve the Financial Management Questionnaire and authorized the Business Manager to sign the document.**

### **6.5 VSBA Mini-Grant Application Approval**

A document titled 'Vermont School Board Equity Mini-Grant Application (VSBA, VSA, VPA)' was distributed. Mrs. Farrell advised regarding this VSBA grant that could be used to fund a needs study to determine the needs of surrounding schools relating to Special Education, with thoughts of expanding the SEA Program into a regional program to serve emotional and traumatic needs of students within the region. This method could assist with centralizing some services and would hopefully result in less competition to fill staffing needs and allow more students to be served. Brief discussion was held including; the amount of the grant (\$3,200 "seed" money), staff members that would work on the study, restorative classrooms, grades to be served, and the difficulty hiring staff. Mrs. Pregent reiterated that she advocates for hiring a full or part-time grant writer for the District.

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mr. Reil, the Board unanimously voted to approve the application for the VSBA Mini-Grant.**

### **6.6 Education Performance Update – 5-Year CIA Plan**

A document titled '5-year Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Plan (DRAFT) – (Outlined by 5 Key Goals of the Strategic Plan)' was distributed. This document was discussed at the Curriculum Committee meeting. Mr. Hennessey shared the document on screen, lauded Ms. Fredericks for her work on the document and proceeded to provide an update to the Board. It was stressed that the document is in draft form. The Plan is outlined by the five key goals in the Strategic Plan. Brief discussion was held including measures of success, alignment with the Strategic Plan, posting to the web site (once finalized) and quarterly updates to the Board. Mr. Hennessey will be sharing the CIP (Continuous Improvement Plan) at a future meeting.

### **6.7 ADHOC Committee for Behavior Issues**

A document titled 'Committees' was distributed.

A document titled 'General Guidelines for Board Committees' was distributed.

Lengthy discussion was held, including; concerns related to confidentiality, the need to look at each schools' policies, procedures, practices, data, types of incidents, & number of incidents (including reoffenders), concern that behavioral problems are ongoing,

concern that procedures are not being followed, suggestions that teachers and other staff provide input (in addition to administrators), the need for clear guidelines for any such committee, identification of the goal of the committee, past reporting to Boards, discussion at the listening session, building good will with the community by showing that the Board is actively working on seeing that behavioral issues are being worked on, concern over possible micro-managing, sharing of data, Federal Laws on confidentiality, the reason the committee was suggested (long standing/ongoing behavioral issues not being adequately addressed) concern over lack of discussion and or action since the public forum in June, the need to look for trends, the need to review handbooks, policies and procedures to see if they are adequate, holding a discussion with administrators and staff on how best to address ongoing issues, a suggestion that the PTO be involved, a suggestion to review data and ask administrators who and how they think others could assist, concern that behavioral issues are reported at board meetings month after month, a suggestion that behavior issues be included in the quarterly CIA 5-year Plan, a suggestion that the issue be moved to the Parking Lot, and be revisited if necessary after the review of data. Mr. Hennessey advised that he will provide first quarter data at the first Board meeting in November.

**On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Pregent, the Board voted 5 to 3 to support the Superintendent's recommendation that the District not form an ADHOC committee to address behavioral issues, and to receive a first quarter behavior report in November.**

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

The Board recessed at 8:00 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 8:06 p.m.

### **6.8 Role of Chair**

A document titled 'Board Chair 101 Effective School Board Leadership' (April 7 2022, Phil Gore, PhD.) was distributed.

A document titled 'Executive Session Tips for Board Members (Nicole L. Mace – VSBA – May 2015) was distributed.

Mrs. Leclerc advised that she has seen a lot of inconsistencies since March and she thought it would be beneficial to hold discussion. Mrs. Leclerc provided an overview of the 'Board Chair 101' and Executive Session documents, including the roles of the Chair and the Board as a whole. Mrs. Leclerc voiced concern regarding the signing of a contract that had not been approved by the Board, regular inclusion of 'Executive Session' on agendas (the VSBA recommendation is that Executive Session not be a standing agenda item), concern that items that have been proposed or discussed in Executive Session do not meet the statute for items that qualify for Executive Session. Mr. Reil advised that he finds there is conflict between Robert's Rules and VSBA guidelines and provided some examples. Mr. Reil noted that when considering accepting the role of Chair, individuals need to consider whether or not they wish to participate in debate, as Robert's Rules clearly state that the Chair is not allowed to participate in debate/discussion, should be non-partisan, and should not try to steer the direction of the Board. Mr. Malone stressed the importance of the Chair's interaction with colleagues and the importance of not trying to steer or influence decisions of the Board. Mr. Malone believes that though there are different views, the Board should be working in the spirit of being on the same page and moving in positive direction, which includes compromise. Mrs. Leclerc advised that she believe Robert's Rules advises that the Chair facilitates the meeting and is not supposed to participate in debate. Mrs. Farrell advised that there are entities, e.g. New England School Development Association, that provide training to assist Boards with some of the issues that this Board has been struggling with. Mrs. Spaulding advised that 'Board Development/Retreat' is in the Parking Lot, but noted that the agenda often needs to be modified/shifted based on priorities, which causes delays in discussing some matters. Mrs. Spaulding advised that she spends much time preparing for meetings and other Board business. Mrs. Spaulding advised regarding her preferred means of communication and other commitments and asked that Board Members respect her boundaries regarding communication. Mrs. Spaulding advised that there are other 'Board' only items in the Parking Lot that need to be addressed.

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1 CVCCSD Lease Update**

Mr. Hennessey announced that Mrs. Farrell made a recommendation/request that the District 'stick' with the 'original' contract (which has not been executed, and look to negotiate changes when that contract needs to be renewed. In response to a request from Mr. Malone, to receive a copy of the 'original' lease agreement, Mr. Hennessey advised that there was a request not to share the amended lease agreement, but that he could share a copy of the 'original' lease agreement. The original lease agreement with CVCC is in the November 2021 Board packet. Ms. Parker queried regarding any conflict of interest on the part of Mrs. Farrell, as she is on both the BUUSD Board and the CVCCSD Board, e.g., the District is the landlord and CVCCSD is the tenant. Flor Diaz Smith addressed the Board advising that she raised the conflict of interest question at the last CVCCSD Board meeting, advising that if there could be a conflict of interest e.g. with a lease, there can be the perception of a conflict of interest, noting that if the BUUSD Board thought there was a conflict of interest, they would advise Mrs. Farrell, and noted that the power of the Board is from the entire Board, not any one single Board Member. Ms. Diaz Smith expressed her appreciation for this evening's discussion. In response to a query from Mr. Malone regarding the amended version of the lease, Mrs. Farrell advised that the amended lease has fallen by the wayside and is a dead issue and that as long as the 2021 lease has been in play all along, and continues to be in play until a new lease is written and signed, the District is fine. Mr. Hennessey advised that he, Jody Emerson, and Mr. Evans have been able to work things out for

this year. Ms. Emerson addressed the Board to provide some context to the discussion. Ms. Emerson advised that the ‘November 2021’ lease agreement was approved as part of the Report to go to the State Board to try to become an independent district. An independent district was approved in March by all of the 18 towns within the CVCC school district. The agreement has so far, not been executed and that is what the CVCCSD is waiting on. Ms. Emerson appreciates the Board for their work on this.

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

Mr. Reil advised of discussion at the Facilities Committee meeting, in particular, renovations to the SHS Athletic Fields and Auditorium. Mr. Reil believes that the District should look at all of the buildings and create a 10-year plan. Mr. Reil would like to see a ‘vision’ for the entire District. Mr. Reil is concerned that it would be difficult to gain voter approval for a big project without first providing a long-term plan.

Mr. Malone advised of several concerns that came out of the Facilities Committee Meeting, including the HVAC project that came in at \$7,400,000 million rather than \$7,000,000. Mr. Malone believes there needs to be an assessment of the needs of all the buildings. Mr. Malone queried regarding where the extra funding for the HVAC project will come from, noting that there are other expenses that will be coming up.

Mrs. Farrell has noticed that other Boards announce at their meetings, the total amount of warrants paid for the given ‘timeframe’. Mrs. Farrell advised that statute requires Boards to announce this non-debatable information, and the BUUSD Board has not been doing this. In response to a query, it was announced that a budget status report will be provided at the second meeting in October.

### **9. Future Agenda Items**

#### October 27, 2022 Meeting:

- New Hires
- VSBA Annual Meeting / Resolutions Update
- VSBA Mini-Grant Update
- Student Presentation
- SHS Foundation Report (Ed Rousse)
- Board Development Retreat
- Committee Reports
- HVAC Project Update – EEI Proposal and Board Approval
- Discussion of Board Retreat Date (Goals for Superintendent are very overdue)
- November/December Meeting Dates

#### November Meeting:

- Behavior Data

### **10. Executive Session as Needed**

No items were proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

### **11. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Pregent, seconded by Mr. Reil, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:31 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Andrea Poulin*