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BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

BUUSD Central Office and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
March 16, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Chair
Paul Malone (BT) – Vice Chair
Michelle Hebert
John Lyons, Jr.
Ben Moore (BC)
Emily Reynolds (BT)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michael Boutin
Giuliano Cecchinelli
Nancy Leclerc
Chris Parker
Terry Reil

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services
Pierre Laflamme, BCEMS Principal
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Marlon Maylor, SHS Co-Principal
Mari Miller, SHS Assistant Principal
Rebekah Mortensen, Assistant Director of Special Services
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager
Brenda Waterhouse, BCEMS Principal
Ashley Young, Assistant Business Manager

PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:

David Delcore – Times Argus	Jeff Blow	Cassandra Demarais	Jennifer Gosselin	Mariah Jacobs
Colleen Kresco	Ben Matthews	Sarah Pregent	Daniel Spaulding	Mindy Woodworth

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1. Call to Order

The Superintendent, Mr. Hennessey, called the Thursday, March 16, 2023 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

2. Organize

2.1 Elect Chair

Mr. Moore nominated Mrs. Spaulding for the position of Committee Chair. Ms. Reynolds seconded the motion.
There were no additional nominations.

On a motion by Mr. Moore, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Committee unanimously voted to appoint Mrs. Spaulding as Chair of the BUUSD Finance Committee.

2.2 Elect Vice Chair

Ms. Reynolds nominated Mr. Malone for the position of Committee Vice Chair. Mr. Moore seconded the motion.
There were no additional nominations.

On a motion by Ms. Reynolds, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Committee voted 4 to 0 to appoint Mr. Malone as Vice Chair of the BUUSD Finance Committee. Mr. Malone abstained.

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3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 6.3 Solar Credits

Agenda Item 10 - Change the next meeting date to Monday, April 17, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the agenda as amended.

4. Public Comment

None.

5. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Meeting Minutes From February 16, 2023

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the February 16, 2023 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting.

6. New Business

6.1 Review Annual (Monthly) Agenda Items

A document titled 'DRAFT – BUUSD Finance Committee Monthly Agenda Items' (dated 03/16/23) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of the distributed document, advising that it assists with tracking specific items that need to be addressed over the course of the year, and is updated as additional items become known. Mrs. Perreault advised that when the agenda is 'light', she will be adding Finance Procedures to the agenda and will provide an overview of the procedures included in the packet. Mr. Malone believes it is important and beneficial to have administrators present, especially when budget development discussions are held. Brief discussion was held regarding the most efficient way to include administrators in Committee meetings. Mr. Lyons advised regarding a collaborative budget development process that utilizes Budget Workshops, each involving a specific area of discussion. Budget Workshops will be added to the Parking Lot.

Mrs. Perreault will add Budget Development Reflection to the May Agenda.

6.2 FY24 Budget Development for Revote

A document titled FY24 Budget Revote Options & Timeline (dated 03/16/23) was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey provided a brief overview of the timeline, and advised that a basic proposal will be provided this evening. More detailed information will be provided later in the month and a communication plan is being developed. The revote is tentatively scheduled for May 9, 2023. Barre Town will hold their Town Meeting on that date. The Barre Auditorium is not available on that date, but Barre City Clerk Carol Dawes advised that polling for Barre City can occur at the Labor Hall. Mrs. Perreault advised that some detailed budget information will be presented at the 03/23/23 Board Meeting. Committee Members requested that detailed information (work product – line by line data) be provided in advance of the Board meeting (to allow Board Members time to study the data). It was noted that additional efficiencies have been identified in the past few weeks. Brief discussion was held regarding the work involved in producing line item budget information, and what may already be available based on previous work by administrators. Brief discussion was held regarding the possibility of holding a Special Board meeting for the purpose of approving a budget and Warning. In response to a query, it was confirmed that voters approve a total budget amount, not the actual line items. Discussion was held regarding the various percentage options that will be presented for consideration. A community member voiced concern that the budget seems to be being developed based on what other districts are doing, not based on the Barre community. A community member observed that the new budget development seems focused on a higher budget; though the District doesn't know if the budget failed because community members thought it was too low, or too high. In response to a query, it was reiterated that administrators still need to weigh in regarding items they wish to add back into the budget and what reductions they want to keep. Mr. Moore believes that salaries and per pupil spending are important items for individuals considering working or moving to the District. Mr. Hennessey advised that he has written 17 letters of recommendation. Mr. Malone queried regarding ESSER positions, promised attrition, and the number of special education positions that remain unfilled. Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding unfilled sped positions, how determination was made regarding elimination of sped positions, and how special education needs will be met. Mr. Delcore queried regarding plans to reinstate reductions that were made to get to 1.5%, and additional items that may be added back in based on newly discovered savings/efficiencies. More detailed information will be provided at the 03/23/23 Board meeting.

6.3 Solar Credits

Mrs. Perreault provided a brief overview of solar agreements for each of the buildings, management fees, and the associated offsets. The overall savings is 10% to 15% of electrical usage. Mr. Malone requested a collective list (by month) that includes solar management fees and invoices from Green Mountain Power. Mrs. Perreault provided clarification that she does not budget for solar management fees, but rather budgets for electrical costs, which is underspent (the two offset each other). Additional discussion included; reduction in solar efficiencies over the 20 year contract, reiteration of the request for a report including power bills and solar management fees, the previous CVCC agreement (for payment towards electrical expenses), and the change made under the CVCCSD

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contract, possible changes to line item budgeting, the budgetary impact of CVCCSD utilizing additional space at SHS, and the addition of this topic to a future agenda.

7. Old Business

7.1 FY23 Year-End Projection

A copy of the BUUSD Expense/Revenue Year-End Projection Summary Report (dated 03/16/23) was distributed.

A copy of the BUUSD Revenue Report (dated 03/01/23) was distributed.

A copy of the BUUSD Expense Report (dated 09/09/23) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised that the projected surplus is approximately \$750,000, and that she continues to carefully monitor the overall financial picture. Mrs. Perreault advised regarding how to 'read' the report, and advised that she is very conservative with projections. Mrs. Perreault advised that the new SPED funding formula makes projections more accurate.

7.2 Warrant Procedures

A document titled BUUSD Warrant Procedures (revised 02/28/23) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised regarding a new Warrant process that has been vetted by the District's auditor and legal counsel.

Mrs. Perreault and Mrs. Leclerc provided a brief overview of the proposed new process, and it was noted that under the new process, Board Members do not have to physically visit the Central Office to approve Warrants, and that approval will be made at Board meetings. It was suggested that procedure wording be changed from 'authorized' to 'certified'. After brief discussion, it was agreed that the wording in the proposed procedure agrees with statute and should not be altered. It was suggested that use of electronic signatures be researched and implemented if possible. For the benefit of new Board Members, Mrs. Spaulding provided an overview of the process that has been in place. It was confirmed that items in the payment process are not 'pulled' or 'held' based on questions from Board Members. If funds need to be recovered, the District will work with the vendor to resolve the matter. The Board Chair or Vice Chair will sign the Warrant after Board approval. Mrs. Spaulding noted that if warrant information is included in the packet, it is imperative that student names be redacted.

8. Other Business

Mr. Malone queried regarding how ESSER funds are being 'booked' and requested that an ESSER Update be added to a future agenda. Brief discussion was held. This item will be added to the Parking Lot.

9. Items for Future Agendas

April Meeting:

- Budget Development for Revote
- FY23 Budget Projections
- Solar Credits (if time permits)
- Procedures (dependent on how full the Agenda is)

May:

- Budget Development Reflection (May) – Parking Lot Item E

Add to Parking Lot:

- Total Compensation Package – should be in Parking Lot, but does not appear in the Parking Lot of tonight's agenda
- Discussion of Budget Workshops – added March 2023 – Mr. Lyons
- ESSER Update – added March 2023 – Mr. Malone (May or June / after budget approval)
- CVCCSD Lease Negotiation – added March 2023 – by Committee

Delete from Parking Lot:

- B – CVCCSD Departure Impact (too far off in the future)
- C – Vermont Green Schools Initiative – phase 1
- H – FY23 Actuals

10. Next Meeting Date

The April 20, 2023 meeting is cancelled.

The next meeting is Monday, April 17, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Lyons, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin