

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

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
May 10, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – Chair
Chris Parker (BT) – Vice Chair – joined at 7:27 p.m.
Paul Malone (BT) - Clerk
Michael Boutin (BC)
Nancy Leclerc (At-Large)
Ben Moore (BC)
Terry Reil (BT)
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Emily Reynolds (BT)

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Michael Gilbar	Sarah Helman	Josh Howard	Prudence Krasofski
Patrick Leene	Karen Moran	Brody Priddy	Megan Spaulding	Michael Titus
Jan Trepanier	Pierre Trepanier	Rachel Van Vliet		

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Wednesday, May 10, 2023, Regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

2. Pledge and Mindfulness Moment

The Board recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Board held a Mindfulness Moment.

3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 6.7 BCEMS Roof Project
Add 6.8 First Reading Teaching About Controversial and Sensitive Issues Policy (D40)
Add 7.7 Salary Metric

On a motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

4. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

4.1 Public Comment

Community members voiced disappointment in the time/effort/money that the District utilized to promote the most recent budget, noting that much less promotion was given to the first budget. Additional community input included a request for the District to ‘put its money where its mouth is’ and that the Board should hold the District accountable to put the money where it was requested (after school program, music, middle school sports, marked improvement in student test scores, etc.). Concern was voiced that as teacher negotiations are still underway, the voter approved budget will not be nearly enough and will negatively impact students and programs.

4.2 Student Voice

None.

5. Consent Agenda

5.1 Approval of Minutes – March 9, 2023 Reorganizational Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the March 9, 2023 Reorganizational Meeting. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

5.2 Approval of Minutes – March 23, 2023 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the March 23, 2023 Regular Meeting. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

5.3 Approval of Minutes – March 30, 2023 Special Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the March 30, 2023 Special Meeting. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

5.4 Approval of Minutes – April 12, 2023 Board Retreat

Mr. Cecchinelli advised that he took notes for this meeting, but is looking for Board Members to provide additional information relating to motions. Once information is received, draft minutes will be updated and minutes will be presented for approval at a future meeting.

6. Current Business

6.1 New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for James Norby (BTMES 4th Grade Math/Science), Monika Norby (BTMES Elementary Special Educator), Andrew Jaromin (BTMES 5th Grade), Casey Grimes (BTMES 3rd – 5th PE), Alexandra Jackson (BTMES 6th grade), Harley Reyome (BCEMS Middle School Special Educator), Jennifer Kelley BTMES (School Nurse), Alek Fleury (SHS English), Ryan Fiske (SHS Science), Melissa Greenwood (BCEMS Assistant Principal), Laurie Smith (BCEMS SPED Case Manager), Hope Sornborger (SHS Math Teacher), Savannah Covey (BCEMS School Nurse), Austin Scatena (SHS Lifeskills Special Educator), Brandi Dewey (SEA English Teacher), Twila Chafai (SHS Science Teacher), Briannon Jarrell (BTMES 7th Grade Social Studies), Gavin Koehler (SHS Math Teacher), Eric Ray (BTMES Music Teacher), and Krystal Doney (BTMES Elementary Special Educator) were distributed.

Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the candidates, and answered questions from the Board.

Brief discussion was held and it was agreed to hold additional discussion of one candidate (Melissa Greenwood) in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of the slate of candidates, with the exception of Melissa Greenwood. Approved candidates; James Norby, Monika Norby, Andrew Jaromin, Casey Grimes, Alexandra Jackson, Harley Reyome, Jennifer Kelley, Alek Fleury, Ryan Fiske, Laurie Smith, Hope Sornborger, Savannah Covey, Austin Scatena, Brandi Dewey, Twila Chafai, Briannon Jarrell, Gavin Koehler, Eric Ray, and Krystal Doney. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

Mr. Boutin moved to approve the hiring of Melissa Greenwood. Mr. Malone seconded the motion.

Discussion was held regarding changes to Administrator roles at the schools. Brief discussion was held regarding the Board's responsibility for performing its due diligence when reviewing/approving candidates proposed for hire, and which administrative positions the Board usually interviews. After discussion, it was agreed to discuss the candidate for BCEMS Assistant Principal in Executive Session.

Mr. Boutin withdrew the motion.

6.2 Warrant Approvals (03/30/23, 04/05/23, 04/13/23, 04/20/20, 04/27/23, and 05/04/23)

Accounts Payable Warrants for the listed dates were distributed.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Accounts Payable Warrants for 03/30/23, 04/05/23, 04/13/23, 04/20/20, 04/27/23, and 05/04/23. Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.

6.3 First Reading Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks Policy (B20) / Procedure for Review (B20-P)

A copy of the policy was distributed. A copy of the procedure was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey advised regarding the policy, and the Committee's recommendation to include the 'optional' section at the bottom of the policy. It was also noted that sections of the policy have been removed from the policy and put in a newly created procedure document (B20-P).

Mr. Boutin moved that the Board approve the First Reading of the Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks Policy (B20), without the optional section, which says The BUUSD will ensure that employees receive training in non-discrimination, bias, and anti-racism as part of the BUUSD onboarding process.

Mr. Malone seconded the motion.

Discussion ensued, including acknowledgement that the Policy Committee spent a significant amount of time on this policy, confirmation that the Board does not need to approve the procedure, Mr. Boutin's concern regarding the 'anti-racism' clause, possible assumptions that may be being made relating to training, availability of training materials (for viewing by the Board), and the definition of 'reasonable effort' (relating to recruitment of employees).

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board voted 4 to 2 to approve the First Reading of the Personnel Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, and Background Checks Policy (B20), without the optional section, which says The BUUSD will ensure that employees receive training in non-discrimination, bias, and anti-racism as part of the BUUSD onboarding process.

**Mr. Boutin, Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Malone, and Mr. Reil voted for the motion.
Mr. Moore and Mrs. Spaulding voted against the motion.
Ms. Parker was not present for the vote.**

6.4 FY24 School Calendar

A copy of the Regional Calendar for BUUSD 2023 – 2024) (dated 04/07/23 Final Draft), was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey provided a brief overview, advising that all efforts are made to see that the calendar is coordinated throughout the region. Mr. Reil suggested that the calendar be 'plotted' against the current Board/Committee meeting schedule, in an effort to improve planning and limit circumstances when the Board or Committees do not meet for a significant length of time.

6.5 Resignation Letters Discussion

Lengthy discussion was held, including discussion of; the current practice (resignation letters are not presented to the Board), the past practice (resignation letters were submitted to the Board), privacy concerns, exit surveys, a suggestion that employees be provided with an option to submit their letters to the Board, possible assumptions that are being made regarding resignation letters, the option given to employees to share their exit interviews with the Board, that 'patterns' or 'consistently reported areas of concern' will be shared with the Board, the possibility of seeking an opinion from legal counsel, and the 'blind' / aggregated exit interview data that was presented to the Board last year.

6.6 Procedures Discussion

A copy of the BUUSD Policy Manual Index (dated 05/02/23) was distributed.

Brief discussion was held and the Board was advised regarding the 'live' document included in the packet (that identifies which policies have procedures).

6.7 BCEMS Roof Project

A document titled BCEMS Roof Project, Summer '23, was distributed.

Mr. Evans provided an overview of the bid document included in the packet, including the process used to solicit bids, and the options included in the bid 'break down'. Mr. Evans provided an overview of the work that would be performed in the different sections (options) included in the bid packet, and advised that the low bidder was DAYCO, INC, a contractor the District has worked successfully with in the past. Mr. Evans queried the Board regarding whether to contract for the 'base bid' work only, or to authorize additional work. Currently \$350,000 of Capital Improvement funds has been 'reserved' for BCEMS roof work (per voters). The cost is currently \$388,500 for roof work that was postponed from the summer of 2022 (due to unavailability of materials). The Board held discussion regarding the various options for work to be performed in the summer of 2023 and how work could/would be performed/financed in the future, as well as the benefit of including all roofing work in the 5-Year Plan. Mr. Evans advised that 'hard numbers' cannot be added to the 5-Year Plan until bids are received. Mr. Evans believes that roofing costs will continue to increase in future years. Mr. Evans would like to complete as much roofing work as possible every year. In response to a query, Mr. Evans advised that if the Board wants to proceed with work on the additional sections, the work could all be completed this summer. Summer School is being held at BTMES this year. In response to a query, Mr. Evans advised that the Business Manager will need to be consulted regarding the funding source for the additional \$38,500 (the amount of the bid that exceeds the amount of voter approved funding). Additional discussion was held regarding the balance of the Capital Improvement Fund, and other possible projects that may need to be funded from the Capital Improvement Fund or by other methods (including loans) including but not limited to; legally required Storm Water Run-off mitigation, ventilation, and parking lots.

On a motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to enter into a contract with DAYCO, INC. for \$388,500 of roofing at BCEMS.

6.8 First Reading Teaching About Controversial and Sensitive Issues Policy (D40)

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey and Ms. Parker provided an overview of the policy as discussed at the Policy Committee meeting. It was noted that the words "master agreement" be changed to "Collective Bargaining Agreement".

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the First Reading of the Teaching About Controversial and Sensitive Issues Policy (D40).

7. Old Business

7.1 Second and Final Reading Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation and Distribution Policy (A20)

Copies of policies referenced under Agenda Items 7.1 through 7.6 were distributed.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Board Meetings, Agenda Preparation and Distribution Policy (A20), and agreed to adopt said policy.

7.2 Second and Final Reading Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities Policy (C22)

Brief discussion was held regarding Mr. Boutin's concern that there be parental notification for all clubs and activities, not just those that require parental permission.

Mr. Malone called the question. There was no second.

Mr. Cecchinelli confirmed that no Board Members wished to contribute further to the discussion.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 5 to 2 to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Student Athletics, Clubs, and Activities Policy (C22), and agreed to adopt said policy.

Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Malone, Mr. Moore, Ms. Parker, and Mrs. Spaulding voted for the motion.

Mr. Boutin and Mr. Reil voted against the motion.

7.3 Rescind Student Clubs and Activities Policy (C23) and Interscholastic Sports Policy (C24)

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to rescind the Student Clubs and Activities Policy (C23) and the Interscholastic Sports Policy (C24)

7.4 Second and Final Reading English Learners Policy (C4)

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board voted 6 to 1 to approve the Second and Final Reading of the English Learners Policy (C4), and agreed to adopt said policy.

Mr. Boutin, Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Malone, Mr. Moore, Ms. Parker, and Mrs. Spaulding voted for the motion.

Mr. Reil voted against the motion.

7.5 Second and Final Reading Selection of Instructional Materials Policy (D23)

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Selection of Instructional Materials Policy (D23), and agreed to adopt said policy.

7.6 Rescind Selection of Instructional Materials Policy (D32)

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to rescind the Selection of Instructional Materials Policy (D32).

The Board recessed at 8:04 p.m. and reconvened at 8:10 p.m.

7.7 Salary Metric

Lengthy discussion was held, including; historical information pertaining to the creation of a salary metric, attempts to rectify disparities in salaries, issues and unfairness caused by hiring of new individuals at a higher rate than long-time employees, the financial impact of rectifying salary disparities, hourly employees, non-contracted salaried employees (positions not requiring a license), the issue that the Board has not been voting to approve the salary metric and has not voted to approve contracts that have been signed by the Chair without Board approval. Mr. Malone reiterated that the reason he asked for this agenda item is not to discuss the actual salary amounts on the metric, but rather to bring to the Board and Superintendent's attention that the salary metric needs to be approved by the Board and thus far, has not been approved. Mr. Malone advised that the Superintendent should be making salary recommendations, but then the Board is responsible for voting to approve salary amounts so that the Superintendent and Board Chair have the authority to legally sign contracts. Mr. Malone believes the statute is quite clear that contracts (including salary) need to be approved by the Board. Mr. Hennessey believes there was a conflict in how statute was being interpreted. Mr. Malone advised regarding the previous Superintendent's practice to present proposed salaries in Executive Session, and then have those salaries voted on in open session. It was noted that new administrative positions have also required Board approval. Mr. Cecchinelli plans to add the Salary Metric to a future agenda for action.

8. Other Business/Round Table

Mrs. Leclerc had requested a summary of the French Classes' trip to Canada. Mr. Hennessey advised that this would be included in the May SHS Board Report. Mrs. Leclerc voiced concern that teachers have been naming specific Board Members and advising students that those Board Members do not support teachers. Mrs. Leclerc clarified that she supports teachers 100% and feels it's wrong for

students to be told otherwise based on her recommendations during budget development. Mrs. Leclerc voiced concern that some of the board and committee agenda packets have been disorganized and/or missing information.

Mr. Reil advised that he believes going seven weeks between board meetings is too long, and that if there is going to be a long delay between board meetings, perhaps the Board should consider changing the approval time for new candidates from 2 days, to a week.

The Superintendent and Board Members thanked the community for their support in passing the budget.

Mrs. Spaulding expressed gratitude to teachers and staff.

Mr. Moore suggested that the Board discuss restructuring committee meetings.

Mr. Hennessey thanked the Board for supporting teachers and staff during this 'Teacher Appreciation Week'. Mr. Hennessey advised regarding past and future Teacher Appreciation Breakfasts.

9. Future Agenda Items

May Agenda:

- Salary Metric
- Special Education Rule Changes (Parking Lot Item D)

Add to Parking Lot:

- 'Action Memos' (summary of the agenda item and the motion staff wants).
- Explanation from AOE on the Cost Per-Pupil Formula
- Curriculum Committee Discussion
- VSBA and/or Legal Counsel Presentation and Question/Answer Session (Re: Open Meeting Law, Roles/Responsibilities, Code of Ethics, and Committees)

Remove From Parking Lot:

B. Hiring Committee for BCEMS Principal Position

10. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, May 24, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

11. Executive Session as Needed

11.1 Administrator Contracts

11.2 Personnel Matter

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include Administrator Contracts and a Personnel Matter.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the items proposed for discussion, specifically Administrator Contracts, would clearly place the Barre Unified Union School District at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Hennessey and Mrs. Marold in attendance, at 8:52 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 9:43 p.m.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding the Board unanimously voted to hire Melissa Greenwood for the position of Assistant Principal at BCEMS

12. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin