

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

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
June 14, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II (BC) – Chair
Chris Parker (BT) – Vice Chair
Paul Malone (BT) - Clerk
Michael Boutin (BC)
Nancy Leclerc (At-Large)
Ben Moore (BC) – arrived at 6:20 p.m.
Terry Reil (BT)
Emily Reynolds (BT)
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Karen Fredericks, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Ashley Young, Assistant Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Melissa Battah	Stacie Boltin	Michael Deering, II	Mike Gilbar
Josh Howard	Stacy Hubbell	Prudence Krasofski	Lisa Liotta	Pietro Lynn
Dan Morrison	Joelen Mulvaney	Jan Trepanier	Rachel Van Vliet	

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Wednesday, June 14, 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

Take 7.10 out of order
Delete 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3
Add 12.1- Executive Session for Personnel / Contract Matter

On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to move Warrant Approval to the Consent Agenda as a standing item. Mr. Moore was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda, postponing 8.1, and 8.2 to June 28th, removing 8.3, moving 7.10 out of order (first item under 7), and adding 12.1 Personnel / Contracts. Mr. Moore was not present for the vote.

4. Executive Session

Concern was voiced regarding holding Executive Session at the start of the meeting. It was noted that this is a rare occurrence. Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include Administrator Contracts and Employment.

4.1 Administrator Contracts 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A)

4.2 Employment 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3)

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously agreed to find that premature general public knowledge of the items proposed for discussion, specifically Administrator Contracts and Employment, would clearly

place the Barre Unified Union School District at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public. Mr. Moore was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Ms. Parker, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board voted 6 to 1 to enter into Executive Session, with Pietro Lynn, Mr. Hennessey, and Mrs. Marold in attendance, at 6:13 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 7:45 p.m.

5. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

5.1 Public Comment

Ms. Hubbell addressed the Board and voiced concern that Executive Session was held at the start of the meeting, advising that this method makes it more difficult for members of the public to attend. It was reiterated Executive Session at the beginning of the meeting is a rare occurrence.

5.2 Student Voice

None.

6. Consent Agenda

6.1 Approval of Minutes – May 24, 2023 Regular Meeting

Mrs. Young and Mr. Hennessey answered warrant related questions from the Board and Mrs. Leclerc requested an amendment to the Board Retreat Minutes. Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding why a new freezer was booked to general expenses rather than using Food Service Surplus Funds. Mrs. Perreault and Mr. Evans are looking into this matter.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the May 24, 2023 Regular Meeting (as presented), the Minutes of the April 12, 2023 Board Retreat (as amended), and the Accounts Payable Warrants listed under Agenda Item 7.2 (for 5/25/23, 05/31/23, and 06/08/23).

6.2 Approval of Minutes – April 12, 2023 Board Retreat

Approved under Agenda Item 6.1

7. Current Business

7.1 New Hires

The resumes and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Forms for Holly Johnson (BTMES 2nd grade), Sarah Shaw (SHS World Language), Antonia Giraud (BTMES World Language), Andrea Cechak (BCEMS 5-8 Music), Julie Maccarone (BCEMS SPED Case Manager), John Elowson (BCEMS 7/8 Science), Holly Weiss (BCEMS SLP), Matthew Guerry (BCEMS 7/8 Social Studies), and Susan Trowbridge (BCEMS Reading Interventionist), were distributed.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Reil, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Holly Johnson, Sarah Shaw, Antonia Giraud, Andrea Cechak, Julie Maccarone, John Elowson, Holly Weiss, Matthew Guerry, and Susan Trowbridge.

7.2 Warrant Approvals (5/25/23, 05/31/23, 06/08/23)

Copies of Accounts Payable Warrants for 5/25/23 (\$328,604.48), 05/31/23 (\$187,726.33), and 06/08/23 (\$1,145,237.72) were distributed.

Approved under Agenda Item 6.1

7.3 Food Service Renewal Approval

A copy of a letter from George Carone, District Manager, Lexington Independents (dated 05/13/23) was distributed.

It was noted that next year the contract will go out to bid. Mrs. Young advised that annually, the prices do increase and that the contract needs to be renewed.

Mr. Boutin moved to approve. Mrs. Spaulding seconded the motion. Brief discussion was held. Mrs. Young provided a brief overview of the annual renewal and price increases. Mr. Boutin clarified that the motion is to approve the increase that was presented. Mrs. Spaulding (seconder) approved the change to the motion.

Mr. Malone moved to approve the increase request from our food services on their meal plan based upon a letter that was provided to us that points to the CPI being 8.4%. Ms. Parker seconded the motion.

It was noted that the motion by Mr. Boutin has not been voted on yet.

Mr. Reil called point of order and requested that Mr. Boutin rescind his motion.

Mr. Boutin rescinded his motion. Mrs. Spaulding rescinded her second.

Mr. Malone moved for the increase requested for food services. Ms. Parker seconded the motion.

In response to a query, Mrs. Young clarified that the District is required, in the food service renewal application, to have the Board approve the renewal with the increased prices, as part of the renewal packet that the State requires. It was noted that the motion does not include that the Board is approving renewal of the contract. Mrs. Young advised that the renewal form does not need to be signed by the Board (it is signed by the Business Office), but the renewal needs to be approved by the Board.

Mr. Malone amended the motion to approve the food service renewal price increase. Ms. Parker (seconded) agreed with the amended motion.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to approve the food service renewal price increase.

7.4 Annual Designation of Truant Officers

A copy of Title 16 Education – Chapter 25 Attendance and Discipline § 1125 - Truant Officers was distributed.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Ms. Leclerc, 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 2023 / 2024 school year.

7.5 Annual Designation of HHB Report Recipients (Policy C10)

A copy of Policy C10 was distributed.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to approve the HHB designees as indicated on page 6 of C10; HHB designated employees (BUUSD and all district schools - Superintendent Chris Hennessey, SHS – Mari Goodridge Miller and Luke Aither, BCEMS – Alexander Wawrzyniak and Kristin Morrison, and BTMES – Theodore Mills and Alice Harding).

7.6 First Reading Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy (B3)

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the policy changes. The Board agreed to make one amendment to the policy, to correct an error. Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding the lack of procedures at BTMES and SEA. Brief discussion was held regarding the definition of ‘drugs’ that will need to be clarified in the policy. There may need to be statewide discussion regarding this matter. If/when the definition is redefined, the policy will be updated. It was noted that if there is a violation of the policy, parents are notified (as part of procedures).

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the First Reading of the Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace Policy (B3).

7.7 First Reading Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7)

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the policy.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Reading of the Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7).

7.8 Superintendent Evaluation FY24

A copy of a document titled ‘VSBA Superintendent Evaluation Service’ was distributed.

Mr. Cecchinelli provided an overview of this document, noting that CVCCSD utilizes this method, and he was impressed with how the evaluation turned out. It was noted that this evaluation process does include Board input.

Mr. Boutin moved that the Board move in this direction and allocate \$1,500. Mr. Moore seconded the motion.

Lengthy discussion ensued, including but not limited to; discussion of when this evaluation process would first be used, the Superintendent's support for using this method, a suggestion that additional discussion be held and that other options also be explored, Board involvement in the process, that the Board is in control of the evaluation and is receiving guidance from VSBA, confirmation that administrators will continue to provide input, the evaluation period (begins March 2023, as new Board Members would not/could not provide input for a time period when they were not on the Board), and a suggestion that VSBA give a presentation on the process.

Mr. Boutin withdrew his motion.

Additional discussion was held regarding the possibility of hearing a presentation on the proposed model.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board voted 5 to 4 to approve moving forward with the plan presented this evening.

Mr. Cecchinelli, Mr. Moore, Ms. Parker, Ms. Reynolds, and Mrs. Spaulding voted for the motion.

Mr. Boutin, Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Malone, and Mr. Reil voted against the motion.

7.9 Provisional/emergency License Count & General AOE Licensing Plan

A document titled Vermont AOE Superintendent Report – Provisionals and Emergency Licenses (updated 06/09/23) was distributed.

A document titled (Vermont AOE) Plan to Obtain a Vermont Professional Teaching License While Teaching Under a Temporary License, was distributed.

A document titled (AOE) Provisional License Progress Report was distributed.

Mr. Hennessey lauded Tina Gilbert and Ron Ryan for their efforts in working to assist individuals who are working under Provisional or Emergency licenses. Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the process and advised that there are fewer individuals this year that will need to obtain Provisional or Emergency type licenses. It was noted that new teachers (fresh out of school) are provided with additional supervision and support. It was agreed that the documents were well written and informative.

7.10 ADHOC Behavioral Committee Discussion

Mr. Boutin advised that he would like to revisit this topic, advising that he would prefer to call the 'committee' a Behavioral Task Force'. It has been confirmed that it is legal to have such a committee/task force. Mr. Boutin would like the Board to consider having a task force to review policies, procedures, and implementation (non-protected information only), and to determine if the District is doing everything that needs to be done, and to possibly bring forth recommendations for improvements. Mr. Boutin advised regarding the proposed make-up of the task force. Lengthy discussion ensued, including but not limited to; a request for clarification regarding components listed in the Essential Work of School Boards document, clarification that no student specific information would be shared with the task force, a need to see that policies and procedures are being followed and are effective, the need to have well defined parameters, a suggestion that there be parental involvement, concern that behavioral issues are continuing to languish in the District (and impact hiring and retention of staff), a suggestion that different issues (at different grade levels) be addressed separately, recognition that the topic of Hazing, Harassment and Bullying is a very emotional topic, a suggestion that the task force also address 'healing' in the community, a perception that staff and community members are frustrated with the effectiveness of implementation of current policies and procedures, acknowledgement that the District is struggling with behavior issues, the need for age appropriate discussions, possible next steps, public input, including; the importance of dealing with this issue, the importance of Board involvement, the lack of an anti-racism policy, support for pursuing this issue further, including engaging community members, and involving behavioral scientists/experts, the need for the Board to be informed/involved prior to issues getting out of hand, the need for preventative measures (for both potential perpetrators and victims), and the need to hire and retain qualified behavioral staff.

On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to hold further discussion on this topic to, as a Board, come together to lay out how the Board wants to move ahead with this and what it may look like in the beginning, and to have administrators and others have time to further explore this matter and report back to the Board.

8. Old Business

8.1 CIA Plan Update

~~A copy of the 5 year Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Plan (updated 06/11/23) was distributed.~~

~~A document titled 'Spring 2023: District Benchmark Distribution of Same Set of Students Over Multiple Years' was distributed.~~

~~A document titled '22—23 BUUSD Professional Development Feedback Summary' was distributed.~~

~~A document titled '22—23 BUUSD Climate Survey Summary' was distributed.~~

~~A copy of the PBIS School Climate Survey was distributed.~~

~~—8.2 Enrollment/Home Study Update~~

~~A copy of the District Enrollment/Staffing Report (dated June 2023) was distributed.
A copy of the Home Study Report (AOE provided data) was distributed.~~

~~—8.3 Superintendent Evaluation Completion~~

9. Other Business/Round Table

Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding the days/times for BCEMS 'Step-up' nights. Mr. Hennessey will be providing information regarding all of the ceremonies.

Mr. Malone suggested that the Board reconsider having an SRO at SHS.

Mrs. Leclerc advised that she took the District's anti-bias/anti-racism/anti-bullying courses, and advised regarding some other mandatory training. Mrs. Leclerc noted that the SEA website is outdated and needs attention.

Mr. Reil advised regarding recent issues with warning meetings and he believes the Board needs to look into this matter.

Mr. Moore lauded Mrs. Lafrancis for wrapping up another year of Work Based Learning, noting the benefits of this program.

Ms. Parker advised that she enjoyed the Memorial Service video and the other recent music/art related events.

Mr. Hennessey agrees that the warning process needs to be shored up. Mr. Hennessey advised that a decision has been made to hold the SHS Commencement Ceremony indoors (SHS Gymnasium) on Saturday, 06/17/23 at 11:00 a.m. All Board Members are encouraged to attend this event as well as the other end of year events (step-up(s)).

10. Future Agenda Items

- Second Readings and adoption of Policies D40, B3, and B7
- Code of Ethics
- Exit Survey Results
- Executive Session for Update on Staff Member on Administrative Leave
- Executive Session Outcome of Off Campus Incident of a Few Weeks Ago
- Executive Session for Completion of Superintendent Evaluation
- Parking Lot Items A, B, C, D, G, N, and O
- Q & A Session with Pietro Lynn (if not on June Agenda, add to Parking Lot – requested by Mrs. Leclerc)

Mr. Cecchinelli will try to determine how many Parking Lot Items can be added to the next June meeting.

Mr. Hennessey noted that there are a few required policies that will also need to be added to the agenda.

11. Next Meeting Dates

Mr. Hennessey advised that he will not be in attendance at the 06/28 meeting.

Mrs. Leclerc suggested that a Special Meeting be held so that the Superintendent's Evaluation can be completed prior to the 06/28/23 meeting.

Mr. Hennessey advised that starting next week, SHS will not be available for meetings (due to construction).

The Board agreed to hold meetings at the BTMES Library while SHS is unavailable.

Wednesday, June 28, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the BTMES Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

12. Executive Session as Needed

12.1 Personnel / Contract Matter

A Personnel/Contract Matter was proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Reil, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session, with Mr. Hennessey in attendance, at 9:25 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 Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Boutin, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 9:33 p.m.

13. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin