

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING**
BUUSD Central Office and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
August 28, 2023 - 6:00 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Giuliano Cecchinelli, II, Chair – (BC)
Ben Moore, Vice Chair - (BC)
Mary Jane Ainsworth (BT Community Member)
Andrew McMichael (BC Community Member) – joined at 6:48 p.m.
Terry Reil, - (BT)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director

OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Nancy Leclerc
Paul Malone

GUESTS PRESENT:

Christopher Rivet- Dubois & King

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Monday, August 28, 2023 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the BUUSD Central Office and via video conference.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

Add 5.2 Update Facility Emergency Shelter Readiness
Add 5.3 Response to Community Correspondence
Take 6.3 out of order

3. Public Comment

Mr. Malone queried regarding any scheduled projects planned for the SEA building (barn). Mr. Evans advised that the only planned item is the addition of some security cameras. Mr. Evans will be meeting with Mr. Derner regarding his vision/plans for the building and barn. Once that information is documented, it will be presented to the Board.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – July 31, 2023 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee Meeting
On a motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Committee unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the July 31, 2023 BUUSD Facilities and Transportation Committee meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 Transportation Efficiency Opportunities/Improvements

Mr. Reil advised of previous discussions relating to having bus coordinators present at the meeting. It was noted that the District now has only one bus coordinator and she is working on efficiencies to the best of her ability. Mr. Hennessey noted the learning curve between transportation at BTMES and BCEMS. Mr. Hennessey will check in with BTMES administrators and the bus coordinator and advise regarding when someone can be present at a meeting.

Mr. Malone queried regarding transportation for SHS. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that the matter has not been addressed.

Mr. Malone queried regarding transportation for out of district students and whether or not providing transportation is viable, noting that there is an economic piece/impact that would be very beneficial. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that there is a recruitment plan, but other than that, once there is more of an influx of students, it would probably be a worthwhile plan to look into transportation.

Mr. Malone asked about consideration for transportation of in-district SHS students. Mr. Hennessey reported on a transportation trial that was run towards the end of COVID and that demand was minimal, almost non-existent. Mr. Aither may be able to provide additional information. Ms. Ainsworth advised that she has seen some requests on the BUUSD Parent Forum on Facebook. Brief discussion was held regarding transportation in other high school districts. Mr. Moore believes that transportation trials should run longer than one year, and should be run for 3, 4, or 5 years before the need is re-evaluated. There may be a cultural barrier to overcome. Mr. Malone noted the vast geographic area of SHS student residents, which differs greatly from some high schools which have a centralized area of students. Mr. Reil believes that the financial aspect must also be closely looked at, as the District has gone significantly over budget on transportation for the past few years (\$380,000 and \$350,000) and he believes the District needs to look in to why these overages are occurring.

Regarding transportation for out of district students, Mrs. Poulin advised that rather than waiting for student counts to increase prior to providing transportation, she noted that transportation is one of the factors in increasing student counts. Mrs. Poulin read from the Echo Valley School District Annual Report, that shows enrollment for the schools that provide transportation are 39 and 22, but Spaulding only has 7 students. The schools that provide transportation are recruiting the majority of students. Spaulding used to be the 'go to' high school, but as soon as other schools started providing transportation, those schools started getting the students and the number going to SHS dropped significantly. The loss in tuition revenue (to SHS) is in the millions of dollars. Addition of out of district students does not cause any addition to staffing and Mrs. Poulin believes the District should be more aggressively recruiting students. Mrs. Poulin noted that several years ago, the District started providing transportation to these students in an effort to attract more students. Tuition for the 7 students more than covers the cost of transportation. Mrs. Poulin believes that it will take time to 'woo' students back to SHS (families are now just in the habit of sending their students to the schools that provide transportation), but given the millions of dollars at stake, she believes it is a worthwhile investment. Mrs. Poulin would like to see the BUUSD receiving the tuition funds.

5.2 Update Facility Emergency Shelter Readiness

Mr. Evans advised that BTMES shower mixing valves have been replaced, and both the 'girls' and boys' showers are operational. The boys' shower is a 'gang' shower, so it may not meet today's expectations/standards. Schools are in session and the boilers are up and running. It was confirmed that the showers at BCEMS are working properly; they just weren't available due to summer construction. Mr. Malone advised that the contractors present for the flood needed three items (a place to lay out cots, showers, and a place to park vehicles). Due to unavailability of the schools, they needed to set up at the Guards. In response to a query, Mr. Evans confirmed that the District currently has two facilities that can accept individuals in an emergency shelter situation. In response to a query regarding steps to take to 'isolate' those in the emergency shelters, from the student population, Mr. Evans advised that that issue still needs to be addressed. Mr. Malone would like the District to make the necessary plans so that the District is prepared for future emergencies. It was reiterated that it is more difficult to provide hot water in the summer, as boilers are not running during that timeframe, and that much construction occurs during the summer which may impede on the ability to use schools as shelters. Mr. Malone believes that at least one of the buildings needs to be available (for use as an emergency shelter) during the summer. Mr. Reil believes that the District should review the Agreement it has with the Town. Mr. Evans advised that the Town of Barre owns the generator, and services the generator. BTMES and the Town split the cost of fuel for the weekly testing of the generator. Mr. Evans believes the Agreement will need to be updated in the near future (due to changes to key contact personnel). Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding the existence of Disaster Recover Plans (one for the schools and one for the emergency shelter) and step by step procedures contained in such a plan. Mr. Hennessey advised of a Crisis Management Plan that addresses various types of emergencies, and the importance of having accurate/up-to-date contact information. It was suggested that Crisis Management Plan be a future agenda item so that administrators can come to the meeting prepared to provide details. Mr. Evans showed the Committee the Crisis Management Plan binder that is kept in his office.

5.3 Response to Community Correspondence

Mr. Reil advised regarding a community member's communication which has not yet been responded to and requested that the Chair respond to the email that was sent on 08/08/23. The community member voiced concerns/confusion regarding dates and warnings (for meetings) and related to on-line postings for Facilities Committee meetings, as well as a question related to ESSER funding and the SHS Athletic Fields. Mr. Cecchinelli believes the calendar is self-generated and was altered for the summer. Mr. Reil reiterated that he wants to assure that community members are responded to.

Discussion moved to 6.3

6. Old Business

6.1EEI Project Update

Mr. Evans reported that Phase 3 is wrapping up. Lights and sprinklers are installed and the walls are painted. There are a few loose ends to tie up, but the phase is approximately 95% complete. Phase 4 (Science hall) will be started shortly and planning will begin for office areas, lighting, and additional sprinkler work. The areas where the sprinklers are live have been pressure tested and the Fire Marshall issued the Certificate of Occupancy. One of the rooftop heat pump units is up and running. EEI continues to be very pleasant to work with. All changes have been covered by the contingency fund.

6.2 LED Lighting Update

BCEMS and BTMES lights have been installed. The lights were 100% funded by Efficiency Vermont. The BCEMS project is complete and a refund of \$61,012 has been received. Mr. Evans will document the BTMES lighting upgrades and forward the data to Efficiency Vermont. It is expected that the District will receive a refund of \$48,216. The district is responsible for the cost to recycle the florescent lamps. The cost is approximately \$4,000 - \$5,000. Mr. Evans provided a brief overview of the recycling process. As the local recycling center was flooded, Mr. Evans needs to find an economical way to recycle the lamps from BTMES.

6.3 DuBois & King Update (SHS)/ Storm Water Remediation Updates (BCEMS/BTMES)

Mr. Rivet addressed the Committee advising that he has a draft and is working through the final review of the permit application. The Plans are also almost complete. Final Design plans should be available for review on 08/24/23 or 08/25/23. He believes the permit application should come through early next week. The 10/22/23 application renewal deadline will be met. Once submitted, the application will receive an administrative approval, then a final approval a couple months after that. The application fee can be submitted on-line by the District, or if utilizing a check there will be about a 2 week delay. There are no substantial changes to the design plans. One item left for review is the capacity of a catch basin, which will need to be confirmed. In response to a query, Mr. Rivet confirmed that Crimson Tide Drive will be completely removed and will most likely be filled with top soil. In response to a query, Mr. Rivet noted that some schools do have their permits in hand and he believes if the permits are approved this fall, the District will have submitted the projects while funding is still available.

Mr. Evans advised regarding BCEMS and BTMES projects. Those projects are being designed by Watershed. The BCEMS project permit application has been approved (permit in hand). The BTMES application is under review by DEC (Department of Environmental Conservation). It is expected that the BTMES permit will be in hand soon. Last Friday, GreenPrint Partners (overseer of funding sources), contacted Mr. Evans and advised that they are starting to roll out Phase 2 funding. It is not known what the matching funding will be, though it's hoped that it is no greater than 10%. Each school is a separate project and funding can be applied for separately. Mr. Evans believes that the projects can be completed in about 2 years (there is a 5 year timeframe from when the permits are approved). Mr. Evans does not believe these projects would prevent using the buildings as emergency shelters.

Discussion move to Agenda Item 6.1

6.4 5-Year Plan Update

Mr. Evans advised regarding some of the work to-date, and advised that the State has hired a firm to perform assessments of all schools in the state. Once the District assessment is complete and the District receives the report, some of the projects listed in the report will be added to the 5-Year Plan. Mr. Evans and Mrs. Perreault have been discussing the various components to add to the plan. Brief discussion was held regarding the various State initiatives that have delayed progress of building assessments (PCBs, Lead, Storm Water Mitigation, etc). Mr. Malone reiterated his belief that a comprehensive 5-year plan will be beneficial to the District (District-wide budgeting and scheduling of projects, etc.). To prevent any misconceptions, Mr. Evans noted that the District has had a 5-Year Plan, but now that Plan is being expanded. Mr. Reil requested that all big ticket items be included in the Plan. Mr. Evans clarified that he views the 5-Year Plan as a Capital Improvement Plan, and that many large ticket items have been paid for by the annual maintenance/equipment budget. Mr. Evans provided a brief overview of how he utilizes the annual Maintenance budget, noting that some items do exceed the \$15,000 threshold, but he considers that those items are budgeted for. Mr. Reil reiterated his preference to have more, rather than less, on the 5-Year Plan, as he believes this will allow for many questions to be answered outside of meetings. Mr. Evans queried regarding the dollar threshold Mr. Reil would like for inclusion of items on the 5-Year Plan. Mr. Evans advised that the 'assessment' mentioned earlier in this agenda item, is State funded (no cost to the District). Mr. McMichael requested clarification regarding what exactly is wanted on the 5-Year Plan. Ms. Ainsworth suggested that someone create a draft document for the Committee to review (possibly view a copy of the 5-Year Plan from a neighboring district).

Agenda Item 6.4 was revisited during Agenda Item 7.;

Mr. Evans advised regarding VSBIT classes, including one that pertains to facilities. Mr. Evans attended a class and learned that the annual Capital Improvement budget should be 2% to 4% higher than the replacement value of each building.

Discussion returned to Agenda Item 7.

7. Items to be Placed on Future Agendas

Mr. Cecchinelli believes that Parking Lot Items C, D, E, F, and G can be taken care of in the next few months. Parking Lot Item H will be wrapped up fairly soon.

Mr. Reil asked if one presentation from Parking Lot A could be done at the next meeting.

Mr. Moore would like some sort of timeline relating to when to have a plan for Parking Lot Items C (to present something to the Finance Committee for FY25 Budget development), D, and E. It was suggested that for Parking Lot Item E, parents be polled at open house.

Discussion returned to Agenda Item 6.4

- Crisis Response Plan (add to Parking Lot – add by the Committee August 2023)

8. Next Meeting Date

The September 4, 2023 meeting is cancelled.

The next meeting is Monday, October 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Reil, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin