

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

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet
October 11, 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)
Terry Reil (BT)
Emily Reynolds (BT)
Sonya Spaulding (BC)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director
Karen Fredericks, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources
Rebecca Busker, SHS Assistant Principal
Mari Miller, SHS Assistant Principal
Ted Mills, BTMES Assistant Principal
Kristin Morrison, BCEMS Assistant Principal
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager
Ashley Young, Assistant Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Dave Delcore – Times Argus	Peter Anthony	Martha Blaisdell	Dale Burnash	Jody Emerson
Michael Gilbar	Sarah Helman	Jen Hutchinson	Brandy Kolling	Prudence Krasofski
Michelle Leeman	PJ LaPerle	Dan Morrison	Joelen Mulvaney	Dawn Poitras
Andrea Poulin	Brody Priddy	Monica Tolman	Rachel Van Vliet	1 802-***-***93

1. Call to Order

The Chair, Mr. Cecchinelli, called the Wednesday, October 11, 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 8.7 Report to Board on The Generator, STEAM, and Work Based Learning
Add 8.8 Warrants – Online Document Storage
Amend 9.1 to include Appointment of Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate
Discuss update on Procedures for Policies F3 and F4 (during policy First Reads discussion).

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Agenda as amended.

4. Executive Session (as needed)

No items were proposed for discussion in Executive Session.

5. Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda

5.1 Public Comment

Mr. Moore advised that tonight's meeting will be his last Board meeting, as he is moving out of the District and is resigning his position. Mr. Moore was thanked for his service.

Mrs. Poulin queried regarding where to find the required procedures for Policies F3 and F4. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that this matter will be discussed during policy First Readings discussion.

Mr. Morrison addressed the Board, and advised regarding positive interactions his students are having at BTMES, and reported regarding the success of the recent BTMES Open House.

5.2 Student Voice

None.

6. Faculty/Staff Reports – Reports/Presentations

6.1 Student Assistance Professionals Presentation

A copy of a document titled '2021 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report' was distributed.

PJ LaPerle and Dawn Poitras (Student Assistance Professionals) introduced themselves to the Board and provided brief overviews of their education and experience, as well as their roles within the District, which includes assisting students with the transition to high school. Mr. LaPerle and Ms. Poitras provided an overview of the results of the Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey Report, noting that the data seems to look a bit skewed, noting that the number of responses (lower than usual) causes them to question the validity. Mr. LaPerle advised that he believes there needs to be some incentive to assure that most students complete the survey and answer it as truthfully as possible. It was noted that this is a national survey (created by the CDC) and is taken in every state. Results are not received in a timely fashion, most likely due to schools holding the surveys at different times throughout the year, and that all surveys must be submitted prior to data being compiled. Mr. Boutin suggested that instead of relying on the Federal Government, the District perform its own in-house survey. Mr. LaPerle advised regarding the numerous safety checks built into the current survey. Mrs. Spaulding, noting that her comment is not specific to this survey, advised that for future packets, data not be shared by putting 4 pages of data on one page (the data is too small and can't be read). In response to a query, it was noted that the survey is held every two years. In response to a query, it was acknowledged that receiving data that is 2 years old prevents education from being provided in a timely fashion. Mr. LaPerle and Ms. Poitras advised of the process of reviewing data with students and discussing ways to change behaviors (the group discusses the 'why', students work to find solutions). It was noted that data is contained in a public document (healthvermont.gov). Parents do have the right to opt their students out of taking the survey. The survey is now conducted electronically. In response to a query, Mr. LaPerle advised that he cannot pinpoint highlights (deficits and/or positives) of the data and noted that the data reflects not only what occurs at school, but also community/family issues. Work will be performed to find ways to incentivize students to complete the survey. Ms. Mulvaney advised that many different entities utilize this data to identify ways to make improvements in the communities. Ms. Poitras and Mr. LaPerle were thanked for the important work they perform and for presenting to the Board. It was noted that the survey is given also given to students in grades 6 through 8. Only high school data is being presented this evening. Mr. Boutin suggested that perhaps the Curriculum Committee could assist with developing curriculum to address identified issues. Ms. Poitras advised that teachers within the District use the data to assist with curriculum development. Data from the survey is also used to assist with securing grants. Ms. Poitras and Mr. LaPerle encouraged Board Members to contact them with additional questions or comments.

6.2 Food Service Presentation

A copy of a presentation titled 'BUUSD Food Service Presentation School year 2023-2024' was distributed.

Ashley Young (Assistant Business Manager) introduced herself and advised that Lexington representatives were also in attendance and have provided food for the meeting. Jenn Hutchinson (Manager of Food Programs) is also in attendance. Mr. Hennessey displayed the Power Point Presentation titled 'BUUSD Food Service Presentation School Year 2023-2024'. The presentation included information on; Food Service Financials, the RFP Process for the next FSMC contract (criteria and scoring rubric provided by the AOE), an overview of Ms. Hutchinson's background, the self-operated food service site at the SEA Program, Professional Development and Training, the receipt of the Healthy Meals Incentives Grant (\$146,000), acquisition of new equipment, creation of a 2nd new position (BCEMS Cafeteria Wellness Coordinator), food samples, the Farm to School Institute (a \$5,000 grant and attendance at the Institute), a Farm to School Project Learning Initiative (at SEA), and the Summer Food Service Program (20,000 meals at 9 sites). Ms. Hutchinson answered questions from the Board, including the Food Service Surplus Fund (currently \$1,100,000), rules pertaining to the Fund, current grant funding for the BCEMS Cafeteria Wellness Coordinator, the existence of the Culinary Program at SHS (run by CVCCSD), restructuring of the role of the Nutrition Specialist, future enhancements to food service programs at all schools, confirmation that employees listed in the financial information are BUUSD employees (2 FT, and one ¼ FTE), the cost difference between the SEA Program and programs at other schools (significantly higher), unknown implications of the upcoming food service contract, the length of the lunch period (20 minutes), efforts to increase recycling and composting, the timetable for the

new contract (RFPs created in November, with final approval by the Board in March), the possibility of expanding the Farm to Table program to all schools, and a community query regarding assisting with access to dental care (can be looked into).

Discussion moved to:

Storm Water Mitigation at SHS.

This item is not on the Agenda (information was provided in the addendum), but was not added during Agenda Item 3 – Additions and Deletions to the Agenda.

A document titled ‘Narrative, Location Map, and Soils Map – Spaulding High School Stormwater Treatment Design for 3-Acre Permit’ was distributed. A copy of the design plans from Dubois & King was also distributed.

Mr. Evans provided an overview of discussion at the Facilities Committee and provided a brief overview of the detailed design plans, answered questions from the Board, and advised that Board approval is necessary in order to move forward with the application process. In response to a query from Mrs. Spaulding, it was noted that the Board has already approved submission of applications for BCEMS (permit in hand) and BTMES (permit currently under review by the State). The estimated costs for the SHS project are not known at this time, though it is believed that grant funding will cover approximately 90% of this State mandated work. Mr. Evans provided an overview of the projects planned for BCEMS and BTMES.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board unanimously voted to approve moving forward with submission of the permit application for the SHS Storm Water Mitigation Project.

The Board recessed at 7:56 p.m. and reconvened at 8:03 p.m.

7. Consent Agenda

7.1 Approval of Minutes – September 27, 2023 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board unanimously voted to approve as amended, the Minutes of the July 26, 2023 Regular Meeting.

7.2 Warrant Approvals (09/28/23 and 10/05/23)

Copies of the Warrants were distributed.

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Warrants dated 09/28/23 and 10/05/23.

8. Current Business

8.1 New Hires

The resume and BUUSD Notification of Employment Status Form for Denise O’Neill (BTMES Pre-K), was distributed. Mr. Hennessey provided an overview of the candidate, and answered questions from the Board.

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Denise O’Neill.

8.2 First Reading Volunteers and Work Study Students Policy (B2) Required

A copy of the policy was distributed.

Ms. Parker provided a brief overview of the formatting changes proposed for the policies.

Mrs. Leclerc queried regarding the existence of procedures for policies listed under Agenda Items 8.2 through 8.6. Mrs. Leclerc would like assurance that procedures are being kept up to date and suggested that the Board review amended procedures for changed policies, as well as procedures for existing and new policies (to assure they are accurate and in compliance with statute).

Mr. Cecchinelli advised that he believes the Board just needs to be aware that the procedures exist. Mrs. Leclerc advised that legal counsel has advised that the Board needs to review procedures. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding policy B4 as she believes it is covered by statute. Ms. Parker advised that the VSBA notes indicate that only formatting changes are being made. Mrs. Spaulding noted that sometimes in the past, VSBA has deleted some policies, noting that the policies are covered by statute. Mrs. Spaulding queried regarding some information (on policy C3) that appears to be duplicated. This item will be researched prior to the Second and Final Reading. Mr. Reil reported that he called VSBA regarding this matter and they may discuss removing the policy the next time they review it. Mr. Reil queried regarding Policy C3, pertaining to transportation for out of district students (conflicts with administrative procedures – direction from the Board and decisions by the Superintendent). Mrs. Poulin queried regarding which title will be used for Policy F26, as the policy and the agenda conflict (Electronic Surveillance will be utilized). Mrs. Poulin advised that under the Transportation Policy (C3), the verbiage pertaining to ‘providing transportation to out of district students, as authorized by the Board’, was added to the policy because the District was trying to increase the number of out of district students (tuition paying students) and directed that transportation be provided. Mrs. Poulin is concerned that within that policy (administrative responsibilities D) there is a clause allowing the superintendent to, based on enrollment on August 1st, decide whether or not transportation will be

provided to out of district students. Mrs. Poulin advised that this presents a problem, because some students may have chosen SHS because transportation is provided, and to yank transportation less than one month before school starts (which happened last year), leaves a really bad taste in the mouths of sending districts and is perceived as a 'bait and switch'. Mrs. Poulin advised regarding previous discussion relating to the millions of dollars of lost revenue that occurred when other districts started providing transportation and students migrated to those schools. Mrs. Poulin believes the District should be more aggressive in recruiting out of district students. Mrs. Poulin is uncomfortable that the District would offer transportation, and then pull it back at the last minute. Additionally, Mrs. Poulin reminded the Board that in February 2022, legal counsel advised that the Board needs to review all procedures, know that they align with statute, and that they are being adhered to. Mrs. Poulin finds it concerning that since that advice from counsel; the Board has not reviewed even one procedure. Mrs. Poulin would like VSBA to reconsider the rescinding of policies that are covered by statute, noting that not all administrators, staff members, or parents, know all of the statutes and when they are revised, and without policies in place, there may be unintended violations of statute. Mrs. Leclerc noted that the legally required procedures for policies F3 and F4, are not on the web site and have not been reviewed by the Board. Mrs. Leclerc believes reviewing the procedures for these policies, would be a great place to start the process of Board review of procedures. Mr. Boutin queried regarding whether or not the Board was going to 'pull back' the approval of the Transportation policy. It was noted that this is only the First Reading of the policy and it can be discussed further before adoption.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Readings of the following policies; Volunteers and Work Study Students Policy (B2), Drug and Alcohol Testing of Transportation Employees Policy (B4), Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7), Transportation Policy (C3), and Electronic Surveillance Policy (F26).

8.3 First Reading Drug and Alcohol Testing of Transportation Employees Policy (B4) Required

A copy of the policy was distributed.

See discussion and vote under Agenda Item 8.2.

8.4 First Reading Tobacco Prohibition Policy (B7) Required

A copy of the policy was distributed.

See discussion and vote under Agenda Item 8.2.

8.5 First Reading Transportation Policy (C3) Required

A copy of the policy was distributed.

See discussion and vote under Agenda Item 8.2.

8.6 First Reading Security Cameras Policy (F26) Recommended

A copy of the policy titled Electronic Surveillance was distributed.

See discussion and vote under Agenda Item 8.2.

8.7 Report to Board on The Generator, STEAM, and Work Based Learning

Mr. Malone addressed the Board and provided information regarding a recent visit to The Generator. Mr. Malone and Ms. LaFrancis met with various administrators. Mr. Malone believes it is critical that these opportunities (The Generator, STEAM, and WBL) continue to be provided to students, advising of the benefits of working with these companies. Mr. Malone advised regarding a number of students who benefited greatly from these opportunities. These opportunities also assist students with qualifying for SHS scholarships. Mr. Moore provided additional information regarding utilization of The Generator, including information on student a student lead project and other opportunities offered at The Generator. Additionally, Mr. Malone advised regarding substantial monetary awards for students as well as other benefits of the Work Based Learning Program (including career paths). Mr. Malone advised regarding a number of community partners. Mr. Boutin departed the meeting at 8:34 p.m. Ms. LaFrancis was lauded for her efforts implementing and overseeing these successful programs.

8.8 Warrants – Online Document Storage

Mrs. Leclerc advised she wishes to entertain the concept of electronic storage, which saves paper, paper handling, improves efficiency, and provides easy access to data. Mrs. Leclerc advised that with some of the warrants, the detail is not available (online) and needs to be manually researched. Mrs. Leclerc reiterated her request that utilizing electronic storage be investigated.

Mrs. Spaulding believes electronic storage would be very beneficial, and suggested that this matter be discussed at a Finance Committee meeting. Mr. Malone reported on how the Town Of Barre utilizes electronic storage. Additionally, Mr. Malone advised that electronic storage would mitigate the issue of damage to documents (water damage, etc.). Mr. Boutin rejoined the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

9. Old Business

9.1 VSBA Resolutions and Appointment of Voting Delegate and Alternate Voting Delegate

A document titled '2023 – 2024 VSBA Resolutions Report to the Membership' was distributed. The document includes a summary of resolutions as well as detail and recommendations for each resolution.

The Board agreed to discuss each resolution prior to voting. Brief discussion was held for each resolution and the voting is as follows;

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, not to pass Resolution #1 (Elimination of the Requirement of Federal Grant Assessment for Vermont School Districts).

On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, not to pass Resolution #2 (Use of Surplus Education Funds).

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, not to pass Resolution #3 (Collaboration to Benefit all Students).

On a motion by Mr. Malone, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, not to pass Resolution #4 (Non-Residential Tax Rate Equal to Homestead Tax Rate).

On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 7 to 1 to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #5 (Non-Residential Tax Rate Equal to Homestead Tax Rate).

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

On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Board voted 6 to 2 to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #6 (Flavored Tobacco Products).

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 5 to 3 to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #7 (Separation of Church and State).

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 5 to 2 to accept the recommendation of the VSBA Board, to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #8 (Restraint and Seclusion).

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 5 to 3 to accept the recommendation of the VSBA, Board, to pass as a Regular Resolution, Resolution #9 (Remote School Board Meetings).

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Parker, the Board voted 5 to 3 to accept the VSBA Committee and Board recommendation to delete Resolutions I.C. and I.J., and to amend Resolutions II.N1, III.D., and III.E., as presented.

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

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Moore, the Board voted 7 to 1 to accept the VSBA Committee and Board recommendation to delete Resolution II.S., to amend Resolution I.L., as presented, and to continue Resolutions; I.M., I.O., I.P., II.E., II.F., II.O., II.T., III.J., AND V.E.

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

Mr. Reil voted against the motion.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to appoint Mrs. Leclerc as the voting delegate for the Barre Unified Union School District, at the VSBA 2022 Annual Meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Boutin, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board voted 7 to 1 to appoint Mrs. Spaulding as the alternate voting delegate for the Barre Unified Union School District, at the VSBA 2022 Annual Meeting.

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

Brief discussion was held and it was agreed that the voting delegate(s) agree to vote as the Board voted.

9.2 Consolidation of Buildings (Articles 3 & 4)

Mr. Hennessey advised that the opinion conveyed to the Board from legal counsel has been shared with the Board via e-mail. Mr. Cecchinelli advised that any advice from legal counsel is privileged information, and once shared in public, attorney / client privilege is nullified. Mr. Hennessey advised that the proposal to bring Articles 3 and 4 to the community needs to happen (Amend Article 4, reconfigure Article 3). The biggest concern going forward is that this is a very political issue and much work would need to be done prior to the March vote. Any vote in March 2024 does not change the schools in any way, but asks to change the way in which planning for changes can occur. Lengthy discussion was held including; a request for identification of a time-line (with benchmarks), confirmation that school reconfiguration can be discussed with the current Articles in place, concern that there is not enough time to thoughtfully plan and present Article changes in March 2024, the enormous political effort involved, administrative support for discussing consolidation, the thought that it is irresponsible to rush this issue to a vote, the loss of over \$5,000,000 by not consolidating voluntarily (under Act 46 – the City supported consolidation, the Town did not), concern that Article changes will be a ‘big sell’, the need to identify the benefits of consolidation and answer questions from the community, a belief that changing the Articles would pass, the importance of providing equity to all students, confirmation that to change the Articles requires of majority of the voters within the BUUSD (BC and BT combined), a belief that research needs to be performed prior to presenting any changes to voters, a reminder that consolidation of middle school sports will be discussed at the next meeting, concern by a community member that there is no information in the packet regarding this matter, confirmation that Consolidation of Buildings is a standing agenda item that will be discussed once per month and that Committees will begin discussing the impacts to their specified areas (facilities, finance, etc.), a belief that community members will support doing what is right, and reiterated concern from a community member, that no information is included in the packet and though other previous meetings may have had documentation, that does nothing to assist community members attending this evening (who were not present during earlier discussions).

10. Future Agenda Items

A request that when Consolidation of Buildings is on the Agenda, it be placed much earlier in the Agenda (meeting).

It was noted that Mr. Moore should submit a written resignation.

It was noted that items requested at the last meeting were not on this evening’s agenda and were not added to the Parking Lot. It was requested that those items be added to the Parking Lot. Ms. Reynolds briefly advised regarding upcoming legislation that will go into effect in July 2025 (Parking Lot item D).

October 25, 2023 Meeting:

- Interview Process for Open Barre City Board Seat
- Board Chair Not Communicating or Responding to Certain Board Members
- Electronic Storage of Documents
- F3 and F4 Procedures (or a date when they will be available)
- Second and Final Readings
- Executive Session for a Personnel Matter

November 8, 2023 Meeting:

- Enrollment/Home Study Quarterly Report

11. Next Meeting Date

Wednesday, October 25, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Spaulding High School Library and via Video Conference (Google Meet).

12. Executive Session as Needed

Mr. Cecchinelli advised there was a personnel matter to discuss in Executive Session. It was suggested that this item be postponed (given the late hour and that this item was not warned). The Board agreed to put this item on the next Agenda

13. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Malone, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 10:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Poulin