

**BARRE UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
March 18, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sonya Spaulding (BC) – Chair  
Emily Reynolds (BT) – Vice Chair  
Catherine Whalen (BT)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**OTHER BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Garrett Grant (BC)  
Michael Boutin (BC)

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent (arrived at 6:32 pm)  
Jamie Evans, Facilities Director  
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager  
Karen Fredericks, Director of Curriculum  
Luke Aither, SHS Principal  
Brenda Waterhouse, BCEMS Principal  
Erica Pearson, BTMES Co-Principal  
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services  
Reed McCracken, Administrator SEA  
Mari Goodridge Miller, SHS Principal  
Rebecca Busker, SHS Principal  
Ted Mills, BTMES Asst. Principal  
Kristin Morrison, BCEMS Asst. Principal  
Melissa Greenwood, BCEMS Asst Principal

**PUBLIC MEMBERS PRESENT:**

David Delcore, Time Argus	Sarah Pregent	Bern Rose	Rachel Van Vliet	Chris Parker
Jodi Bushway	Billie Corrette	Jackie Wheeler	Jan Trepanier	Merrin Rousseau
Eirene Mavodones	Lori Bernier			

**1. Call to Order**

**The Director of Curriculum, Mrs. Fredericks called the Monday, March 18, 2024 BUUSD Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., which was held at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.**

**2. Organize**

**Nominations for Sonya Spaulding for Committee Chair made by Ms. Reynolds, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding. Nomination approved unanimously.**

**Nomination for Emily Reynolds for Committee Vice Chair made by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Whalen. Nomination approved unanimously.**

**3. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda**

None

**Motion to approve the agenda by Ms. Reynolds, seconded by Mrs. Whalen. Motion approved unanimously.**

**4. Public Comment**

None.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

Two sets of draft minutes were handed out for November 13, 2023 and January 4, 2024

**Motion to approve the minutes from November 13, 2023 and January 4, 2024 by Ms. Reynolds, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding.**

**Motion approved by Ms. Reynolds and Mrs. Spaulding; Mrs. Whalen abstained.**

## **6. New Business**

### **6.1 Review Annual (Monthly) Agenda Items**

Document handed out titled "BUUSD Finance Committee Monthly Agenda Items, Updated 3/18/24".

Mrs. Perreault, Business Manager, explained the document and its purpose. By month list of important agenda items this committee would discuss so nothing is forgotten. No additional discussion.

### **6.2 FY25 Budget Development for Revote**

Document handed out titled "Budget Modeling-Priorities-Updated 3/15/24".

Mrs. Perreault, Business Manager indicated one modification to line 16. Two Assistant Special Ed Directors were entered on line 16 and line 24. Should not be two. Outplacement General Ed moved into line 16. Above reductions are calculations which get to the tax rate. We are still using the \$9,775 yield. This number will be finalized after the legislative session and will likely go a little higher due to reductions in budgets. Position clarification, open or newly added? Tech Center tuition reduction is based on the actual announced actual tuition that came out after we developed our budget. January 15th we're required to submit our announced tuition to all of the sending districts and Jody came and presented the budget for CVCC to the Barre Board she used \$19,423 for their tuition. It was announced at \$18,901 so the adjustment was made to that line along with other minor adjustments of our students who go to the Tech Center resulting in a savings. Spaulding High School Behavior Interventionist is a vacant position. The leased vehicles, there were two added to the budget. This is a reduction in one of them. Director's Phase 2 increase on the metric, contentious thing that's been out there. We developed a salary metric for administrators, principals, and the directors 3 years ago due to inequitable salaries. Principals received increases to be put on the metric. Directors were being put on the metric in a phased in approach of 3 years. When you're seeing increases in the director's salaries that's why. We're in phase 2 and without that we're farther away from the metric than we were hoping to be. Second electrician is a new position. We obviously could benefit from a second electrician but we know it's one of the things we are reducing. Spaulding High School SRO, position not filled. The Barre City Police department is having a really hard time with staffing. SEA Barn contracted service was added to ask an architect to do a design of improvements to the barn so we could use it and have students in the barn safely. The Grant Writer, we have a Grant Coordinator now and we were hoping to elevate that position and have somebody be able to reach out and get grants to support an after school program and other things to help our district. Facilities, across the district, have a construction line in each of the buildings at \$1 per square foot. We often go to this when cuts are needed as our buildings are in very good shape, well maintained but they're getting older. We really wanted to keep \$1 per square foot but it's an area that we reduced. SEA teacher is a vacant position, a new position actually so we are reducing that. Barre City and Barre Town Elementary Co-Curricular, that's their athletics and their clubs. In terms of athletics we do have BYSA. The Barre Town and Barre City SRO will be reduced. Set up in two tiers. First tier is \$305,095 to 11%. I just went through 1-14 and that is \$825,045 and that is a 10% increase over last year. Moving along which we hoped to not have to get to further cuts we've got a change to the Barre Town Principal model which would be one principal and two assistant principals. Currently the Barre Town Principal model is two principals and one assistant principal, estimating about \$25,000 reduction if the model changed. Barre City outplacement is a student placed out of district. The HHB Coordinator student support is a new position (Barre City has it, Barre Town doesn't and it is being absorbed by the administrators). Spaulding High School supplies and field trips are a reduction. One Special Educator is a new position in the budget and travel and conference district wide. That is a total of 1,253,645 that brings you to a 9% decrease. Barre City Elementary K-8 Cares Program - \$350,000 was intended to be a classroom teacher, behavior specialist, a BI with a BI Level II which is a student support specialist and two paras. It's staffing to expand the program so this is an expansion. We currently have 22 students we meet and we have a number of students that are already waitlisted and other needs that keep coming to us regularly so we were hoping to expand the program because we're finding a great deal of success with it. Line 22 was a duplicate assistant special ed director. Line 23 Assistant Special Ed Director, Line 24 is the potential of freezing all principals and director's salaries currently. That's at a 5% increase but to freeze that it'd be 105,564. Bus riders we currently have monitors on our buses and we budget 150 and typically spend more than that. Two FTE PreK Para-Educators and two PreK teachers which is actually 4 classes. All of these are very heavy hits for the district. Two clerical positions for the Central Office. One FTE Curriculum Coordinator and three Tech Integrationists and that would be for 6.5%. Conversation went around the room for questions or comments. Ms. Reynolds would recommend cutting the first 7 lines (tier 1) with some tweeks to recommend an 11%. Ms. Whalen would prefer a fine tooth comb review of the other budget lines because it needs to go lower than 11%. Mrs. Perreault made a recommendation to bring options to the Board with an 11% and a 10% option.. Mrs. Spaulding felt this was helpful for them and the community to understand what we're looking at and I appreciate all the work you've done to get to this point because I know none of it is easy to decide what you can let go of and what needs to stay. The committee was unable to provide a recommendation to the Board with just 3 members of a 9 member board without the other members weighing in. Decisions will be made by the full board.

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1 FY24 Revenue/Expense**

A document titled FY24 Expense/Revenue Summary Report – 03/18/24 was distributed.

A document titled BUUSD GF Finance Expense Report by Function (dated 02/29/24) was distributed.

Mrs. Perreault advised there's columns with year-to-date expenses and a year-end projection column. We are anticipating a surplus at the end of the year of \$680,000. As we get further into the year we are able to fine tune that. Questions? Speak to reason why we have, especially for the narratives for the unspent salary benefits and those sorts of things for surplus or deficit. Are those unfilled positions? It certainly is unfilled positions, new teachers who replace veteran teachers, there's a salary difference up to \$40,000. Benefits change if a teacher took benefits but the new teacher doesn't. That can change the salary benefit differential. Mrs. Spaulding asked, What's the bulk of the surplus because the way that I'm reading this it looks like it's the census line 120 census based grant change and special education? Mrs. Perreault explained that we are receiving more extraordinary revenue and that is because we budgeted a certain amount and calculated a certain amount but with Act 173 there's a new formula and it allows more reimbursement for those extraordinary students and those are students who are eligible for special education whose expenses exceed \$60,000. Anything above and beyond the \$60,000 we are reimbursed 95%. Ms. Reynolds asked about projected surplus, as we get closer to the year, you'll have a better understanding of what that number actually means and is, right? Mrs. Perreault agreed. Ms. Reynolds continued, With the surplus money does that go into our tax stabilization? Do we put it on the ballot to decide what the voters decide they would like the board to do? Mrs Perreault agreed they could choose to put the entire amount in Capital Reserve Funds or they could transfer it into your tax stabilization fund or do nothing and it would just stay in your general fund. Clarification was made that this number would not go on the re vote as those articles passed on the first vote. This surplus is for the fund balance which would go next year.

#### **8. Items for Future Agendas**

- Items from Monthly Agenda Document
- FY25 Budget Revote/Communication / Questions
- FY24 Expenses/Revenue

#### **9. Next Meeting Date**

The next meeting is Monday, April 15, 2024 at 6:00 p.m., at the Spaulding High School Library and via video conference.

#### **10. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Whalen, seconded by Ms. Reynolds, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn at 7:49 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

*Tina Gilbert*