

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

Spaulding High School Library and Via Video Conference – Google Meet  
May 29, 2024 - 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Michael Boutin (BC) – Chair  
Giuliano Cecchinelli II (BC) - Vice Chair  
Sonya Spaulding (BC)- Clerk  
Nancy Leclerc (At-Large)  
Emily Reynolds (BT)  
Terry Reil (BT)  
Garrett Grant (BC)  
Alice Farrell (BT)  
Catherine Whalen (BT)

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

**ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:**

Chris Hennessey, Superintendent  
Karen Fredericks, Director of Curriculum  
Melissa Greenwood, Asst Principal BCEMS  
Carol Marold, Director of Human Resources  
Reed McCracken, Administrator SEA  
Ted Mills, Asst. Principal BTMES  
Jen Nye, Co-Principal BTMES  
Erica Pearson, Co-Principal BTMES  
Brenda Waterhouse, Principal BCEMS  
Rebekah Mortensen, Assistant Special Services Director  
Ashley Young, Asst. Business Manager  
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services  
Jamie Evans, Director of Facilities

**GUESTS PRESENT:**

David Delcore (Times Argus)	Sarah Attig	Marc Bernier	Martha Blaisdell	Carrie Blodgett
Mary Bowers	Jude Brister	Julie Burns	Randi Collins	Cassandra Demarais
Erika Dolan	Nora Duane	Kirsten Evans	Lisa Felch	Kristin Gilbar
Miranda Green	Darby Hiebert	Sarah Hill	Josh Howard	Sharon Jacobs
Stacie Jacques	Colleen Kresco	Jennifer Leedy	Colleen LeFebvre	Ella Lyford
Prudence Krasofski	Ben Matthews	Jessica Maurais	Denise Maurice	Topper McFaun
Joan McMahon	Carey Miller	Karen Moran	Joelen Mulvaney	Christie Omodeo
Laura Ortiz	Christine Parker	Victoria Pompei	Merrin Rousseau	Tim Sanborn
Wendy Sell	Lara Slesar	Shellie Stevens	Steven Thompson	Susan Thompson
Rhonda Thygesen	Jan Trepanier	Rachel Van Vliet	Linsey Wells	Michael Whalen
Jackie Wheeler	Jasmine Wimble	Jan Zemba	Jordan	Lori Bernier
Mary Ann Ritchie	Hale Ritchie	Reagan Welch	Brodey Priddy	Brianna Pace
Peter Anthony	Paul Malone	Bern Rose	Adam Coburn	Jen Hutchinson

**1. Call to Order**

The Chair, Mr. Boutin called the Wednesday, May 29, 2024, 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.

Jen Hutchinson, Manager of Food Programs for the district was welcomed by the chair and she introduced guests Jason and Reagan from Genuine Foods, the new Food Service Management Company. They provided snacks for the meeting.

**3. Additions and/or Deletions with Motion to Approve the Agenda**

Add Budget Survey Results under Current Business 6.1

Add two contract update items 1 VSA 313 (a)(1)(a) and a student matter VSA 313 a (7) under Executive Session

Move 5.5 through 5.8 out of Consent Agenda and put under Current Business becoming 6.2-6.5

**Motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, to approve the agenda with amendments, motion passed unanimously.**

#### **4. Comments for Items Not on the Agenda**

##### **4.1 Public Comment**

Bernadette Rose - June 3rd there's an art show at Spaulding High School as well as Jazz Band and Choral concerts. Barre City parade tomorrow morning at 11:00ish. Thanks to Bobby Booth for organizing.

Mr. Hennessey - In the auditorium tonight is the annual scholarship night; \$700,000 in scholarships to Spaulding students going out.

##### **4.2 Student Voice**

None

#### **5. Consent Agenda**

##### **5.1 Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes - May 8, 2024 and May 22, 2024**

Mrs. Spaulding referenced May 8th minutes, second to last page says Mrs. Farrell made a motion to exit executive session, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc and the motion passed unanimously but the motion did not pass unanimously. Remove the motion passed unanimously because the vote is actually recorded after the discussion.

##### **5.2 Approval of Special Meeting Minutes - May 13, 2024 and May 20, 2024**

##### **5.3 Warrant Approval: May 2, May 9, May 16, and May 23, 2024**

##### **5.4 Approval of New Hires**

Mr. Hennessey reviewed all candidates. Zachary Charboneau - new Special Educator in our Lifeskills Program at Spaulding High School coming from the New School in Montpelier; long term Behavior Specialist there and enrolled in UVM Master's program in Special Education. Kristin Harris - new BC Elementary Music Teacher spent the last 3 years teaching music at Fair Haven Middle High School. Family is moving closer to this area. Hanna Keenan - new Counselor at BC with tons of years of experience working with at risk students at Bellcate School and at Howard Center. Ella Lyford - new Kindergarten Teacher at BT, just finished her student teaching at East Montpelier Elementary and is a recent graduate of Colby Sawyer. Mr. Hennessey assured they are all eligible for licensure.

##### **~~5.5 Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Approval (moved under #6 Current Business as 6.2)~~**

##### **~~5.6 Food Service Management Company Contract Renewal (moved under #6 Current Business as 6.3)~~**

##### **~~5.7 BUUSD Copier Proposal Approval (moved under #6 Current Business as 6.4)~~**

##### **~~5.8 SHS Underground Heating Line Recommendation Approval (move under #6 Current Business as 6.5)~~**

**On a motion by Mrs. Leclerc, seconded by Mr. Grant to approve the consent agenda, motion passed unanimously with the modification stated by Mrs. Spaulding.**

**On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Ms. Reynolds to amend the original motion amending the May 8, 2024 regular meeting minutes, motion passed unanimously.**

#### **6. Current Business**

##### **6.1 Budget Survey**

Ms. Reynolds thanked Mr. Hennessey and Mrs. Fredericks for getting this survey out so quickly. She also thanks everyone who participated. There were 265 responses, 20 less than the last survey. Acknowledged there were some difficulties with the survey and things weren't perfect. Majority of the responses were from parents, guardians, and grandparents. The next highest group was community members. Finding information about the budget was informative, 6% of respondents did not find any budget info. We could do better to make sure everyone is able to access information. Part regarding how people voted, concerning feedback was that people were reluctant to tell how they voted because they were afraid of retaliation from Board members. Ms. Reynolds reiterated the survey is completely anonymous. Some comments addressed barriers to voting - intimidated to vote in person, not having childcare, and appreciation for line by line work done and they felt confident about the Board. Last part was a lot of comments about property taxes for people who voted against the budget which is very fair and concerning. Majority of responses favored June 11th revote as well as many feeling either June 11 or 18th would work but the sooner the better. A lot of responses about board behavior. Ms. Reynolds hopes the survey was informative to Board members and can be used to further discussion around budget development now and in the future.

Mrs. Farrell shared feedback she received and many felt shutout because they didn't have Google accounts and being barred from continuing through the survey if you refused to answer any questions, it automatically cut you out of the survey. Some inequity for individuals who don't have internet access or Google accounts. Many people didn't realize the survey was out there as it went out quickly and went down quickly. Mr. Reil apologized to all the community members who weren't able to do it because he received

several calls about not being able to access it. Mr. Grant wonders, since this work begins in October, how the board can do more work to make awareness that started in October. Mrs. Spaulding read through all the comments and also heard from some people that were concerned they couldn't get in and she apologizes for that as well. She feels, to Mr. Grant's point, that the Board needs to do a better job of getting information out. Many concerns were not factual and wanted to make sure information is getting out and people are understanding where to get information they can trust.

## **6.2 Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) Approval**

Mrs. Fredericks, Director of Curriculum shared background information. Worked with a team of educators and community members over the course of February and March to develop and analyze data to come up with goals that would help our district make progress in the areas of safe and healthy schools and academic achievement. There are district wide goals that have a number of change ideas, measures and related resources. Building leaders work with their building based teams to develop the change ideas. The district is seeking approval for this plan, its grant related and required.

**Mrs. Spaulding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Grant to approve the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), motion passed unanimously.**

Mrs. Farrell mentioned the document has revised February 7, 2022 on it and the date needs to be changed. Mrs. Fredericks stated it's the agency template and confirmed the BUUSD plan was revised February 2024.

## **6.3 Food Service Management Company Contract Renewal**

**Mrs. Spaulding made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc to approve Genuine Foods which is the low bid, motion passed unanimously.**

## **6.4 BUUSD Copier Proposal Approval**

**Mrs. Spaulding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli to approve VisualEdgeIT (OSV) which is the low bid, motion passed unanimously.**

This is in the FY25 budget and has everything the district needs. Mrs. Perreault explained OSV is the current vendor and they've been excellent to work with, very responsive, and local.

## **6.5 Spaulding High School Underground Heating Lines Recommendation Approval**

**Mrs. Spaulding made a motion, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli to approve A. Cooper Mechanical, Inc which is the low bid, motion passed unanimously.**

Funding is coming from the Capital Reserve Fund, FY25. Mr. Evans shared it's an unplanned expense. Original lines installed in 1967 and they're leaking. It's straight water, no contamination, and repaving is included in the bid.

Mrs. Leclerc asked if the dollar amounts provided for the assessment report of the Central Office were included in FY25?

**Ms. Reynolds called Point of Order.** Getting off topic.

## **7. Old Business**

### **7.1 FY25 Budget Discussion/Set Date & Approval**

**Motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, to approve the budget for \$57,686,445, Long-Term Weighted Pupil Spending of \$11,273, motion passed 5 to 4**

**Mr. Cecchinelli, Mrs. Spaulding, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Grant and Mr. Boutin - Approved the motion.**

**Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Reil, Mrs. Whalen, and Mrs. Farrell voted against the motion.**

**Motion made by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Cecchinelli, to amend the original motion to increase the BT Teacher Co-Curricular line from \$55,000 to \$100,000, increase the BT Contracted Services line from \$5,500 to \$7,000, increase BT Supply line from \$2,000 to \$3,000, Sub Wages for SHS General Instruction line currently budgeted at \$146,892.70 increase to \$185,000, increase Supply line for BC Intervention from \$461 to \$1,500, increase Co-Curricular BC Contracted Services from \$5,000 to \$7,500, increase graduation for BC Principal's Office from \$400 to \$1,500, increase Special Ed Instruction Teacher Tuition from \$40,000 to \$85,000, increase Teacher Tuition for ECSE Special Ed Instruction which is zeroed out to \$4,000, Supplies for SHS General Instruction is at \$4,000 and it should be \$10,000, Technology Communication line is currently at \$50,000 and increase to \$58,000, Electricity at SEA is non-reimbursable is currently at \$20,000 increase to \$30,000, include \$3,000 for the Design Lab at BT, and reinstate all Travel and Conference which is a total of \$62,100. Amount to add back in is \$230,596.30. Postage at BC Principal's Office is currently at \$4,750 increasing to \$7,000. Previous cuts equal \$703,487 deducting the items listed makes the reduction \$472,890 for an overall total budget of \$57,686,445. Overall General Fund total expenses to 9.21% and Educational Spending at 5.31%, motion passed 6 to 2, Mr. Reil and Mrs. Leclerc voted against the motion**

Questions about adding overspent lines, are we also deducting for underspent lines? Teacher Tuition increases - significant number of Provisional and Emergency licenses this year - equal number requiring that amount of increase? Clarified Special Ed tuition only not all tuition lines. Unfilled positions questioned and administrators from each building provided unfilled and new positions for each of their buildings.

The Homestead Property Tax rate will be 3 cent increase for Barre City and 5 cent increase for Barre Town.

Setting the date: June 11th or June 18th; BOR is not available for voting on June 11th and 18th is better for absentee ballots.

**Motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mr. Grant, to approve the Warning of the BUUSD for June 18th at the Barre City Municipal Auditorium. The School Board will expend \$57,686,445 with Long Term Weighted Average Daily Membership of \$11,273. Informational meeting held at the regular board meeting on Wednesday, June 12th at 6:00 p.m., motion passed 5 to 4**

**Mr. Cecchinelli, Mrs. Spaulding, Ms. Reynolds, Mr. Grant and Mr. Boutin - Approved the motion.**

**Mrs. Leclerc, Mr. Reil, Mrs. Whalen, and Mrs. Farrell voted against the motion.**

## **8. Round Table**

- Mrs. Whalen shared from Calvin Coolidge for his inaugural address March 4, 1925, "I favor the policy of economy not because I wish to save money but because I wish to save people. The men and women of this country who toil are the ones who bear the cost of government. Every dollar we carelessly waste means their life will be so much more than eager. Every dollar that we prudently save means that their life will be so much the more abundant. Economy is idealism in its most practical form".
- Mrs. Farrell shared we are celebrating Memorial Day tomorrow and it's extremely important that individuals recognize why that is such and take part in the celebration for those folks.
- Mr. Boutin shared, someone made a bet to a reporter, she couldn't get more than two words out of Calvin Coolidge and she took that bet. She went up to Calvin and explained the situation and he turned to her and said, "you lose". It's a funny story from Mr. Gingras.

## **9. Future Agenda Items**

None

## **10. Next Meeting Dates**

June 12, 2024, 6:00 p.m. at Spaulding High School and via Google Meet. Will include the Informational Meeting.

June 26, 2024, 6:00 p.m. at Spaulding High School and via Google Meet.

## **11. Executive Session**

**11.1 ~~Personnel 1 VSA 313 (a)(4) Evaluation of a public officer~~ (removed at beginning of item discussion)**

**11.2 Contract 1 VSA 313 (a)(1)(a)**

**11.3 Contract 1 VSA 313 (a)(1)(a)**

**11.4 Student Matter 1 VSA 313 (a)(7)**

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

**Mrs. Spaulding made a motion to enter into executive session inviting the Superintendent at 7:30 p.m., seconded by Ms. Reynolds, motion passed unanimously.**

**Mrs. Farrell made a motion to exit executive session at 8:19 p.m., seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, motion passed unanimously.**

## **12. Adjournment**

**On a motion by Mrs. Farrell, seconded by Mrs. Leclerc, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:19 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Tina Gilbert*