



**BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Board of Education Meeting Minutes**  
**Board Room**  
**Monday, January 13, 2020**

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**PRESENT** R. Atwater, M. Clemens-Harris, H. Ecker, C. Gancasz, L. Mead, J. Sweeney, V. Voss

**EXCUSED** None

**ALSO**

**PRESENT** J. Reimer, M. Carter, M. Eadie, C. Heiligenthaler, M. Kramer  
Public: 9

**CALL TO  
ORDER**

President Atwater welcomed everyone to the first meeting of 2020 and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge to the Flag was given.

**APPROVE  
AGENDA**

There being no changes recommended to the agenda, a motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**ACCEPT  
MINUTES**

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mrs. Ecker, to accept the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting dated December 16, 2019 as presented.

Yes: 7, No: 0  
Motion carried.

**PUBLIC  
FORUM**

Mrs. Amy Dewart of Barker stated she saw the agenda which had listed that the Board was being asked to take action on a solar project. She stated her concern about the solar project contract, noting she was a multigenerational family of Barker, and the appearance of a solar field is aesthetically disturbing. She said she has done research about solar projects and noted it damages the ground it is on, takes a large amount of land for a small amount of energy that is produced, and wondered if the District had a projection of the amount of energy/benefit to be received by the project. She also stated that when solar panels expire, there are only two locations in the country to dispose of them. One site is full and the other



nearing capacity according to Mrs. Dewart. She questioned, what will happen then. She commented that this is an agricultural area and it will be ruined forever, and also that we don't know what is to come in the future and can't go back. She used the example and stated how happy Royalton–Hartland was to have FMC next door to the school, and now it is now cleaning it up. She questioned what harm will it do to the land, students, and staff. She noted the solar project would also reduce the land available for the community and students' use, and that it being near the soccer fields, the location would cause two fields not to be used and is an injustice. She stated that she believed all the Board members had children that played on these fields, as did her daughters. She is very concerned about the solar project and recommended that the Board take serious thought before moving forward with the contract.

## PRESENTATIONS

### Principal's Update

Mr. Carter provided an update on the graduation cords with regard to the inquiry about recognition of Advanced Regents diplomas. The Advanced Regents will be included in the academic cord category. Based on the feedback received from various schools, employees and students, there will be four different recognition cords. They will not be listed after each graduate but rather a summary as part of the program describing why the individuals have the different cords. The categories will be: (1.) Top Ten; (2.) National Technical Honor Society; (3.) Academic Cord; (4.) Extracurricular/Community. Mr. Carter noted that information will be provided to the Seniors during their government/economics classes.

Mr. Carter stated there is a lot of positive activity ongoing all over the Barker campus and provided examples.

Mr. Carter noted that he reviewed with the Leadership Team before break possible changes to the student class and government election process to make sure the students are running for the positions for the right reason. He will provide an update as more is finalized.

New Directions is the outside counseling agency working with the District. The school counselors have been making referrals over to New Directions and their counselors have begun meeting with students and/or their families and utilizing the old Pre-K wing rooms.

Mr. Carter noted that the process to converting the report cards for Pre-K – 6 over to a standards-based grading format for the 2020-2021 school year continues. Dr. Kramer will also be providing a more in-depth session starting tomorrow as part of the staff's professional development.



Mr. Carter discussed one initiative that is part of the ongoing focus on campus of character education and building. In the elementary school, a student from each grade is selected who demonstrates on a regular basis a particular positive character trait designated each month from the acronym HARD WORKER. December's trait is Dependable. January will focus on the trait Witty. The description of that trait is a student who is clever and funny, says quick, little funny remarks that are delivered in a playful manner.

Building off character education, Mr. Cater reported that the school was able to help approximately twenty families this holiday through generous donations of staff, students and the community. Mr. Rogers is also working with various students who are going through different personal/family matters, who may need extra support too. Mr. Carter then noted that if you noticed a lot of orange colors in the Elementary wing, it was to welcome back Ms. Bisland who has returned to work. She and Mrs. Atwater are working together during the transition period which is going very well. He complimented Mrs. Atwater for all she has done to assist with the class year to date. He also noted that after 55 years of service to the District, Madeline Chenez is planning on putting away her scissors, stapler and white-out for good. He invited the Board to attend a recognition celebration for Mrs. Chenez on Friday, January 17 at 2:30 p.m.

#### Curriculum Update

Dr. Kramer provided an update on two grants applied for last week which, if awarded, would provide a combination oven and warming cart(s) to the school for the cafeteria. She also has been working on a Lions' Club grant that, if awarded, would replace 3 – 4 convection ovens in the cafeteria that are over 20 years old.

On February 6, 2020, Dr. Kramer will hold another two-hour Professional Development (PD) session that is developed and will build off the prior to PD events. The staff has been asked to pick a topic to work on based off the Danielson Rubric.

On March 20, 2020 there will be a full PD day based on the new standards which have been worked on at all the faculty meetings year to date. The staff will work on priorities, unit themes and outlines. She noted that the new ELA and Math standards are to be fully implemented next year; Science this year; and Social Studies a few years ago. With regard to the Math standards in particular, Pre-K – 2 is being implemented this year, 3 – 8 next year, and 9 – 12 on a rolling schedule.

#### Financial Update/Initial Rollover Budget

Ms. Heiligenthaler distributed and reviewed the budget summary for the 2019 – 2020 school year and projected expenditures. She noted what each column represented: (1.) actual 2018 – 2019 expenses; (2.) budget for 2019 – 2020; (3.) projected year-end 2019 – 2020; and (4.) unexpended funds from 2019 – 2020



budget. The expenses for 2019 – 2020 are projected to be \$538,630 higher than the prior year. She noted that in 2018 – 2019, there was an ongoing \$300,000 expense in the health insurance lines as a reserve which removed, adjusting for that variance, the actual expenses for 2018 – 2019 would be closer to \$16,500,000, the difference between this year and prior would then be approximately \$238,630. Transportation costs increased approximately \$315,000.

She then reviewed the initial rollover budget for 2020 – 2021. General Support increased 1.27%; Instructional increased 1.54%; Transportation is projected to increase 1.86%; Community Services remained flat, and Undistributed increased 1.64%. The proposed budget overall is 1.56% over last year's budget of \$17,272,346. Most increases in expense are due to salary and benefit increases as per the contracts.

With regard to other items impacting the Undistributed category, the District paid off a bond this year for \$225,825. TRS is projected to increase from 8.86% this year to between 9.25% - 10.25% next year. For budget purposes, 10% was used for TRS projections. In addition, a 7.5% increase for health insurance premiums was projected. She commented that Administration continues to look at what it can adjust and what it is unable to adjust. Ms. Heiligenthaler reviewed additional line items impacting the budget projections, noting the reasons for a larger change in a line item such as the 10.38% increase in the BOCES Occupational Education expense line which is based off a 3-year average for which this year the District is being billed for 59 students, and last year for 55 students.

Mr. Reimer noted that they have been analyzing the various components of the budget based on which are items that are changing such as salary adjustments according to contracts which comprise over \$11 million of the budget; which expenses are nonadjustable items that the District will continue to use from year to year without much variation which equal approximately \$1 million; expenses which are dependent upon usage which are projected at \$3.34 million; and items which do not fall into any of the three aforementioned categories which only represent \$1.17 million. As 80% of the monies budgeted cover instructional expenses, Mr. Reimer emphasized that the Administration is being very careful and diligent throughout the year and during the budget process to provide the best opportunities for the students. Based on the breakout of expenses, there is not a lot of expenses that can be cut. Administration continues to look at ways to decrease expenses and increase ways to get aid that we may not have in the past. It is very difficult to adjust expenses unless it is systemically changed or something drastic happens. The rollover is projected to have a 1.5% increase currently, if the school needs to make adjustments to try to get to a balanced budget, the focus needs to be on revenues.



Mr. Reimer inquired if the Board had any more thought on the tax levy limit at 2% for next year or a different amount. When asked about the Somerset Power Plant impact on the levy limit, it was noted that as the plant is likely going off the PILOT and onto the tax rolls, the allowable tax levy would be approximately 46%. The tax rolls will be out March 1, 2020 and it is anticipated that the plant's value will be challenged at that time. If the tax rolls change, Mr. Reimer noted that Board would be able to adjust the levy to stay within the parameters if necessary. After discussion and review, the Board agreed to move forward with a 2% tax levy increase for budgeting purposes.

Mrs. Ecker inquired about the Director of Facilities expense line in the proposed budget, and was informed that the monies allocated to that line can be used elsewhere if the position is not filled. Different budgeting concepts for the Board to review and discuss will be presented at the next meeting. At this point, Administration wanted to keep the overall figure in the budget. As the District continues to be in a structural deficit, if less funds are use, less will be drawn out of reserve.

#### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Mr. Reimer provided an overview of the Board Retreat scheduled for Saturday, January 18, 2020 at the school. The retreat will be educational in nature. The Board will do an interior and exterior walk thru of campus; review information from the architects, community forums, the 2015 Building Condition Reports, energy performance project reports and inspection reports; and what makes a project aidable. The outcome would be to better understand how capital outlay projects can be put together.

Mr. Reimer discussed the advocacy initiative and how the Board would like to go about advocating for the school in order to finalize the process and next steps. Mr. Reimer noted that he prepared different draft letters and letter components that people could personalize and send to various governmental representatives to inform them of the financial issues faced by Barker and the need for equitable distribution of aid. They also discussed how the campaign expenses legally must be covered by funds other than the District's. After discussion, the Board agreed on potential dates for the public meetings on January 30 and February 5, if practical, at which the community can be informed about the rational for the advocacy campaign and have the opportunity to create their own or use a prepared letter to send to representatives. An All Call will be made to the students' home and a postcard with the dates and times to meet will be sent to the community. The goal would be to get as many letters out before the February break in legislature so it is brought to the attention when they meet in March and April.

With regard to the advocacy campaign, as a request from the Board, Mr. Reimer presented a proposed resolution regarding the matter which he and the District's



attorney's drafted reflecting what the Board could publically have a stance on. The resolution addresses the issues impacting the District relative to foundation aid, energy cessation mitigation program, and capital outlay limits. Mr. Reimer than read the resolution which is below.

### **BARKER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**WHEREAS**, the Barker Central School District continually strives to provide an outstanding learning environment for each and every student so all can make meaningful contributions to society upon their graduation; and

**WHEREAS**, changes to state policy and regulations, including but not limited to those pertaining to CO<sub>2</sub> Performance Standards for Major Electric Generating Facilities, have led to significant decreases in local tax revenues from the Somerset Operating Company, the district's largest tax payer, with no subsequent increase in Foundation Aid to supplant the loss of local revenues; and

**WHEREAS**, the district has and will continue to create sensible, balanced budgets including the use of District Reserve funds in order to provide an education that will well prepare our students; and

**WHEREAS**, each child in Barker Central School District has the right to receive a comprehensive educational experience and school facilities equivalent to others in the region and across the state in a manner affordable to our local taxpayers;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Barker Central School District Board of Education calls on the New York State Legislature and Governor Andrew Cuomo to act upon the following priorities:

1. Adjust the Foundation Aid Formula to reflect regularly updated and current demographics and socioeconomic factors for each district across the state.
2. Fully Fund and allow the adjusted Foundation Aid formula to work as it is created and promote transparency and equality for each student in the state, no matter where they reside.
3. Adjust the eligibility and reimbursement amounts governed by the Energy Cessation Mitigation Program to allow affected towns and districts to recoup reductions in tax revenues based on the previous 5 year average total rather than revenues collected during the last year of operation of a shuttered power plant.
4. Increase the limit for capital outlay projects from the current amount of \$100,000 to \$250,000.



Mr. Reimer noted that the factors for calculating foundation aid for the District are ten years old and do not reflect the current economics and wealth ratio of the District. If the calculation was adjusted it would result in more aid to the District, and if the capital outlay limit would be increased, the District would be able to do larger project and receive more aid back. Mr. Atwater thanked Mr. Reimer for his work on this subject and the resolution had good coverage of the concerns that need to be addressed. After discussion, Mr. Atwater inquired if the Board would like to take time to consider the resolution or make a motion to approve.

A motion by Mr. Sweeny was made, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris to approve the resolution as presented.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Reimer noted that he submitted an application for him and Mr. Carter to present at the Rural Schools conference this summer and he is hoping they are accepted in order to talk about the challenges Barker and similar school districts face.

Mr. Reimer noted that more companies have come in to look at the school relative to Energy Performance Contracts. Another company will be in on January 20. The companies have looked at solar, HVAC, lighting, windows, heating units and various areas to determine how to increase energy efficiencies, as well as improve what the District has here. He noted one review addressed the wall heating units and what could be done, and what could be covered by state aid. Over the next three – four weeks the ideas and recommendations will be pulled together to discuss with the Board. He stated that this process does not cost the District anything as the companies come out for free.

Mr. Reimer then updated the Board on the budget vote/election for May 19, 2020 given that a change to the primaries may impact the number of scanning machines available to districts. He stated that there has been different information as to whether or not it will be an issue. Mr. Reimer reviewed the cost and time differences of both processes, and noted that work has begun on plans to run a paper ballot election. The Board concurred to use the scanning devices vs. paper ballots unless availability dictates the need to change.

Mr. Reimer explained the annual school calendar process to the Board and noted that the regional 2020 – 2021 calendar has been issued which BOCES developed their calendar from and it is now at the districts' level for consideration and development of each district's calendar. He reviewed scheduling issues that are being considered with the start of the school year, breaks, etc. He stated that the proposed Barker calendar has been given to the BTU and he is waiting on input from them in order to bring forward to the Board for review next month.



Mr. Reimer reviewed how annually the school has to prepare a BEDS report and the District previously had four codes, and decreased by one as a result of the consolidation of the Middle and High Schools. As the District has gone to a Pre-k – 12 school, it has the ability to go down to just two codes, one for the school and one for the District. He noted that there would work needed by the Board to do this but it would result in savings to the District, in particular on annual subscriptions that are charged by BEDS code. Mr. Reimer knows of another district that also did this. He said this is an example of how Administration is looking at everything to provide the most and best for the students.

Mr. Reimer discussed the request to attend the NYSCOSS/LEAF Winter Conference in Albany and the ability at this conference to be able to discuss with legislative representatives across the state and raise the flag of who Barker is and how they need to make changes for more equitable distribution of funds to schools for the students.

Motion by Mrs. Ecker, seconded by Mr. Sweeney to approve the attendance of Jacob L. Reimer, Superintendent, at the 2020 NYSCOSS LEAF Winter Institute & Lobby Day - Fostering Connections with Your School Community, Sunday, March 1 - Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at the Albany Capital Center, Albany, NY.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

**POLICIES** Upon motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mrs. Ecker, to approve the following policies:

<b>Policy #</b>	<b>Policy Name</b>
7312	Student Dress Code
7313	Suspension of Students
7314	Students Presumed to Have a Disability for Discipline Purposes
7315	Student Use of Computerized Information Resources (Acceptable Use Policy)
7316	Student Use of Personal Technology
7320	Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs and Other Substances (Students)
7330	Searches and Interrogations of Students
7340	Bus Rules and Regulations
7350	Corporal Punishment/Emergency Interventions
7360	Weapons in School and the Gun-Free Schools Act
7410	Extracurricular Activities
7411	Censorship of School Sponsored Student Publications and Activities
7420	Sports and the Athletic Program



Yes: 7  
 No: 0  
 Motion carried.

The Board reviewed the first reading of the following policies as listed below.

Policy #	Policy Name
7430	Contests for Students, Student Awards and Scholarships
7440	Public Performances by Students
7450	Fund Raising by Students
7460	Constitutionally Protected Prayer in the Public Schools
7510	School Health Services
7511	Immunization of Students
7512	Student Physicals
7513	Administration of Medication
7514	Student Health Records

Mr. Atwater asked if there were any additional comments or questions on the policies. None were brought forward.

**EDUCATION** There were no education items brought forward.

#### **PERSONNEL**

**ITEMS** Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the completion of the Leave of Absence from September 3, 2019 - January 6, 2020 for Emily Bisland, Elementary Education Teacher.

Yes: 7  
 No: 0  
 Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the appointment of Krista LaGreca as a Full-time Teacher Aide, effective January 31, 2020 at a rate in accordance with the Barker Support Staff Contract, Step 1, \$12.15/hour.

Yes: 7  
 No: 0  
 Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Krista LaGreca as a Part-time Teacher Aide effective January 31, 2020.

Yes: 7  
 No: 0  
 Motion carried.



Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the appointment of Jennifer Goodwin as a Part-time Teacher Aide, effective January 31, 2020 at a rate of \$11.80/hour.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve the acceptance of the resignation of Melissa Bundrock as the Director of the Summer Recreation program effective December 13, 2019.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve Jacob L. Reimer and Mariah Kramer as Multidimensional Principal Performance Rubric (MPPR).

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, seconded by Mr. Sweeney, to approve Ashley Andreana, Second Grade Teacher at Niagara Street Elementary, Niagara Falls, NY to shadow at the District during the first part of the new year as part of her internship for administration through Niagara University.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Mr. Atwater then welcomed Ms. LaGreca and Ms. Goodwin, who were present at the meeting, as new employees to the District.

## **BUSINESS & FINANCIAL**

### **ITEMS**

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Warrant Report dated January 13, 2020.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Extraclassroom Report for December 31, 2019.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to accept the Treasurer's Reports for December 2019.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.



Motion by Mr. Sweeney, seconded by Mrs. Clemens-Harris, to approve the resolution regarding Solar Liberty Energy Systems, Inc.

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education hereby approves the scope of work and services reflected in the proposed Energy Performance Contract with Solar Liberty Energy Systems Inc., for the performance of services identified in the Energy Performance Contract, and authorizes the Superintendent of Barker Central School District to execute such contract. A copy of such contract shall be incorporated by reference within the minutes of this meeting.

Yes: 7

No: 0

Motion carried.

**EXECUTIVE**

**SESSION** The Board concurred that no Executive Session was needed.

**PUBLIC SESSION/  
ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Mr. Mead, seconded by Mrs. Ecker, that the Board approve the end of the Public Session and adjournment of the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary H. Eadie  
District Clerk