

BARRE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Barre City Elementary and Middle School –Library
December 14, 2015 - 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Lucas Herring - Chair
Sonya Spaulding – Vice Chair
Jim Carrien - Clerk
Anita Ristau
Leslie Walz

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Anita Chadderton
Guiliano Cecchinelli, II
Nathan Reigner
Tyler Smith

ADMINISTRATORS PRESENT:

John Pandolfo, Superintendent
James Taffel, Principal
Jackie Tolman, Principal
Stacy Anderson, Director of Special Services
Grant Fleming, Facilities Director – departed at 6:14 p.m.
Lisa Perreault, Business Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

Video Vision Tech Dave Delcore-Times Argus Dawn Matthews

1. Call to Order: Pledge of Allegiance

The Chair, Mr. Herring, called the Monday, December 14, 2015, Regular meeting to order at 5:34 p.m., which was held at the Barre City Elementary and Middle School Library. The flag salute followed.

2. Additions and/or Deletions to the Agenda

There were no additions or deletions.

It was noted that there would be two personnel issues and two student issues for Executive Session.

Agenda Item 6.3 (Boiler) will be discussed out of order (after Agenda Item 5.1).

3. Visitors and Communications

None.

4. Approval of Minutes

4.1 Approval of Minutes – November 9, 2015 Regular Meeting

On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mr. Carrien, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Minutes of the November 9, 2015 Regular Meeting.

5. New Business

5.1 PTO Presentation

Dawn Matthews, representing the PTO, addressed the Board. Ms. Matthews provided an overview of some of the activities sponsored by the PTO, including the Walk/Run/Fun event, Bingo, Family Movie Night, the Bathtub Race, and various other fundraisers throughout the year. The PTO has raised funds for Reading is Fundamental, and awards numerous scholarships, including those awarded at 8th grade Step-up night, the ski program, and Girls on the Run. The PTO currently has 6 to 8 core members and approximately 6 additional members who participate as time allows. The PTO is actively looking for additional volunteers. It was noted that Board member Mrs. Spaulding, is a very dedicated PTO member. The Board and Administration expressed their appreciation for the efforts put forth by the PTO. Mrs. Ristau queried regarding PTO members' interest in serving on the Board, and advised that there will soon be three openings on the BCEMS Board.

5.2 Teacher Resignation/New Hire (Stacy Anderson)

BCEMS Notification Status forms were distributed for the following individuals; Denise Joy and Melissa Campbell. Mrs. Anderson advised that due to medical reasons, Ms. Joy has resigned her position. Her last day of employment was November 20, 2015. Brief discussion was held.

On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mrs. Walz, the Board unanimously voted to accept the resignation of Denise Joy.

Mrs. Anderson provided an overview of the qualifications for Melissa Campbell. Brief discussion was held, including the necessity of a provisional license. **On a motion by Mr. Carrien, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the hiring of Melissa Campbell**

5.3 Thunder Chickens – Landowner Permission

The VAST (Vermont Association of Snow Travelers) Landowner Permission Form was distributed. This form is submitted for signature annually, to grant permission for VAST to use a portion of BCMES property. **On a motion by Mr. Carrien, seconded by Mrs. Ristau, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Superintendent to sign the Landowner Permission Form.**

5.4 Policy Ratification

BSU Curriculum Development & Coordination Policy (G1)

BSU Professional Development Policy (D2)

Copies of the policies were distributed. Mrs. Ristau provided a brief overview of the policies and advised that tonight's discussion would be for the approval of the First Readings. Mrs. Ristau provided clarification regarding the ratification process. There was one change noted to the BSU Professional Development Policy.

On a motion by Mrs. Walz, seconded by Mrs. Ristau, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Reading of the BSU Curriculum Development & Coordination Policy (G1).

On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to approve the First Reading of the BSU Professional Development Policy (D2).

5.5 Bond Vote Recommendation

Mr. Pandolfo noted that he applied for and received the grant for the boiler (\$20,000). Round two of the grant may yield an additional \$55,000. These two grants could lower the amount to be funded (for the boiler project) to \$275,000. The Facility Committee recommends fixing the furnace, and completing roof repairs. It was suggested that some of the Capital Improvement Fund be used for funding for roof work, and that the Board should look for a loan or bond for the woodchip boiler, repair of leaking fixtures, loop controls and security issues. The boiler and other recommended repairs/upgrades total approximately \$700,000. This information provides a rough estimate of what is needed for a Special Article. It may be possible to delay the first payment (on a loan or bond), until FY18. Ms. Perreault advised that the decision to ask for a loan or bond would be dependent on the interest rate. It was noted that the Special Article could not contain details about the projects being funded, but that literature could be produced to assist with educating the public. Concern was raised that budgeting for this project in FY18 may prove difficult, if the State continues to put restraints on spending. It was suggested that some of the work be delayed to allow for borrowing a lesser amount (\$500,000). Mr. Pandolfo voiced concern that integrating the new system with the current fittings could prove difficult and feels that all of the work should be performed as one project. It was noted that in the past, there has not been enough long term planning regarding financing of major facility upgrades and repairs. A goal for the Board is to begin long term planning for facility upgrades/maintenance, including the financing of the necessary projects. Mrs. Spaulding believes firmer numbers need to be obtained prior to the Article being written. Mrs. Spaulding would prefer actual bids for all projects and expressed frustration that RFPs have not been submitted for other portions of the heating system project. Mr. Herring advised that the most accurate numbers possible will be presented at the January meeting and that additional discussion will occur at that point. Ms. Perreault will obtain information regarding options and interest rates, and will present that information at the January meeting.

6. Old Business

6.1 FY17 Budget

A copy of the Draft Audit was distributed. Ms. Perreault reported that the draft audit finds that the financial statements present fairly and there are no findings. The plan is to have the Auditors present at the February 2016 meeting. Ms. Perreault provided an overview of the draft, including a review of the Financial Highlights listed on page 3. The fund balance of the General Fund is \$754,851, of which \$754,413 is unassigned. The new ballot language, as mandated by Sec.33.16 V.S.A. 563 was briefly discussed and an example was exhibited. Using the current draft, the expenditure amount listed on the ballot would be \$13,139,373, (\$11,846.40 per equalized pupil, which represents a 3.6% increase over the current year). If the Special Article amount(s) are added into the budget, the increase will be greater than the 'cap' allowed by the State. A report titled 'Barre City Elementary and Middle School Comparative Tax Rate Calculations Budget Years 2016-2017' was distributed, as well as the draft budget (Version 1.5 – 12/14/15). The budget increase is currently at 4.21%. That number does not reflect the \$50,000 Special Article for the 'roof fund'. The Base Education Rate and Tax

Rate have not been set yet. Ms. Perreault advised that if the CLA changes from 103.5% to 100%, the Tax Rate will probably go down. Discussion included concern over using too much of the Tax Stabilization fund in one year. This approach may lead to a much larger issue in the future. Mr. Taffel provided an overview of the budget cuts made thus far and advised that future reductions would negatively impact programs and personnel. Mr. Herring requested that Administration attempt to cut \$200,000 from the budget, which would lower the amount needed from the Tax Stabilization fund. Mr. Herring feels that more needs to be done to lower the budget, as a recent survey indicates that voters may support only a 2% tax increase. Ms. Perreault advised that she is concerned regarding the timeframe remaining to complete all of the budgets. The Finance Committee agreed to meet on December 23, 2015, rather than wait until the regularly scheduled January meeting (01/07/15). Additionally, Ms. Perreault reminded Board members that Transportation and Special Education will be pulled out of the district budget and be added to the SU budget. Mr. Pandolfo advised that the SU Board approved level funding the SU budget, using tax stabilization funds.

6.2 Second and Final Reading Student Attendance Policy (F25)

A copy of the policy was distributed. Mrs. Walz provided an overview of the policy and noted one minor typographical error that needed correction. **On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mrs. Walz, the Board unanimously voted to approve the Second and Final Reading of the Student Attendance Policy (F25).**

6.3 Boiler

Two documents were distributed; 'Site Visits and Presentation Review – BCEMS BIOMASS HEATING PLANT REPLACEMENT', and 'RFP Results for BCEMS Biomass Heating Plant Replacement – BCEMS BIOMASS HEATINGPLANT REPLACEMENT'. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the site visits and submitted RFPs. The overview included discussion of the positive and negative aspects of each system, including vendor experience, controls, efficiency, automated ash removal, and price comparisons. Mr. Pandolfo advised that he would feel comfortable recommending any of the vendors, but does not feel that any of the vendors' product, service, or warranty would justify a large difference in price. The quote from Advanced Fabrication Services, Inc. (AFS) (approximately \$350,000 total) seems to be the most reasonable. It was noted that the prices quoted include boiler room controls, but not the controls throughout the building. Outdated controls throughout the building still need to be replaced.

6.4 Act 153 Update

Copies of the Confirmation of Compliance Forms for Transportation Consolidation and Special Education Consolidation were distributed. Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview, stressing that non-compliance will result in penalties, and that in the past, the SU has been operating on a waiver, but that the waiver will not continue to be granted under Act 153. The most recent response to a waiver request was partially approved, partially denied. Mr. Pandolfo submitted a status report, advising of the current scheme and different contracts. A thorough analysis will need to be performed to determine if the disparate schemes should continue, or if transportation will need to be reconfigured/restructured. In order to maintain disparate schemes, it must be proven that they can continue at or below the cost of one scheme. If disparate schemes are maintained, without approval from the DOE, a penalty (an increase in the education tax) will be imposed. Mr. Pandolfo is waiting for a reply from the DOE regarding their approval of the SU devising a transportation plan by June 30, 2016. If the DOE requires actual consolidation by June 30, 2016, much work will need to be completed in a short time frame.

6.5 Superintendent Evaluation

This item will be discussed in Executive Session. Mrs. Ristau advised that all Board Members were in receipt of the evaluation form, and should present their forms to her, so that she may compile all forms (including those from BTMES and Spaulding). The evaluation will be discussed at the February SU meeting.

7. Board Reports

7.1 Superintendent

A copy of the Superintendent's report dated December 8, 2015 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; activity of the Act 46 Consolidation Study Committee (meetings held on 11/19/15 and 12/03/15, public forum scheduled for 01/12/15 at 6:00 p.m. at SHS), an update on the hiring process for the new HR Coordinator position, the Legislative Breakfast (held on December 9, 2015), an update on the Solar Project (Certificate of Public Good has been obtained. Construction will begin in the spring), the PATH grant, with attached document titled 'BSU Wellness in the Workplace funds – Action Plan', and the Financial Management Questionnaire (as required by Title 16, Chapter 5, Subchapter 2). A copy of a 'new' completed Financial Management Questionnaire-BSU, was distributed for Board review. **On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mrs. Walz, the Board unanimously voted to authorize the Board Chair to sign the Financial Management Questionnaire.** Mr. Pandolfo provided an overview of the PATH program, which is a grant funded program, promoting healthy lifestyles of employees. Mr. Pandolfo thanked and recognized the following individuals for their efforts in coordinating the PATH program: Laura Thygesen, Beth Bicknell, Melissa Brown, Jen Bombard, Jesse Carpenter, Wendy Clark, Linda Rodriguez, Diana Flood, and Pam Wark. Mr. Pandolfo distributed a document outlining the FY2016 Per-pupil Spending by Town (PPSpending). Mr. Herring believes it may be beneficial to compare spending with bordering towns.

7.2 Principals Report

A copy of the Co-Principals' report dated December 2015 was distributed. The report included information pertaining to; the second round of literacy assessments, curriculum development coordinated by Literacy and Math specialists, support of students with symptoms of trauma (working with North American Family Institute's Trauma specialist, Pete Cudney), training on Next Generation Science Standards, coordination of a food drive by Students on the Move, the upcoming concert (5-8 grade band/chorus concert on Thursday December 17, 2015 at 6:30 p.m.), and Mr. Weselcouch's fourth grade students upcoming performances at local nursing homes and at the mall (December 15, 2015). Additionally, Mr. Taffel advised regarding receipt of \$3,500 from the American Gift Fund (to be used for cultural activities), the successful K-4 Literacy Night, for parents and students, changes to student testing and use of results (resulting from the ESSA Act), and the Food Bank food deliveries (held on the first and third Tuesdays of each month). The public is invited to participate and are encouraged to take what they need.

7.3 Committee Reports

Policy – Minutes from the October 21, 2015 Policy Committee meeting were distributed. There was no meeting in November. The next meeting will be on December 16, 2015.

Curriculum – The Committee met on November 23, 2015. The next meeting will be on January 2, 2016. There will not be a meeting in December. The Committee is discussing Next Generation Science Standards, the effectiveness of 'outplaced' programs (one such program costs \$113,000 for one student), and possible expansion/improvements to the Positive Behavior Classroom program.

Facility/Security – Minutes from the November 23, 2015 meeting were distributed. The next meeting will be on December 30, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

Finance – Minutes from the December 2, 2015 meeting were distributed. The next Finance Committee meeting will be held on December 23, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.

7.4 Financial Report

A copy of the 'Barre City Elementary and Middle School BC EXPENSE BUDGET STATUS REPORT' (dated 12/08/15) was distributed.

8. Round Table/Future Agenda Items

Ms. Tolman reported that the Guidance Counselors coordinated a holiday project, which will result in 100 families receiving stockings, quilts and other items.

Mrs. Anderson promoted the Penguin Plunge, to benefit Special Olympics. The event will take place on Saturday, February 6, 2016, at the Burlington Waterfront. Donations may be made at www.firstgiving.com/team/308145. Additional information may be found at www.penguinplunge.org. Mrs. Spaulding advised that a student team may be formed. Parents will be responsible for transporting their children. Mrs. Anderson distributed an informational flyer. Additionally, Mrs. Anderson advised that the Unified Sports snowshoe competition will be held during the first week in March 2016.

Mr. Pandolfo advised that the ESSA Act may result in a change in how Title I funds are distributed. The ballot language for the proposed reduction in the number of Board members is being drafted.

Mrs. Spaulding announced the annual Christmas dinner being hosted by the Hedding Methodist Church. This event is held on December 25, 2015 from 12:00 p.m. until 2:00 p.m. This event is free and all are welcome. Hedding Methodist welcomes any donations, volunteers, and diners. Those wishing to donate may contact Mrs. Spaulding at 476-5569 or via e-mail: sonya@milessupply.com.

Mrs. Walz suggested flyers to promote the open Board positions.

9. Executive Session

9.1 Student Matter

Items proposed for discussion in Executive Session include personnel and student matters.

On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, 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 City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public.

On a motion by Mrs. Ristau, seconded by Mrs. Spaulding, the Board unanimously voted to enter into Executive Session at 7: 56 p.m. under the provisions of 1 VSA section 313 to discuss the items proposed for discussion.

The remaining information was provided by the Board Clerk.

On a motion by Mrs. Walz, seconded by Mrs. Ristau, the Board unanimously voted to exit Executive Session at 8:52 p.m.

No action taken.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Spaulding, seconded by Mrs. Walz, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Poulin