



NOT FINAL UNTIL APPROVED BY THE BOARD.

**BURLINGTON BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES
Hunt Middle School Library
March 16, 2017
6 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:13 p.m.

1. Opening Items

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

Commissioners:

Mark Barlow __, Lauren Berrizbeitia X, Brian Cina __,
Liz Curry X, Susanmarie Harrington __, Anne Judson X, David Kirk __,
Kat Kleman X, Kathy Olwell X, Mark Porter X, Stephanie Seguino X,
Miriam Stoll __

Student Representatives:

Jacob Bucci X
Isabella Weston __

Administration:

Yaw Obeng, Superintendent X
Minute Recorder, Executive Assistant Brittany Nevins X
Stephanie Phillips, Senior Director Teaching & Learning __
Nikki Fuller, Senior Director Human Resources & Equity Affairs __
Paul Irish, Senior Director Infrastructure & Technology __
Nathan Lavery, Senior Director of Finance X
Elizabeth Atkins, Accounting Manager __
Henri Sparks, Director of Equity __
Miriam Ehtesham-Cating, Director of EL __
Doug Davis, Director of Food Service __
Marty Spaulding, Property Services Director X

The Board wishes to recognize, welcome and thank those that are providing language interpretation of the Board proceedings. The Board's commitment that all children receive equitable academic services must ensure that New American parents are welcome and can attend meetings, understand the process and be actively engaged. Interpretation of proceedings honors,

respects and values our New American parents and students. The Board asks the public and media to respect and understand the importance of this interpretation.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Motion (Commissioner Judson/ Commissioner Berrizbeitia) to approve agenda

3. **Public Comments/Questions**

A. **Public Comment**

Megan Carlisle- Senior at UVM, Member of BLM Vermont

Concerns regarding suspensions and expulsion. Has been going through and looking at the suspension data reports at Board meetings. Reflects on most recent suspension data. What is the process around this? Could the minutes better reflect these conversations?

Emma Jenkins- Member of BLM Vermont, Elementary school teacher at Flynn.

Also shares concerns around suspensions and expulsion. She is also a representative of equity council for her school. She is concerned that the reform policy around restorative justice is not urgent and lacks transparency. Advocates for funding for training teachers. The current training is not fully adequate in this matter. She is concerned that this isn't enough of a priority.

Diedre Yee- Member of BLM Vermont

Also voices concerns around issue. She mentions a lack of transparency. There has been a lack of clarity for families as well in this matter. There should be a set of criteria/standard in suspension and expulsion. This process should be clearly documented.

B. **Board Reflections-**

Commissioner Seguino- Thanks the group for representing those values, which are reflected in the School Board. The Board has expressed a commitment to getting rid of out of school suspensions. Trauma-informed training for teachers is a step in the right direction. She shares a sense of urgency as well. Having suspension data available is one way for the board to keep a careful eye on this topic. Thank you for your commitment to BLM and for sharing with us.

Commissioner Berrizbeitia- Shares sentiments that Commissioner Seguino shared. She invites the group to attend the next Diversity & Equity Committee meeting.

Commissioner Kleman- This is a very important issue and she is glad that this is being discussed. Thank you for bringing it up.

Judy Kaplan-

Congratulations that the budget/bond passed. The process that has been set up last year and encouraging community input has really made a difference. The message from the community has been an overwhelming desire for transparency. This is a key word. Agendas include a list of shared values. She has seen improvement, but to keep this overarching goal in plain view this is

important. Wants to ask the board tonight some hard questions about gaps in transparency. She is here to advocate for school library programs. She mentioned the change in the budget regarding “librarian interventionists.” This was unclear and not transparent in her view. How do we include the school librarians into the decisionmaking about the future of libraries. Will there be a school librarian in every school? How do decisions include input with expert knowledge from librarians? Please be transparent in all ways.

Public Comment Closed

B Cont... Board Reflections- None

4. Policy Governance BTV Model Discussion

Commissioner Curry: Purpose of tonight’s meeting is to have another discussion about the final version that has been given to all board members and to approve the recommended policies if the Board chooses.

1. Motion to approve Policy Governance policies. (Commissioner Curry/ Chair Porter)

Discussion:

Superintendent Obeng: Consultant Michael Healy has been a big help along this process. The question has arose, such as *how do we do this?* Superintendent Obeng suggests having a summer Board retreat to actually do the planning around logistics.

The Board has a packet in front of them with examples of agendas, monitoring reports, and calendars from other School Districts in Vermont

Chair Porter rose a question about Committees. How will Committees/Ad Hoc Committees work with the Policy Governance model?

Consultant Michael Healy: Michael describes that the Board can have committees if it chooses and would create a purpose and time frame for the committee.

Commissioner Curry: We could recommend that committees could still continue, such as the Diversity & Equity Committee. There isn’t anything in the policies that say that this can’t be.

Superintendent Obeng: The committees would be time-bound with directives. We don’t want them to be redundant, but focused and effective.

Commissioner Curry: Again, this could be the case with the Finance Committee to further the Boards understanding during times of financial transition like the times that we are in.

Consultant Michael Healy: It isn’t like if this is approved all questions will be answered. This is a framework. The questions will continue to exist and can continue to be pursued with this structure.

Chair Porter- I picture us also being outward facing. There are many outside forces that don't have a way to influence decisions. This would be a better way to address this.

Superintendent Obeng: When there is a narrow focus around a different topic there could be a different format that would allow for a more robust feedback loop.

Commissioner Judson: Brought Jeff Wick's (Expected to start term on Burlington School Board in April, 2017) email that was sent to some Board members. Consultant Michael Healy seeks to clarify and suggests that the amount of detail suggested in the email likely would not be necessary.

Chair Porter is hesitant for the Board to be so specific around board roles.

Superintendent Obeng- In other districts who have been successful in policy governance model have been successful without that much detail. Much of what was stated in the communication is also in legislation and does not need to be included in policy governance.

Commissioner Curry- The purpose of these policies are to define the relationship between the Board and the Superintendent. If we were to be this detailed we would be spending a lot of time on these matters rather than doing other work. Mandated policies are in law and we are required to abide by law.

Consultant Michael Healy- Really this is a *style* question.

Commissioner Seguíno- This is not meant to be the Board's job description. Thank you Michael for giving clarity on that.

Continues... What is the process for making changes?

Consultant Michael Healy- This would likely be the same decisionmaking process that you currently have. He suggests that either now or later to put in the process for decision making. Again, one of the agreements in the policies is to evaluate yourselves regularly.

Chair Porter- What do you do with the old policies?

Superintendent Obeng- There are mandated policies that we have to follow. We have many policies now that are not being monitored. This is an opportunity to create administrative procedures. This is also good timing to clean up our website and update our processes. One example of a procedure that I would create is around suspension and expulsion. This would be an example of something that could be started at an administrative level and then the administration could update the Board.

Student Representative Jake Bucci- Feels that this is the best way for the Board to move forward and also increase transparency.

Commissioner Olwell- Still unclear on determining the Ends. What is going to happen there?

Commissioner Curry- There is not a complete ends policy that has been fully developed. She recommends that we work on it this summer.

Consultant Michael Healy- Currently the Mission/Vision/Core Beliefs is the Ends policy.

Commissioner Curry- This is a living document that we will continue to work on.

Commissioner Seguino- This is a process. We are engaging in step one. We will be doing what we've always done, but with more clarity.

Superintendent Obeng- He understands what Commissioner Olwell is saying. He sees this has having an opportunity here to really define these ends. He would like to have included the strategic plan in this process as well. He is comfortable with taking this step and moving forward together to help define this. We know that we will continue to have this conversation with this structure.

Consultant Michael Healy- Most of the boards he has worked with have not had an Ends policy when they started. The Board does need to be proactive and finish that work.

Motion passes unanimously to adopt policy governance policies.

5. *The Board moves to postpone the reorganization from the first week of April to the regularly scheduled monthly Board meeting on April 11th*

(Chair Porter/Commissioner Seguino)

Commissioner Seguino shares that this is to save us from multiple meetings

Commissioner Curry clarifies that the City Charter language states something different. This is an example of an item that could be addressed through policy governance by

6. *Bid Award Motions*

A. Motion to full board to approve these contractors as pre-qualified on consent agenda: EF Wall & Associates, Farrington Construction, KR Adams Construction, Millbrook Building & Remodeling, Wright & Morrissey.

(Chair Porter/Commissioner Olwell)

Commissioner Curry has a question regarding language. Why does it state Consent Agenda?

Director of Property Services, Marty Spaulding, describes that the motion was intended for Tuesday's meeting, but because of the snow storm it was placed for tonight due to the tight agenda at hand. It should not have Consent Agenda language in it.

Commissioner Curry makes a motion for friendly amendment to propose to strike "consent agenda" in language.

Motion to full board to approve these contractors as pre-qualified: EF Wall & Associates, Farrington Construction, KR Adams Construction, Millbrook Building & Remodeling, Wright & Morrissey.

Unanimously Passes

B. Motion to to authorize Finance/ITC Committee to act on behalf of the full board at their April meeting to award the final Champlain Building Project Bid which will be due April 17th.

(Chair Porter/Commissioner Judson)

Commissioner Curry raised a question about the Board's ability to delegate its authority to approve construction contracts to a committee, and asked the size of the contract.

Marty Spaulding- The Champlain bid is under \$1M but over \$750,000.

Commissioner Curry expressed concern that under federal procurement rules, a Board typically cannot delegate this authority to a committee. Mr. Spaulding noted that the contract will not be federally funded, but suggested that the approval could be contingent on staff confirmation that Board authority can be delegated.

Curry proposed friendly amendment to the motion that the Board would authorize the Finance/ITC committee to *act on behalf of the full board at their April meeting to award the final Champlain Building Project Bid which will be due April 17th*, contingent upon staff confirmation that the Board can delegate its authority to approve a contract of this size to the committee.

Motion passed unanimously

Note: These authorizations are necessary to comply with statutory bid timelines and avoid a special Board meeting in late April.

Portion of meeting ends at 7:28 PM.

7. Executive Session

A. Motion to consider Executive Session to discuss Contract Negotiations where premature disclosure to the public could put the District at a disadvantage.

*(Commissioner Kleman/Commissioner Olwell) to enter into executive session
Passed unanimously*

Motion to leave executive session - Commissioner Berrizbietia /Commission Olwell

B. Motion to consider employee performance review - post-poned until Tuesday, March 21, 2017.

9. Adjournment

A. *Motion (Commissioner Olwell / Commissioner Judson) to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.*

Minutes will be updated with Adjournment motion.