

**Barnet School Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 14, 2015
Barnet School**

Members in Attendance: Louis Bushey, Robert Farlice-Rubio, Sue Roberts, Jim Schenck; Principal Shawn Gonyaw, Superintendent Mat Forest

- 7:05 p.m. The meeting was called to order by Chair Louis Bushey.
- 7:06 p.m. A motion was made by Robert Farlice-Rubio and seconded by Sue Roberts to enter Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously. **Approved**
- 7:29 p.m. A motion was made by Robert Farlice-Rubio and seconded by Sue Roberts to exit Executive Session. The motion passed unanimously. **Approved**
- 7:30 p.m. The public portion of the meeting began. Ellen Hinman, Cindy Ruggles, and Heather Counter joined the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

July 14, 2015 - The minutes of the July 14, 2015 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Jim Schenck and seconded by Robert Farlice-Rubio to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion. **Approved**

August 11, 2015 - The minutes of the August 11, 2015 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Jim Schenck and seconded by Sue Roberts to approve the minutes as written. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion. **Approved**

Public Input

-Cindy Ruggles asked questions about Act 46. Regarding merging, she asked if merging meant merging of school board members and different school aspects such as sharing teachers, or if merging meant a school would close and students from one school would go to another school. Louis Bushey said no information on what the final governance might look like is available at this time. Representation on a merged board is supposed to be based on the school’s population. Jim Schenck said Barnet should be having discussions on all options and should have as many discussions as possible. Nothing should be done hastily. Mrs. Ruggles also asked about high school choice, what the number of available schools to choose from would be, and if St. Johnsbury Academy would be one of the choices. Principal Gonyaw said he understood Barnet could not be forced to give up choice. However, once a merge is done, the schools that merged would come up with three high schools that all those schools would send students to. Louis Bushey said any option would be presented to the town before a decision would be made. Superintendent Forest explained one option – a RED side by side – where two school districts operate side by side; K-8 on one side and K-12 on the other. His example was Barnet, Peacham, and Walden on one side with one board and one budget and students could move freely between the three schools. On the other side would be a K-12 system, like Danville, Cabot, and Twinfield, with their own board and budget. This option is outlined in Act 156, which was enacted prior to Act 46. There was discussion regarding a 1% cap on budget increases that is in place and whether that might change. Mrs. Ruggles expressed concern regarding transporting students to another school and students being on the bus for a large part of their day.

-Heather Counter asked about the change in school hours and how that was taking away from parents' time with teachers when they dropped off their students. This has been a particular hardship for her family and the lack of face time with teachers has been aggravating.

-Cindy Ruggles asked about the companies chosen to do school photos. Superintendent Forest reported that two local companies – Empire Imaging from Danville and Whipple Photography from Newport – had been chosen and are working together on photos.

Administrative Reports

-Business Manager's Report. Louis Bushey asked if the 1% cap would interfere with roof replacement. This could be a problem but there may be a way to work around it. Principal Gonyaw mentioned he had met with other principals last week and some said the rule would be a problem for them to replace or repair a roof.

-Principal's Report. Open house was discussed. It was decided Board members should attend and food should be done. It was acknowledged that cooking and talking do not mix well but Board members felt it was important they be at open house. Jim Schenck asked about STAR assessments. Data from those assessments will be available next month. Principal Gonyaw said the SBAC assessment brought up some areas that need to be addressed. Overall scores were not bad. The STAR testing will eventually look at trends across grade levels. Louis Bushey suggested perhaps students could look at data to see that an entire class may need more work on a subject and not just one student.

-Superintendent Report. There was discussion on the expansion of duties for Andrea Wasson. She will be taking over some duties like transportation. Superintendent Forest has been attending many meetings this year and cannot always respond in a timely manner. If Mrs. Wasson is made assistant superintendent, money will need to be shifted around as she is currently funded with Special Ed money. If and when a merger takes place, this position will be a necessity. Jim Schenck asked about support staff contracts; negotiations with staff are ongoing. Superintendent Forest pointed out the upcoming CCSU meeting with Waterford on September 17th at Barnet School, and the CCSU policy meeting scheduled for October 20th.

New Business

-Transportation. The attorney has the contract and there should be a draft to review in a week or so.

Old Business

-Roof Update. The roof needs to be replaced; it should be done next summer and the Town should be asked to carry over as much money as possible to cover the cost and appropriate the shortfall.

-Playground Update. The final paperwork for the grant is ready to be signed and then funds can be accessed to pay for the playground. The new playground is great and everyone seems to be enjoying it. Louis asked about the parking at the end of the building to accommodate weekend use of the playground; that parking area is in the works.

Other Business

-The Board discussed requests from Lydia and Alisha to apply for the Legislative Page program. Both students will not be able to do the program. A motion was made by Robert Farlice-Rubio and seconded by Sue Roberts to approve the requests to apply for the Legislative Page program

and to wish both students the best of luck. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion; Louis Bushey recused himself from the vote. **Approved**

-Louis Bushey and Ellen Hinman asked about getting a digital recorder to record the meetings. There is a cost savings in having the meeting recorded and transcribed versus having Ellen attend the meetings. There was discussion on whether the school or CCSU should purchase a recorder.

Future Agenda Items

- Busing Policy
- Staff Updates
- Act 46 Discussion
- Walk through the school with Principal Gonyaw

Executive Session

A motion was made by Robert Farlice-Rubio and seconded by Sue Roberts to enter Executive Session to discuss a parent request and negotiations. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion and Executive Session began at 9:06 p.m. **Approved**

A motion was made by Jim Schenck and seconded by Robert Farlice-Rubio to exit Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion. **Approved**

A motion was made by Jim Schenck and seconded by Robert Farlice-Rubio to deny the parent’s request for a waiver of tuition. The motion passed unanimously with no further discussion.

Approved

Adjournment

A motion was made by Robert Farlice-Rubio and seconded by Jim Schenck to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with no discussion and the meeting was adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Farlice-Rubio, Board Clerk
Ellen Hinman, Recorder