BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD AGENDA
February 17, 2015

P.I.O.T. Budget Review - Highway and Equipment Funds 6:30 p.m.

1. Call to order 8:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Announce changes to agenda.
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests (for non-agenda items).
7. Presentation of Barre Town Middle & Elementary School and Spaulding High School budgets.
8. Discuss policy for not-for-profit agencies donations.
10. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants.
11. Miscellaneous, including permits, licenses, and legislative report (if any).
12. "Round the table"
13. Executive Session – real estate, labor contract negotiations.

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MINUTES
February 17, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Selectboard of February 17, 2015 was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, Lower Websterville at 8:03 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Robert LaClair, Rolland Tessier, Tom White, W. John "Jack" Mitchell, and Jeff Blow.

Attendance for the regular meeting included: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Assistant Town Manager Andrew Dorsett, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Paul Malone, Spaulding High School Board Chair Norma Malone, and Julie Bond (by phone).

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 8:03 p.m.

The PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE was recited by those present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

On a motion by Mitchell, seconded by White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to amend the agenda by inserting an item before #8, discuss a community development block grant for the Montessori School and add to item #11 an equipment repair authorization.

MINUTES

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the Selectboard Meeting Minutes of February 10, 2015.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Barre Town's Budget Committee meets every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the lower level conference room (Municipal Building) through March 31st. The public is encouraged to attend. Budgets will be available on the website as they are completed. And remember, while the Budget Committee is active the Selectboard meetings will begin at 8:00 p.m.

- On February 21st the Town will host its annual Budget Tour. Join your neighbors, friends, and town staff for this community event. The tour is at no charge and
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includes coffee, juice, doughnuts, and great conversation. An engaging question and answer session will grow your understanding of Town operations and their relationship to budget requests. All ages are welcome! Tour bus starts rolling at 8:00 a.m. For more information call the Town Manager’s office at 479-9331.

- Home owners must file a Homestead Declaration Form, even if you do not file a State Tax Return, with the Vermont Department of Taxes by April 15th to receive the homestead tax rate, avoid penalties and receive adjustments on their property taxes. For more information contact the Vermont Department of Taxes (1-866-292-2865) or your accountant.

- The first quarter Town Newsletter has arrived in mailboxes. If you have not found yours, visit the Town Office to get a copy.

- This year’s 17th annual Freezing Fun for Families softball tournament fundraiser will be held March 6 - 8, 2015 at the Barre Town Recreation fields. This year proceeds will be donated to 14 year old Jacob Gorton (Bristol, VT) and 5 month old Micah Legacy (Morrisville, VT), both are in treatment for rare forms of cancer. For more information or to make a donation call Corey at (802) 279-3632.

- The Barre Town Selectboard wished our very own Town Manager, Carl Rogers, a belated Happy Birthday....which was delivered by song.....after which it was noted that everyone should be sure to keep their day jobs!!!!

GUESTS - None

PRESENTATION OF SCHOOL BUDGETS

Background: School representatives will be presenting a synopsis of the budgets to be voted on for Barre Town Middle & Elementary School and Spaulding High School (which includes the Tech Center).

SUHS Chair Norma Malone was present. The BTMES Chair Brenda Buzzell was flying back home today and due to complications could not make this meeting. Ms. Malone will be presenting both school budget overviews.

Ms. Malone stated the combined proposed school budgets would result in a tax rate increase for Barre Town of 2.43¢. The biggest contributors for the increase are the proposed 2¢ state tax rate increase, rising health insurance (4.5%), and SUHS’s first payment of the roof loan. A future concern for school boards is a possible excise tax on some insurance plans (part of Obama Care). This tax, which has yet to be determined, could be a big hit for many schools in Vermont and will definitely impact the tax rate.

On another note Brent Tewksbury, due to illness, did not submit his petition to run for School Board on time, so there is no candidate for one of the Elementary School Board seat. He will be running a write-in campaign.

Proposed Barre Town Middle & Elementary School Budget: The bottom line is this budget proposes a 1.9% increase in expenses (additional $223,334).

Fiscal Year 15-16 budget items to note are:
➢ Maintains all current school programs
➢ Increases the Pre-K program from 4 to 5 days
➢ Eliminates 3 para-educator positions
➢ Honors the contract for teachers, para-educators, and custodian/bus drivers
➢ Includes the anticipated 4.5% rise in health insurance and a .09% reduction in the dental insurance cost
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➢ Continue the K-8 enrichment/intervention programs with the addition of one more special education interventionist
➢ Reflects no change in the assessment in the Supervisory Union Budget
➢ Includes the purchase of one school bus
➢ Reflects a $10,000 savings for electricity due to a solar energy project which began generating on December 31, 2014.

As is customary, there is also a ballot question asking voters to set aside a $25,000 allotment for the Roof Fund.

Fiscal Year 2015-2016 Spaulding High School Budget: The proposed budget is increasing 3%. The projected tax rate increase for this budget is 3/10 of 1¢. As noted above, the significant cost increases in this budget are the first payment for the roof project loan, health insurance, and salary increases. The budget includes $400,000 from the Fiscal Year 14 fund balance applied as revenue.

The top expenditures of the budget are Salaries/Wages (160 employees, including Tech Center), health insurance, Tech Center tuition (88 SUHS students), Supervisory Union assessment, facility renovations, and electricity.

Ms. Malone stated that of the 28 union high school districts, Spaulding ranks 28th in spending. Of the 266 school districts statewide, SUHS ranks 208th in spending, Barre Town ranks 240th and Barre City ranks 233rd.

There will also be a special ballot question requesting voter approval to place the remaining $166,000 of fund balance into a tax stabilization fund to help offset payments on the roof replacement project in Fiscal year 17.

Budget booklets are available throughout the Town and City. It contains information pertaining to all school districts and includes: School Board Directors and their contact information, a Report from the Superintendent, and the proposed budgets for all schools (City and Town). The booklet will also be distributed with the World, which is out this week. If you cannot find a booklet contact the Superintendent of Schools (476-5011).

Chair Blow took the opportunity to thank Ms. Malone for her many years of service on the School Board. She will not be seeking re-election this term.

CDBG GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Background: The Montessori School of Central Vermont, a 501 C-3 agency, is currently operating in Montpelier, Vermont. They have purchased the Knights of Columbus building on Pine Hill Road. The building is being renovated to teach about 80 students, grades preschool through 6. During the September 23, 2014 the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the Chair to sign a letter of community support for the School in association with their USRDA loan application.

The Manager stated the School needs to do renovations ($200,000) to the building to make it ADA compliant (elevator, handicap bathrooms, change fixtures throughout the building, flooring, and parking lot grading). They would like to have the Selectboard apply for a Community Development Block Grant on their behalf. It would be similar to what the Town recently did with Barre Housing Authority.

Julie Bond, Chair of the Board of Directors and Project Manager attended the meeting by phone. She stated the School must do an environmental review prior to submitting an application.

On a motion by White, seconded by Tessier, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the Town to apply for a Community Development Block Grant in the amount of
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$200,000 for the Montessori School of Central Vermont pending the outcome of the environmental review.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT AGENCY POLICY

Background: The Board was provided a copy of the policy prior to the meeting. Chair Blow asked that this item be placed on the agenda. His issue was the practice of multiple agencies listed on one petition.

The Manager received an email from Town Attorney Monte. It stated he agreed with the Secretary of State's Opinion which was published in the Opinion's Newsletter in 2007. It states".....that joint petitions must be accepted....The statue is clear that if any agency provides services within the Town to Town residents, they are allowed to petition. Neither the statute nor our Charter place limits on the form of the petition or number of articles it may contain." With that being said Chair Blow stated further discussion on petitions was not necessary. The Board agreed.

The policy section: Policy - C. states "...prior to drafting the warnings for Town Meeting, the agency must meet with the Selectboard to re-affirm its interest in re-appearing on the ballot." A few years ago the Selectboard would hold a special meeting for the purpose of hearing all the not-for-profits. With the list continuing to grow it was becoming quite a long meeting. The past two years written reports were received in lieu of a special meeting.

After discussion, the consensus of the Board is to hear from a few of the groups each year. This year will begin with the 4 highest dollar agencies plus 1 other agency picked at random. Those not presenting to the Selectboard would continue to be required to submit written reports. The not-for-profit agency presentations will be heard during a regular televised meeting.

CERTIFICATE OF NO SUIT PENDING - 14/15 GRAND LIST

Background: Annually each town/city is required to close their Grand List (listing of all properties and their values) unless there is an outstanding unresolved issue (such as Tax Grievance appeal). The Assessor has presented the Selectboard with the "Certificate of No Suit Pending" for the Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Grand List.

Once this certificate is signed no changes will be allowed to the Grand List. This means that should the Town find a property that was not taxed the Town cannot send a bill for the 2014-2015 tax year. Should a resident find an error in the property assessment, no adjustment can be made to the tax bill for 2014-2015 either.

On a motion by LaClair, seconded by White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to accept and sign the Certificate of No Suit Pending for the Fiscal Year 2014 - 2015 Grand List.

WEEKLY ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by LaClair the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable warrant for February 17, 2015.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Manager stated a Police Department SUV transmission went and must be replaced. One option is to buy a reconditioned transmission (cost of $3,500) or to purchase a new one (cost of $3,750), both prices include installation. Due to the age of the vehicle there is no warranty.

The SUV is currently used by the Sargent and has a dog cage. The thought was the Sargent would receive a new vehicle this year and the SUV would be used by the Animal Control Officer as it already has a cage in it.
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The consensus of the Selectboard is to have the staff check with local dealers to see if we can get a better price, select a vendor, proceed with repairs, and bring the information back to the Selectboard at the next meeting to reaffirm the action taken.

'ROUND THE TABLE
Mitchell thanked the staff for fixing the heat situation in the conference rooms, upstairs and downstairs.

Mitchell noted on the Monthly Police Report the School is asking that an Officer do an occasional walk-thru during the school day. He would like to see the Chief perform this duty so a Patrol Officer will not have to be taken off the road.

Mitchell thanked the DPW for all the snow removal they have doing around Town. However, he has a concern regarding the sharp corner on Websterville Road near the Municipal Building. The house is so close to the road and the snow piles are so high there is no site distance. He would appreciate it if someone would look at the situation.

LaClair also thanked the DPW for all their efforts with the road plowing, sanding, salting, and long hours.

LaClair noted the Legislature has begun work on the State budget. Everything from PSAP consolidations, to opening the VSEA union contracts for wage re-negotiations; to even possible program cuts are being reviewed. It is going to be a challenge with some tough decisions to make. If you have comments or opinions to express please feel free to contact Representative LaClair.

Tessier inquired as to the time and place to meet for Friday's site visit inspection. Rogers stated the first site will be Kelly Road just up from the Municipal Building at 9:30 a.m.

Blow reminded Board members of a joint meeting with the Planning Commission tomorrow night, 7:00 p.m., to be held in the Selectboard meeting room, for the purpose of taking public comment on the proposed AT&T Mobility's proposed cell tower.

EXECUTIVE SESSION
On a motion by Tessier, seconded by Mitchell, the Selectboard voted unanimously to find the need for executive session where premature public knowledge would put the Town at a disadvantage.

On a motion by White, seconded by Mitchell, the Selectboard voted unanimously to go into executive session to discuss labor contract negotiations, real estate, legal issues, and personnel at 9:03 p.m.

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to come out of executive session at 10:13 p.m.

ADJOURN
On a motion by Tessier, seconded by White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:13 p.m.

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Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer Selectboard Chair

Barre Town Selectboard