



Town of Barre VERMONT

BARRE TOWN BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024

Tuesday, January 31, 2023

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda.
3. Acknowledge guests, if any
4. Self-introductions
5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair
6. Organization, operation details
 - a. Review, corrections on contact sheet
 - b. Preferred means of receiving meeting material
 - c. Thoughts on receiving information from or meeting with groups included in the budget
 - d. Review Open Meeting Law, Conflict of Interest Policy
 - e. Meeting Schedule
 - f. Live stream meetings
7. Information about budget process and Committee’s role
8. Begin review of budget appendices
9. Public comment, if any.
10. Adjourn.....7:50 p.m.

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2023-2024 fiscal year budget was held on Tuesday, January 31, 2023 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Websterville, VT.

Budget Committee Members Present: Norma Malone, Bob Nelson, Paul White, Justin Bolduc, W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Mike Gilbar, Chris Neddo, Todd Provencher, Jamie Cushman, and Josh Howard.

Budget Committee Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Assistant Town Manager Chris Violette, Town Clerk Tina Lunt, and Finance Director Katelyn Kran.

Others Present:

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Josh Howard, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

GUESTS: None.

INTRODUCTIONS:

Committee members and Town staff introduced themselves and provided their background information.

ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR:

The Committee will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair. There are no requirements for this role, except chairing the meeting.

On a motion by Josh Howard, seconded by Bob Nelson, a nomination for Norma Malone was made for Chair of the Barre Town Budget Committee. With no other candidates put forth, nominations ceased, and the Committee voted to appoint Norma Malone as Chair.

The meeting was turned over to Chair Malone.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Mike Gilbar, a nomination was made for Justin Bolduc as Vice-Chair of the Barre Town Budget Committee. With no other candidates put forth, nominations ceased, and the Committee voted to appoint Justin Bolduc as Vice-Chair.

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION DETAILS:

a) Contact Sheet: A contact sheet was distributed to Committee members. Members were asked to verify their contact information. The Budget Committee members' names and contact information are posted on the Town website. Members were asked to indicate what information, if any, they would not like to be made public.

b) Receiving Meeting Material: Committee members were asked their preference on receiving material by email only, on paper only, or both. Committee members shared their preference of receiving their budget packet by email prior to the meeting for reviewing purposes but also receiving a hardcopy of the budgets at the meeting. Mrs. Malone asked if the budgets could be handed out ahead of time for the purpose of reviewing prior to the meeting. Additionally, she requested a schedule of the meeting dates that outlines the budgets to be reviewed be shared with Committee members.

c) Groups: Groups such as the Aldrich Public Library, Barre Area Development, Barre Partnership, Central Vermont Economic Development, and Green Mountain Transit sometimes make a presentation to the Budget Committee. All other Not-for-Profits that are on the ballot submit reports to include details regarding services provided to Town residents. Board consensus is for the groups to attend a meeting to make a presentation. Additionally, Committee members asked for written reports to be submitted prior to the presentation. The reports should include budgeted items and actual expenditures. Committee members will plan to discuss those reports at their Tuesday, February 21 meeting.

d) Law and Policy: Chair Malone turned the floor over to the Manager to give a brief overview of The Vermont Open Meeting Law and the Town's Conflict-of-Interest Policy. Town Manager Carl Rogers informed the Committee these proceedings are subject to Vermont Open Meeting Law. While it is okay to email the Manager with questions, he strongly discourages conversations between members via email. If 6 or more are involved in a conversation, even through links, it is a legal meeting and must be warned. Under the Open Meeting Law all proceedings are to have an agenda. The agenda will be posted on the Barre Town website and locations throughout the Town. Mrs. Malone added that any written correspondence is considered public information and is subject to the Freedom of Information Act. Mr. Rogers noted the Conflict-of-Interest Policy, adopted in 2018, pertains to the Budget Committee as well.

e) Meeting Schedule: This Committee will meet Tuesday evenings, 6:00 p.m. – 7:50 p.m., in the Lower Conference Room at the Municipal Building. The Manager will prepare a calendar outlining the date a fund is to be discussed. Sometimes the Budget Committee will need to hold an extra meeting or there will be a double session should they fall behind in their schedule. During these double meetings there will be a recess (8:00 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.) to allow the Selectboard to hold a short meeting to conduct necessary weekly business. These extra meetings sometimes take place on Thursdays or Saturday mornings as well. The Manager recommends the Committee plans for double sessions during the month of March. The Board suggested double sessions to take place on March 14th and 21st. The Town Meeting Warning must be approved by the Selectboard no later than April 4, 2023. A budget decision must be made by the Selectboard on March 28, 2023.

f) Live Stream Meetings: The technology in the Lower Conference Room enables the ability to live stream the Budget Committee meetings. The Budget Committee decided to have the live streaming option available for observing the meetings via Microsoft Teams. Additionally, these meetings will be recorded.

BUDGET PROCESS:

Department Heads include: Town Clerk's Office – Tina Lunt; Zoning & Planning – Cindy Spaulding; Police Department – William Dodge; Fire Department – Andy Lange; Ambulance Service – Paul Ginther; Emergency Management – Jack Mitchell; Cemetery - Dwight Coffrin; Recreation – Johnny Crossley;

Public Works (Equipment, Sewer, Water, and most of the Highway) – Richard Tetreault; Engineering (Municipal Building, Highway, Sewer, and Water) – Josh Martineau; and Finance Office – Katelyn Kran.

Town Manager Carl Rogers gave an overview of the budget process.

Department heads submit their proposed expense budgets using budget worksheets. The Town Manger reviews the worksheets with the department heads, comparing to prior years and invoices. Data is collected by calling vendors. The budget being considered by this Committee is the Manager’s revised budget. The Budget Committee will make the final budget decision(s) and adopt the proposed budget. The final General Fund (including Highway) Budget will be presented to the voters on Town Meeting Day, May 9, 2023.

Barre Town’s budget practice is to not inflate line items by percentages. Department heads are instructed to be precise and not to overstate. Rounding is done to the closest 5 or 10 dollars. Wages, utilities, debt service, employee benefits, and insurances are budgeted by the Manager. The committee will make motions at the last meeting to adopt the 10 budgets.

During the budget review and discussion process each member should make a note of changes they would like to see and/or items which require a more in-depth discussion. These items will be placed on the white board for discussion at a future date. Once all fund budgets have been reviewed, individual items remaining on the white board will be acted upon by this Committee. Fund budgets will be approved separately and by motion.

APPENDICES:

The Budget Notebooks were distributed. Each fund type (tabbed section) within the book is setup in the same manner. Each fund budget section/tab contains the following: first page is a summary of revenues and expenses for the current fiscal year and the proposed FY 2023-2024. The second page will detail “What’s In, What’s Not & Significant Changes” for the fund. The third page reflects the proposed revenue. The remaining pages are the proposed expenditures. For your information, the current fiscal year is 2022-2023 or July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. The proposed budget this Committee will review is fiscal year 2023-2024, (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024).

In the very front of the Budget Book there is a list of Fund and Designator Codes. Mr. Rogers noted the Budget Notebooks that were passed out were missing the General Ledger Chart of Account Object Codes, and a Glossary of Acronyms. This information will be shared next week.

APPENDIX (Last tab in notebook)

The last section of the Budget Book (Appendix tab) contains the following:

- 5-Year Equipment Purchase Plan
- 5-Year Paved Road Plan
- 5-Year Gravel Road Work Plan
- 5-Year Building Plan
- Reappraisal Fund
- Debt Service Chart
- Tax Stabilization Agreements
- Housing Loans
- Recreation Maintenance

The 5-Year Plans were approved by the Selectboard earlier this year to assist with the preparation of the FY 2023-2024 proposed budget.

The Committee began their review with the 5 Year Equipment Purchase Plan. Currently, the Town is working with Municipal Lease Consultants for their lease purchases. Mr. Rogers noted inventory delays are holding up the replacement of fleet within this plan, which are due to the supply chain issues. The Town is holding onto vehicles for a longer period of time.

While reviewing the 5-Year Paved Road Plan Town Manager Carl Rogers stated staff bi-annually evaluate Town roads. The roads are evaluated and given a priority score based on their condition. The Town has been trying to combine paving segments of roads for cost efficiency purposes. This fiscal year paving is based on \$90/ton, which is a 13.9% increase from last year.

Budget Committee Meeting of January 31, 2023 Continued:

The 5-Year Gravel Road Plan is a Work Plan. The work is completed by the Public Works Department. The conditions are evaluated by staff. The expenses will show up in the Highway Fund in the summer maintenance section.

The 5-Year Building Plan is reviewed just like the 5-Year Equipment Plan. Each department or fund that owns a building contributes towards the Building Fund. Mr. Rogers stated a few years ago the Selectboard asked the Town to increase the contributions by 3%. Department heads contribute their input towards the plan. Items may move from year to year within the plan based on the needs of projects.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

APPROVED MINUTES

Barre Town Budget Committee

Filed in the Barre Town Clerk's Office on this _____ day of _____, 2023.

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.