



Town of Barre VERMONT

BARRE TOWN BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-2025

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Consider approving March 19, 2024 meeting minutes
4. Acknowledge guests, if any, for non-agenda items
5. Questions about material received and reviewed to date
6. Consider Approving the Following Budgets to Include:

a. General Fund	b. Records Restoration Fund	c. Highway Fund
d. Sewer Fund	e. Sewer Capital Improvement Fund	f. Water Fund
g. Equipment Fund	h. Cemetery Fund	i. Ambulance Fund
k. Building Fund		
7. Discuss Budget presentation
8. Managers Comments
9. Public comment, if any
10. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2024-2025 fiscal year budget was held on Tuesday, March 26, 2024 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Websterville, VT.

Budget Committee Members Present: Norma Malone, Paul White, Justin Bolduc, Mike Gilbar, Chris Neddo, Todd Provencher, Jamie Cushman, and Lindsey Lozier. Those present virtually: Bob Nelson and Josh Howard.

Budget Committee Members Absent: None.

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

Others Present: Times Argus Reporter Eric Blaisdell.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 6:10 p.m. by Chair Malone.

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

On a motion by Todd Provencher, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the agenda as presented.

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Todd Provencher, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the March 19, 2024, Budget Committee minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

GUESTS: None.

QUESTIONS: None.

APPROVAL OF THE FY 24-25 BUDGET:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Chris Neddo, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Records Restoration Fund Budget in the amount of \$19,961.00.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Sewer Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,227,811.

Paul White inquired about the sewer rate recommendation to the Selectboard. The Manager said the range of \$350.00 - \$370.00 was provided as they are not sure how things will be impacted at this point with the high usage customer.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Todd Provencher, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Sewer Capital Improvement Fund Budget in the amount as \$0. It is noted there is \$48,000 of revenue in this fund.

On a motion by Todd Provencher, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Water Fund Budget in the amount of \$655,652. With recommendation that the rate take into account the special assessment adjustment by Selectboard approval.

There was discussion regarding the Websterville Fire District Special Assessment. This rate needs to be adjusted. Town staff were able to confirm that the Websterville Fire District #3, Special Assessment Plan allows for the Town to adjust the rate.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by, Josh Howard the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Equipment Fund Budget in the amount of \$756,298.

The Equipment Fund decreased by \$979,459 (56.45%). This fund had previously been used as an Internal Service Fund which is not appropriate for assets. With recommendations from the Auditor and the Selectboard, Finance Director Katelyn Kran and the Manager revamped the Equipment Fund (aka Fleet Maintenance Fund), changing the way this fund is run. This fund no longer owns or purchases equipment. Due to this change, the Highway Department has increased expenses along with other departments.

Mr. Bolduc thanked the Manager and Finance Director for their work on this change.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Ambulance Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,226,952.

The Manager reports that the largest increases in the Ambulance fund are due to the addition of six full-time staff for Williamstown. Additionally, per-diem staffing has been added to eliminate overtime hours. It is noted that additional revenue will be added to this fund with an adjusted fee schedule and the new billing company.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Josh Howard, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Building Fund Budget in the amount of \$90,000.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Cemetery Fund Budget in the amount of \$130,801.

Mr. Violette shared the Selectboard approved a wage increase for the Cemetery Sexton.

Highway and General Funds:

The Highway Fund has the largest impact from the shift of the Equipment Fund. The Manager notes another notable increase in the Highway Fund is the paving contract. Furthermore, this proposed budget includes financing the 1-ton dump truck. Mr. Violette shared his concerns over financing this over the course of five years. Mr. Violette's recommendation is to bring the \$205,000 10-wheel truck purchase back into the Highway Fund as opposed to financing it. Overall, this would be a 2-cent difference in the tax rate. The Committee agrees with this recommendation.

Conversation continued as Committee members discussed the General Fund whiteboard items. One of these items was the lighting for the Basketball/Volleyball court. Mr. Violette shared that a quote in the amount of \$15,400.00 was received for this project. Committee consensus is to add this to the General Fund Budget. Additionally, this item will be added to "Bob's List".

The Committee discussed the option of adding \$150,000 back into the Highway Fund for paving the Municipal Building. Committee consensus is to move this item back into the budget.

Mrs. Malone stated that over the years, the Selectboard has used fund balance to buy down the tax rate. She noted if there is not a fund balance to sustain this in the future there will be a spike in the tax rate and it's important the Town temper this.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 General Fund Budget in the amount of \$5,108,126 of which \$514,576.00 will be paid for from fund balance.

Budget Committee Meeting of March 26, 2024 Continued:

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Todd Provencher, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Highway Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,488,915.

It is noted for the record 20.82% is the overall increase of the Highway Fund Budget.

BUDGET PRESENTATION DISCUSSION:

The Budget Presentation has been done in various ways in the past. In most recent years, the Selectboard has videotaped a Budget presentation after Open Town Meeting. The Budget Committee citizen members are invited to join in the presentation. A presentation will be held on Wednesday, May 8 after Open Town Meeting.

Mr. Violette confirmed a modified budget book will be produced for our residents. It is noted for the record that the warning must be approved no later than April 9th.

MANAGER’S COMMENTS:

The Manager thanked the Committee for their effort. He said he appreciated the transparency through the process. Additionally, Mr. Violette credited the Department Heads and the Finance Director for all their hard work. He hopes that all felt it was a bit more streamlined this year.

Committee members shared that the process was great, and things went smooth. They noted that no extra meetings were needed. Chair Malone commended the Manager for his work on his first budget.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Todd Provencher, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

APPROVED MINUTES

Barre Town Budget Committee

Filed in the Barre Town Clerk’s Office on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.