

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting

Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016

Minutes for January 27, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2014-2015 fiscal year budget was held February 4, 2014 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Chair Rolland Tessier, Jeff Blow, Rob LaClair, Tom White, W, John "Jack" Mitchell, JP Isabelle, Scott Hutchins, Paul Malone, and Jaimes Fewer. Members not present included: Chris Day

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, DPW Superintendent Richard Tetreault, Town Engineer Harry Hinrichsen, Aldrich Public Library Trustees (Nancy Pope, Karen Lane, and Paul McGinley).

CALL TO ORDER

Town Manager Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

PRESENTATION OF THE ALDRICH PUBLIC LIBRARY

Nancy Pope, Karen Lane, and Rob Spring gave a power point presentation to the Committee in the upstairs Selectboard meeting room.

Points made by the presentation include:

- Aldrich is the 4th largest in the State, is open 44 hours a week, and has 8.4 full-time employees. Salaries are the lowest in the State.
- They currently have 25 computers with internet connections. This includes borrowing of e-books.
- The library role is evolving into a Public Service Center
- Funding (43%) is obtained from Barre City and Barre Town. The statewide average per capita rate for funding libraries is \$37.49. Barre Town's per capita is \$12.78.
- The remaining 57% of budget is raised through fundraising, endowment interest, and in some years by dipping into the principal of the endowments.
- Currently there is no money set aside for capital improvements which includes repairs and replacements over the next 10 years. The research indicates it would take \$180,000 to do all the "necessary" items on the list.
- It was hoped that a recent endowment would be used for capital improvement projects but were diverted to the general operating to meet expenses.
- The Library stated to bring the Town up to \$29.00 per capita the Board would need to request \$235,050 for FY 15-16. The current fiscal year contribution is \$115,000.

During discussion all agreed the Library was needed and its role is changing. However, balancing what the taxpayers can afford is the issue. Blow expressed concern about a large increase without having some kind of approval from the voters. An option might be for the Town to keep our annual allocation in the budget (current rate) and do a special article for an additional amount (to be determined). There was brief discussion regarding patron usage (the number of town residents versus city residents) and what happens should the Barre City budget not pass. Will the Library allotment be cut?

In her parting comments Ms. Pope noted the Library Board expects cost increase in the salaries with the retirement of Karen Lane and having to replace their technology person.

MINUTES

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF February 3, 2015 continued:

On a motion by Malone, seconded by White, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of January 27, 2015 with the following corrections:

Page 1, Meeting Time & Process, third sentence: delete the words "or there will be a double meeting".

Chris Day was not present for the vote.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The Manager, for the benefit of those not present last week, reminded Committee members to not wait until the last minute if they have questions. Making them know sooner will allow staff time to do the necessary research.

WATER FUND

DPW Superintendent Richard Tetreault and Town Engineer Harry Hinrichsen were present.

The Manager's Water Fund proposed budget will be increasing 7.87% or \$25,050. The main reason is the increase in the purchase of water (from Barre City); the readiness to serve charge increase (from Barre City) and the once every 5-year expense of cleaning and inspecting the water tank. The list of what is in and significant changes were reviewed.

Revenues: The proposed budget would increase the base rate from \$51 to \$55 per quarter and the cost per 100 cubic feet would be increased to \$6.75.

Expenses: Rogers noted the distribution of wages for Management; spoke to software expenses (billing and meter reading programs); insurances; water distribution to include the purchase of water from the Graniteville Fire District and Barre City Water Department; generator testing certification; and other outside services (grass mowing, water line testing, etc.).

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Next week the Committee will review of the Sewer and Water Fund budgets. The Manager hopes to have the Highway Budget in your packets. Be prepared to discuss them at the meeting next Tuesday. If you have questions prior to the meeting feel free to call (479-9331) or email (crogers@barretown.org) the Town Manager.

The Committee inquired as to other groups which might want to come before the Committee. It was noted the Recreation Board will be present one meeting. The consensus of those present is they would like to have a discussion on the Aldrich Library funding at the beginning of the next meeting instead of waiting to the very end.

Reminder: Should you be unable to attend a meeting or will be late, contact the Town Manager as soon as possible. He will also be available if you want a one-on-one session to catch up on the information you missed. The Budget Committee meetings are audio taped and will be another resource available to you. All meeting minutes are posted on the website (www.barretown.org). From the homepage, look under the Boards/Commission button, and click on Budget Committee.

NEXT MEETING

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, February 10, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

RECESS

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF February 3, 2015 continued:

On a motion by Isabelle, seconded by White, the Committee voted unanimously to recess the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Chris Day was not present for the vote.

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Barre Town Budget Committee

x _____
Committee Chair

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

DRAFT