

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020
January 29, 2019
AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Self introductions
4. Elect Chair and Vice-Chair
5. Information about the budget process
6. Begin review of budget appendices.
7. Adjourn 7:55 p.m.

Minutes for January 29, 2019

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2019-2020 fiscal year budget was held January 29, 2019 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Tom White, Bob Nelson, Paul White, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, Cedric Sanborn, Andrew McAvoy, Phil Cecchini, and Alan Garceau.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang, and Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty.

CALL TO ORDER

Selectboard Chair Tom White called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Bob Nelson, the agenda was approved with the following amendments: Add item 6A for Public Comment and change Item 7 to Recess the meeting.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Self-introductions were made and each of the members stated his/her goals, priorities, and objectives for this budget. A contact sheet was distributed. Members were asked to verify their telephone numbers, email address, and to designate those items not to be published on the website. Committee members are encouraged to ask questions and participate, especially if they have an area of special interest. Snacks and beverages will be provided at the meetings. Be sure to let us know what you like.

ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

In accordance with the State Open Meeting Law all Committees, like this one, where motions/considerations are made, meeting minutes will be taken. Barre Town does take minutes and they will need to be approved. Future agendas will contain an item for minute approval. Minutes should be available in a draft form no later than 5 days after the meeting and are posted on the Town website (www.barretown.org) under Boards/Budget Committee.

To keep the meetings moving along a Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed for this Committee.

On a motion by Tom White, seconded by Bob Nelson, a nomination for Norma Malone was made for Chair. 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.

Cedric Sanborn was nominated but declined to be Vice Chair.

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

BUDGET COMMITTEE OF 10

The Budget Committee consists of the five Selectboard members and five citizens; two appointed by the Selectboard; one appointed by the Town Clerk-Treasurer; this group of three then appoints the final two

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 29, 2019 continued:

members. The budgets (General Fund and Highway Fund) approved by this Committee will be the ones presented to the voters. In the event the budgets would fail the Committee would reconvene to make changes for the next vote.

OPEN MEETING LAW

The Manager informed the Committee these proceedings are subject to the open meeting law. This means in order to take official action there must be a quorum of 6. While it is okay to email the Manager with questions, he strongly discourages conversations between members via email. If 6 or more get 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. He will prepare one which will include some standard items such as approving/amending the agenda, approval of meeting minutes, allowing time for questions and answers. However, it will be flexible to accommodate the unforeseen discussions. Reminder: consensus is not an official action....motions are

Malone also asked the Manager to provide members of this Committee with the "Conflict of Interest Policy."

MEETING TIME & PROCESS

This Committee will meet Tuesday evenings, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., in the Emergency Operation Center at the Municipal Building in Lower Websterville. The Manager will prepare a tentative 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 or if there is a topic which needs in depth discussion. 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 (approving warrants, minutes, etc.). See the Designated Meeting Dates section for itemized dates.

All the Budget Committee stated they would like to receive their weekly packet of material via email and by paper.

The Manager also reminded the new members that if they cannot make a meeting or will be late to please send him an email or call so time is not wasted waiting for a member.

BUDGET BOOK CONTENTS

The budget notebooks were distributed. Each fund type (tabbed section) in the budget book is setup in the same manner. The first page is a summary of revenues and expenses for the current fiscal year and the proposed FY 2019-2020. The second page (green) will detail "What's In, What's Not & Significant Changes" for the fund. The third page (yellow) reflects the proposed revenue. The remaining pages (white) are the proposed expenditures. On the revenue and expense pages note the headings of the seven columns. Column 6 (Manager's proposed budget) contains the information which is being reviewed. For your information the current fiscal year is 2018-2019 or July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019. The proposed budget this committee will review is fiscal year 2019-2020, (July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020).

BUDGET PROCESS

In the front of the Budget Book (lavender paper) is a flow chart detailing the lengthy budget process (beginning to end).

The proposed FY 19-20 expense budgets were prepared by the various department heads and reviewed by the Town Manager. 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 all fund budgets except the General/Highway which will be presented to the voters on Town Meeting Day in May 2019.

BUDGET PRACTICES

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 discussed whether Department Heads should be required to attend the meeting(s) while their budget is being discussed. Department Heads include: Town Clerk's Office – Donna Kelty; Zoning & Planning – Chris Violette; Police Department – William Dodge; Fire Department – Chris Violette; Ambulance Service – Chris Lamonda; Emergency Management – Jack Mitchell; Cemetery & Recreation – Dwight Coffrin; Public Works (Equipment, Sewer, Water and most of the Highway) – Richard Tetreault; and Engineering (Municipal Building, Highway, Sewer, and Water) – Harry Hinrichsen. The consensus was to have department heads attend the meeting when their department budget is being reviewed. Department Heads will receive a copy of the tentative meeting schedule so they are aware of when their department budget(s) are being reviewed.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 29, 2019 continued:

Other groups sometimes request to make a presentation to the budget committee and sometimes the committee will request an appearance by a group that is seeking funding. Some of the groups requesting time before the committee are the Aldrich Library, Barre Area Development and Barre Partnership. The consensus was to limit presentation time before this Committee. (See meeting dates below.)

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. Once all fund budgets have been reviewed a list of those items which have notations will be given to the Manager to prepare a final discussion list. The Budget Committee, by fund type, will then review, discuss, and determine from those items on the list what action, if any, is necessary (leave it in, add to, take it out, amend, etc.). It was noted that in the past the chalk boards in the meeting room have been utilized to post items which need additional work/discussion so that they don't get overlooked.

The Manager again noted that should you be unable to attend a meeting or will be late, contact him 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.

CITIZEN BUDGET TOUR

The Citizen Budget Tour was a Saturday morning in February (with refreshments being provided) for a very long time. Last year, in an effort to increase citizen involvement, a mini tour was scheduled on a Tuesday night. However, a big snowstorm hampered the plans and it was cut very short. Committee conversation focused on whether the Town should have a budget tour. Many concurred the Tour has value especially for first-time members.

Consensus is the Manager will speak to Department Heads to get input on other possible options (willingness to do video snip-its for the website, try a Tuesday night mini tour again, site visits for major items like the new Websterville water plant, etc.) and will report back.

DESIGNATED MEETING DATES

Those "in the budget" not for profits (GMT, Barre Area Development, Barre Partnership, etc.) the Committee will hear from are scheduled for March 12, 2019. All these not-for-profits should provide their respective reports to this Committee for review no later than February 26, 2019. There was a brief discussion noting these "in the budget agencies" do not have to be a ballot item as they are services that a municipality may provide (transportation, economic development, etc.). This Committee many years ago decided these agencies would be a budgeted line item.

Double meetings will be held on February 19, 2019 and March 19, 2019. Paul White noted he will not be attending the February 12 and 19 meetings. Bob Nelson will be out the week of March 4th, and Phil Cecchini may not be available on March 5th.

The Manager will provide the Board with a proposed schedule as to what funds will be reviewed on what dates. This may help to keep things on track.

UNDERSTANDING THE CHART OF ACCOUNTS

The general ledger chart of account numbers for the Town is represented in a twelve digit numeric format, "XXX-XXX-XXX-000." The first set of three numbers (XXX-xxx-xxx-000), represent the fund type. The second set of three numbers (xxx-XXX-xxx-000), represent the department and the last three numbers (xxx-xxx-XXX-000), represent the line item/object. The Chart of Accounts is in the front of the budget book. These numbers are consistent throughout the various funds and departments.

Fund Types are:

| | | | |
|-----|-----------------|-----|-----------------|
| 011 | = General | 400 | = Equipment |
| 012 | = Highway | 500 | = Sewer |
| 050 | = Building Fund | 600 | = Water |
| 200 | = Cemetery | 700 | = Ambulance/EMS |

Departments refer to departments within the Town, such as Police, Fire, Town Manager's Office, Assessor's Office, Town Clerk's Office, etc.

Line item/objects are types of revenues (property taxes, dog licenses, water receipts) or expenses (wages, supplies, insurance, purchases, etc.).

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 29, 2019 continued:

APPENDIX REVIEW

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 Plan
- 5-Year Building Plan
- Reappraisal Fund
- Debt Service Chart
- Tax Stabilization Contracts
- Housing Loans
- Recreation Facility Maintenance Plan
- Employees' Pay Department Splits

To create a 5-Year Plan the Selectboard (who ultimately approve the plans) rely on staff expertise, and recognize that a great deal of time, effort, and research go into their preparation. Information within the plans is used by the Management to assist with the preparation of the proposed budget. Please be aware these plans impact many fund budgets. When preparing the Plan effort is made to keep the numbers somewhat consistent year-to-year. The other appendices are used as aides to assist the Manager with budgeting as well.

The Committee reviewed the Equipment Purchase Plan, 5-Year Paved Road Plan, 5-Year Gravel Road Plan, and part of the 5-Year Building Plan. The Gravel Road Plan was missing a couple of pages. Rogers will provide the corrected copy at the next meeting.

Malone asked the Manager to provide a roster of Town employees and their Departments.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Reminder: If you have questions on anything discussed during this meeting or on what you review that cannot wait until the next meeting be sure to contact the Town Manager.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

NEXT MEETING

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, February 5, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

RECESS

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee meeting recessed at 7:58 p.m.

Town Clerk-Treasurer – Donna J. Kelty

Barre Town Budget Committee

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Committee Chair

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____

x _____