

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 - 2020
February 19, 2019
AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Consider approving February 12, 2019 meeting minutes
4. Questions about material covered at previous meeting.
5. Review Highway Fund budget
6. Public Comment 7:50 p.m.
7. Recess 7:55 p.m.
8. Reconvene 8:20 p.m.
9. Continue review of Highway Fund budget and miscellaneous sections of General Fund.
10. Adjourn.

Minutes for February 19, 2019

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2019-2020 fiscal year budget was held February 19, 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, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, Cedric Sanborn, Andrew McAvoy, Phil Cecchini, and Alan Garceau. Paul White was not present.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Clerk-Treasurer Wendy Moore, and DPW Superintendent Richard Tetreault.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Norma Malone called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn, and seconded by Bob Nelson, the Budget Committee voted to approve the agenda. Paul White was not present for the vote.

MINUTE APPROVAL

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Cedric Sanborn, the Budget Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes of February 12, 2019 with minor spelling and grammatical corrections. Paul White was not present for the vote.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Sewer Fund – What does the expense item of collections cover. Rogers noted it is for the collection of the sewage.

Investments of the Town – want to make sure the Town is getting best rate for dollars. Reviewed by outside auditors annually. Changing strategy on investments may be worthwhile. Want to be proactive. Will be put on the white board for further discussion,

Indebtedness: WFD #3 loans (Appendix F). The loans are new this year. The new loan (for recent construction) is still not closed out. The Board reviewed the debt payment schedule. The WFD #3 loan has a negative 3.0 interest rate. After each payment the principal amount is decreased/discounted 3%.

Water and Sewer Operator Expenses – please put on the Board for further explanation. These are split out over various funds over allocation.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF February 19, 2019 continued:

The adjustments noted last week will be changed a revised Water Fund budget will be provided.

HIGHWAY FUND

The Highway Fund budget is increasing 3.99 percent or \$120,000. Major expense changes (green highlights page) were reviewed. Storm water regulations have impacted project costs.

Some of the expense items discussed were road erosion inventory is being hired out (one-time expense) at \$12,000, the guard rail project is ongoing, round-a-bout landscaping (to include ongoing maintenance), increase tree removal funding to continue regular removal and accommodate taking down trees showing signs of ash borer infestation.

There was significant discussion on the price for salt which has gone up significantly this year. The budget increased \$14,400 (page 15 of expenses). The amount of salt purchased has remained consistent. State recommends 500 lbs. of salt per mile of paved road. The Town has calibrators to monitor salt disbursement. Rogers stated the Town adjusts practices to control salt usage. This item will be put item on white board for further review.

Equipment charges for winter maintenance/summer construction are based on seasonal projects, truck rentals are needed for larger projects, and the excavator (tracks) rental due to project on Camp Street. The Manager noted the Equipment Fund rental rates increased by 4%. Equipment charges can be based on hourly/monthly/lump sum amounts. The Equipment Fund audit last year showed a paper deficit. Is there a plan to retire the deficit? Use General Fund fund balance or fix over the years by raising rates.

Various road grants and the booking of grant revenue were noted.

Winter Maintenance – there is new sidewalk in East Barre and by next winter there may be more. The number of callouts for plowing parking lots has been increased by 1. The vendor’s contract expires this April. Will be asking for a reversible plow when purchasing a new truck this year. Some of the items included are erecting snow fence, hauling winter sand, marking routes, plowing, salting, sanding and snow removal (a lot this year).

Street Lighting increased – appears as though a credit has gone away. Rogers needs to do more research. Discussion focused on research & development, efficiencies, and using less energy but electric companies not having the revenue needed to operate.

Proposed budget would be about 1.85¢ on the tax rate. Manager Rogers estimated an increase to the Grand List and estimated the rate. Estimated about \$65,000 would raise 1¢ on the tax rate.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

RECESS and RECONVENE

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted to recess at 7:52 p.m. Paul White was not present for the vote.

The Budget Committee reconvened at 8:34 p.m.

HANDOUTS

Table of contents for Appendices, Equipment Fund Y-T-D budget report, and several General Fund Departments.

GENERAL FUND

Ten budgets (14% of the entire budget) distributed – Solid waste forward. Changes are in Aldrich Library and Development (CVEDC, WIP, BAD).

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF February 19, 2019 continued:

Solid Waste (7.4% increase) – driving factor are Bulk Trash expenses for roll-off services. Increase for equipment charges. Green Up Day charges can vary year to year. Brush chipping equipment used at the lawn waste site is a big cylinder grinder.

Health Officer – William Kirby is the Health Officer and Doreen Philips is the Deputy (since June 2018). The State is looking into regionalizing this position. No legislation at this time. The Constable, by law, must deliver/serve Health Orders. Thus other services has been funded. No changes to this budget from the current year.

Animal Control Officer - In the past the Town had a part-time officer. The ACO decided she wanted to be a full-time police officer and is at the Academy now. Whichever Officer is on duty answers the animal calls. Hope to recruit a new officer by June 2019.

Tools provided by the Town, use of personal vehicle, and cell phone service were noted. This covers domestic animals, (dogs, cats, chickens, horses, pigs, etc.). Most ACO calls are for dogs, then cats (strays). Line item decreased \$130.

Culture – *Aldrich Library* has requested an increase of \$12,200. The reports for the Committee should be available for distribution to the Committee. Manager Rogers has not received anything regarding a *GMTA* revised request.

Most of the \$7,360 increase in the Development Department is for Barre Area Development.

Insurance and Benefits - Insurances are down \$7800. The insurance is purchased through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns.

Other Sundry Items – Williamstown Taxes (west side of route 14 - across Stevens Branch up the hill) have been increased. They are working on a reappraisal and the value/tax rate may be much different. The County tax is based on our Grand List and estimated an \$1925 increase.

Property purchases of \$1 are budgeted in anticipation of acquisition through tax sale or regular purchase. VLCT per capita is based on the last census figure.

Interfund Transfers – Equipment charges are for the unknown things which may be purchased (replacement voting machines, many years ago a computer server, etc.).

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Rogers distributed the Highway Fund budget. Next week Richard Tetreault (DPW Superintendent) and Harry Hinrichsen (Town Engineer) will be present.

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.

NEXT MEETING

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, February 26, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 9:44 p.m. to the next meeting which will be February 26, 2019. Paul White was not present for the vote.

Asst. Town Clerk-Treasurer – Wendy Moore