

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021
March 17, 2020
AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Consider approving March 10, 2020 minutes
4. Questions about material received and covered to date.
5. Review Budgets: General Fund – Recreation, Police, Animal Control, Fire, Emergency Management, Solid Waste, Health Officer, Development, Insurances, employee benefits, other (tax payments, dues, transfers).
6. Public comment: receive guests, if any 7:50 p.m.
7. Recess 7:55 p.m.
8. Reconvene 8:15 p.m.
9. Continue review (See #5 above)
10. Consider holding extra meetings on March 19 and 26.
11. Adjourn 9:20 p.m.

Minutes for March 17, 2020

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2020-2021 fiscal year budget was held March 17, 2020 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Bob Nelson, Norma Malone (by phone at 6:02 p.m.), Justin Bolduc, Cedric Sanborn, Debra Pierce, Mike Gilbar, Alan Garceau, W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Tom White and Paul White.

Also, in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Recreation Board Chair Doug Farnham, Police Chief William Dodge (6:17 p.m.), Fire Chief Chris Violette (7:00 p.m.).

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Justin Bolduc called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn, seconded by Alan Garceau, the agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVE MINUTES – The item was tabled to the next meeting.

QUESTIONS ON MATERIALS RECEIVED AND COVERED

Cedric Sanborn asked if the Recreation laborer – perhaps a per-diem staff and fees being charged by the Recreation Department could be placed on the white board. Paul White would also like to ensure the radio system funds are on the white board as well.

GENERAL FUND REVIEW CONTINUED

Recreation Fund budget review began with expenses. Wage breakdown, supplies, the softball field light project, invasive species pull (see Recreation Board minutes for more information), contracted services, and rain gear for staff were highlighted. Discussion continued on the pros/cons of hiring full-time additional laborer or per-diem worker, that the Softball League raised an additional \$2,460 at their Calcutta event which will go toward the softball field light project, and a little more information on invasive species (common buckthorn, Japanese barberry, Japanese knotweed, and honeysuckle).

Police Chief Dodge was present for the review of the Police Department Budget. Manager Rogers began with the What’s In/Not and Significant changes. It was noted that Wilkins Harley Davidson is providing a motorcycle for the summer at no charge. So included in the budget is \$2,500 for patrol equipment. There is also additional funding for the new police dog training, food and vet fees. Donation monies will cover the cost of buying the dog.

Wages are a big Department expense noting there is an increase due to the hiring of an already trained and certified officer. The Committee was informed the Town now supplies the School with a Resource Officer, approximately 10 hours a week. The School reimburses the Town for the wages/benefits.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 17, 2020 continued:

Other expenses noted were radio charges, the large equipment purchases (5 in-car camera systems, and the AFIS fingerprint machine (will be financed), Range fee increases, computer software and maintenance fees, and the need for outside lab services. The other big expense in the budget is Dispatch which increased 3% (\$2,655). Due to new agreements with Thunder Road, Washington County Sheriff Department (WCSD) services will be reduced. WCSD reimburses the Town for this expense.

Animal Control Officer Currently the Town does not have an Animal Control Officer. The most recent ACO quit as there was not enough work (roughly 5 -6 hours a week). The Town still uses Random Rescue for Kennel services even though they moved to Chelsea. Boarding fees for strays that are picked up will be borne by the pet owner. The Town does not use the Central Vermont Humane Society due to cost and limited services.

Fire Department. The Fire Chief Chris Violette was present to answer questions. Review began with the What's In/Not list and Significant Changes. Focus was on the set-aside monies for the next purchase of SCBA, department wage increases to officer stipends and fire-fighter response increases. There was a significant reduction (\$45,335) due to the lease purchase of SCBA being paid in full.

The Manager reviewed the wage account noting the changes to stipends and response pay, training, set-aside money for jaws-of-life, supplies, a reduction in the heat account due to the decrease in propane cost, preventative maintenance on pumpers, and the Fire Warden stipend.

Emergency Management. Manager Rogers noted there were no big changes in his budget. Discussion centered on the school generator project. Jack Mitchell noted there has been a recent development. It was thought most of the work to be completed to "connect" the generator to the electric panel was complete. However, there is a bit more to do and this estimate for the work is around \$60,000. There is no plan on how to pay for the additional cost at this time but meetings are planned.

PUBLIC COMMENT AT 7:50 P.M. - None

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn, seconded by Mike Gilbar the Budget Committee recessed at 8:08 p.m.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Tom White, the Budget Committee reconvened at 8:55 p.m. Jack Mitchell was not present for the remainder of the meeting, leaving at 8:54 p.m.

GENERAL FUND REVIEW CONTINUED

Solid Waste brush chipping expense has increased \$1,000. The Health Officer budget contains wages for a Deputy as well. The Manager noted funds were allotted to pay the Constable to deliver Health Orders.

Aldrich Public Library is on the white board for discussion. However, the Manager did inform the Board he proposed increasing the Town allotment 2.25% (the same as the Library budget increase).

Development (included dues to BAD, Barre Partnership, CV Economic Development, GMTA) were highlighted. Debt Service (noted the Incubator Building at the Wilson Industrial Park will be paid this year), Town insurances, and Employee Benefits (VMER rate increases), and County/Williamstown taxes rounded out the budget discussions.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 24, 2020, 6:00 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville. The agenda will be to review the Ambulance budget and if time permits start on the white board issues.

There will be no meeting on Thursday, March 19th but be sure to pencil in Thursday, March 26th if needed.

ADJOURN

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

Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty