

**Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 - 2022
March 9, 2021
AGENDA**

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda.
3. Consider approving February 23, 2021 and March 2, 2021 minutes.
4. Acknowledge guests, if any.
5. Presentations by organizations included in the General Fund Budget
 - a) Barre Area Development 6:05 p.m.
 - b) Barre Partnership 6:15 p.m.
 - c) Aldrich Public Library 6:25 p.m.
6. Questions about material received and reviewed to date.
7. Continue review of Budgets: General Fund Administration and Finance Department
8. Public comment: receive guests, if any 7:50 p.m.
9. Discuss meeting schedule and adding an extra meeting.
10. Adjourn 7:55 p.m.

Minutes for March 9, 2021

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2021-2022 fiscal year budget was held March 9, 2021 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Meeting Room, Lower Websterville, Vermont at 6:00 p.m. and remotely using Teams.

The following members were present in the Selectboard meeting room: W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Jim West, and Terry Reil. Those attending remotely were Paul White, Norma Malone, Bob Nelson, Justin Bolduc, Cedric Sanborn, Phil Cecchini, and Mike Gilbar.

Also attending (in the Selectboard meeting room): Town Manager Carl Rogers and Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang. Others attending remotely: Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Finance Director Katelyn Kran, BAD representatives Cody Morrison (Director), David Sichel, Robert Hutchins, Barre Partnership Executive Director Tracie Lewis, and Aldrich Public Library representatives Loren Polk (Director), Nancy Pope (President), Michael Smith (Treasurer) and resident Jeff Blow.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Bob Nelson, the agenda was approved as presented.

APPROVE MINUTES

On a motion by Jim West, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of February 23, 2021 and March 2, 2021 with minor grammatical and spelling errors as presented to the Clerk.

GUESTS - None

PRESENTATIONS FROM NOT-FOR-PROFITS IN THE GENERAL FUND BUDGET

Barre Area Development (BAD): Executive Director Cody Morrison informed the Committee memberstheir request is the same as last year \$51,744. He reviewed a few power point slides noting the mission statement, the website revitalization, spoke to the Barre Rock Solid Marketing campaign, and COVID impacts to doing business. Mr. Morrison stated while the “inventory listing of available properties in the Barre area” is not complete there are links to various realtors handling industrial/commercial/business properties.

Barre Partnership: Tracie Lewis (Director), reviewed for the newer committees some of the work being done in the Barre area (the property spotlight, Christmas light decorating contest, Build a snowman contest, and Barre Bucks). She noted the summer Heritage Festival probably will not happen. The thought is to try to hold something in the fall, provided COVID restrictions are eased. The increase in funding request is due to needs of the area businesses.

Aldrich Public Library: Library Director Loren Polk, Board President Nancy Pope, and Treasurer Michael Smith were present. Ms. Polk reviewed how the Library services have changed during COVID to include curbside pickup of books, administering their outreach programs, staff retirements, and the restoration

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 9, 2021 continued:

program (taped interviews). Unfortunately, the boiler had to have work completed which was paid with funds from investment funds, the budget some hits but was somewhat offset by staff retirements, etc. Brief discussion was had on audit review versus and full outside audit (cost and requirements for timing of audit).

Around 7:00 p.m. Bob Nelson and Cedric Sanborn lost power at their homes. Mr. Sanborn returned almost immediately, and Mr. Nelson returned around 7:26 p.m.).

QUESTIONS ON MATERIAL RECEIVED TO DATE

Terry Reil inquired about ambulance rates – does the Town pay the same per capita rate as other contracted Town. Rogers stated all other Towns pay a lower rate than Barre Town.

Mr. Reil inquired about the need for full-time Paramedics. Rogers stated we are a Paramedic service and therefore should have paramedics available. Paramedics provide a higher level of care and are compensated by insurances when performing those advance life support skills.

Asst. Manager Wang noted that GMT provided a breakout of the special services for the Barre area (1,641 for Barre Town and 22,854 for Barre City). It was noted this was based on the “address on record.” GMT does not plan to change services at this time. Their “on demand” service is limited for the Montpelier/Berlin area and is a PILOT program.

**BUDGET REVIEW
GENERAL FUND**

There are 25 departments in the General Fund. The Committee was provided the General Fund proposed budgets for all but four departments (Police, Fire, Recreation, and Employee Benefits). The first nine (9) Departments to review are Selectboard, Finance Office (formerly auditing), Town Manager, Elections/BCA, Town Clerk, Data Processing, Planning & Zoning, Assessor’s office, and the Municipal Building. For these departments there is an increase of \$61,070 or 6.70%. The reasons include hiring a new Finance Director, a half-time Treasurer, and a few one-time expenditures. The Manager did note that there are also changes within departments for personnel due to the new organizational chart.

Selectboard (411) – Manager Rogers noted 80% of the Selectboard wages are in this Department. Expenses include postage (newsletters mostly) and televised meetings of the Selectboard (about 45 a year). The televised meeting budget was based on “going back to normal” – meeting in person and having a camera person in the room. Funding was proposed for Training and miscellaneous items (retirement plaques, frames, and volunteer appreciation).

Finance Office (412) – This department is seeing a significant increase due to the addition of several staff: full-time Director, one office assistant (transfer from Clerk-Treasurer Office), part-time Town Treasurer (split from Clerk-Treasurer office), and the AP Clerk (pay split with Zoning & Planning and formerly in the Manager’s office wage account). Other items moved from the division of the Clerk-Treasurer position include mileage stipend, postage (tax bill, late letters, delinquent bills), advertising (taxes due), printing (bills, envelopes, bill forms, check forms), one-time purchases of furniture, and training/conference funding,

Manager’s Office (413) – Wage expenses (the moving of the AP clerk decreased line item), equipment rental (413-270) is for the postage meter, a reduction to the payroll processing fee (413-680-150) as payroll is being done in-house, and the contracted service with Paydata to access payroll information including and before Fiscal year 2019-2020.

Conversation centered on why the payroll information had not been merged into the new AccuFund program. Recollection is that costs, our complex general ledger line items, and Paydata’s limited stored general ledger information would mean a lot of clean-up work (for staff), prohibited this from happening. Assistant Manager Wang will verify this.

Elections (414): Review began but was briefly interrupted for the Public Comment period. Review began with wages for the BCA versus those for election day work, overtime pay for the DPW to setup and take down the polling place, postage costs (off election year, but there is a town-wide reappraisal – meaning more appeals based on past reappraisal), and ballot printing.

PUBLIC COMMENT – None

ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

Board consensus is an extra meeting can be scheduled for Thursday, March 18, 2021, 6:00 p.m. Jack Mitchell noted he has another commitment and will not be able to attend.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 9, 2021 continued:
NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 16, 2021. As always if members have questions contact the Manager via email or phone. Review will begin with the General Fund – Town Clerk Department (415).

ADJOURN

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Town Clerk-Treasurer – Donna J. Kelty