

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2021 - 2022
March 23, 2021
AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda.
3. Consider approving March 16 and 18, 2021 minutes.
4. Public comment: receive guests, if any
5. Consider final approval of Building, Cemetery, Water, Sewer, Sewer Capital Improvement, Equipment, Ambulance, Highway and General Fund budgets.
6. Adjourn 7:55 p.m.

Minutes for March 23, 2021

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2021-2022 fiscal year budget was held March 23, 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, Josh Howard, Loren Polk, and Nancy Pope.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Mike Gilbar and duly seconded, the agenda was approved as amended: add an item for “Questions and answers on material received to date.”

APPROVE MINUTES

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the meeting minutes of March 16, 2021 and March 18, 2021 with the minor grammatical and spelling corrections provided to the Clerk.

PUBLIC COMMENT

This being the Committee’s wrap meeting and finalizing the budgets, taking comment prior to each budget approval seemed logical.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Cedric Sanborn noted he had requested placing the tennis court light pole replacement and wiring on the white board list, so it was added. There was also brief discussion of having a portalet at the Town Forest. He was informed there are no facilities available at the site.

FINAL REVIEW/APPROVAL OF VARIOUS FUND BUDGETS

The Manager, prior to the meeting, provided the Committee with a General Fund Summary (listing of every department and total budget info), a list of items on the “white board,” a detailed Fund worksheet (showing current budget, proposed budget, difference between the two and space for listing changes).

In his notes to the Committee, Manager Rogers noted there is a last minute budget increase request by the Fire Department for the East Barre Fire Station furnace. The Fire Chief just informed the Manager the East Barre Station has a 10-year old propane furnace. Last fall a service call was made and parts had to be ordered. The parts replacement did not happen (difficulty in obtaining parts). Recently the furnace was making an odd noise. The service company was called and the Chief was informed extensive repairs are needed (around \$6,000). The estimate for a new furnace (including installation is \$12,000).

Board Consensus is to deal with the “white board” items and then make the motions for approving budgets.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 23, 2021 continued:

Item #1 011-432-660, double the amount of the cracking sealing (+ \$21,500). Discussion centered on the process, making bids attractive by grouping neighborhoods, and targeting roads that were paved 2 to 3 years prior. It was also noted there are very few companies to do the work and they must accommodate the entire state. When added to the “correct type of weather for application” it can be a very short work season.

Consensus is to add an additional \$2,500 to this line item.

Item #2 700-424-479, Paint ambulance station as requested (+ 1,800) Jack Mitchell noted if the painters are there doing the outside for this amount they should do the inside as requested. We might get a better contract.

Consensus is to add the addition \$1,800 to this line item.

Item #3 400-474-432, add the monthly billing of internet service at the DPW shop (+ \$3,300). With the Town Engineer moving to the DPW Shop new internet service was approved by the Selectboard. However, it did not make the budget. Consensus is to add an additional \$3,300 for the internet service to this line item.

Item #4 011-421-125, reduce the Police Department Thunder Road Wages (- \$5,000). The Budget was put together prior to negotiating the work contract with Thunder Road. Since then the Manager has informed the Committee this line and the payment to Washington County Sheriff's Department (WCSD) can be reduced.

Consensus is to reduce this line item by \$5,000.

Item #5 011-421-992, reduce the Police Department WCSD Thunder Road Wages (- \$1,500). See details above.

Consensus is to reduce this line item by \$1,500.

Item #6 011-419-283, add replacement of 7 security cameras at the Municipal Building (+3,675). There are two security systems in the Municipal Building (one for the Police Department and the second covers the rest of the building). Cameras are positioned with three in the main hallway, two outside the front door, two in the Clerk's Office (counter and vault door), and one in the lower back lobby. All the cameras are ten years old. One of the cameras in the main hallway is not functioning.

The Police Department cameras are located at the holding cell, fingerprint room, office lobby, dispatch room, troop room, outside police rear door, and outside the Annex door. Chief Dodge noted his system was replaced (HD quality) not long ago. The cell camera is less than three years old.

Committee discussion focused on age, the cost to replace all cameras, impact to the budget, the need to get the cameras on the rotating schedule and inquired if this line item should be part of the Data Processing budget.

Consensus is to add \$3,675 for the purchase of seven cameras for FY 21-22 and to recommend the second set of cameras be added to the FY 22-23 budget.

Item #7 011-462-450, add \$53,880 to complete the repair/replacement of all recreation areas. The Little League ballfield drainage should be improved which requires digging in the field. The reason for improving the drainage and fence is so Barre Community Baseball (BCB) will use it. Experience has proven the Town cannot rely on BCB to do what it says it will do. However, leaders do change year to year but have not followed through. The Manager is recommending the Town get a signed agreement with BCB before making any improvements.

Items of concern are the backstop fencing and gates, knowing there are no public safety issues, and the Little League ballfield work needed (prior to fence installation).

Consensus is not to add the additional amount to this line item.

Item #8 011-462-450, add water service for 44 Brook Street (\$4,620) and a water bottle filler at the Recreation area (\$5,480). The Committee recognizes there is no water of any sort at the Brook Street parking area. Concerns are for ensuring the connection has an “auto turn-off” so it does not accidentally get left on and must be insulated so the line does not freeze. The water bottle filling station is nice but there are budgetary concerns.

Consensus is to add \$4,620 to the line for providing water at 44 Brook Street and to not fund the water bottle filling station in FY 21-22.

Item #9 011-419-480, Audio & Visual meeting system, amount unknown. As noted in a previous meeting this item can range from a few hundred to thousands of dollars. COVID has proven the need for this technology. However, at this point in time it is unclear exactly what the Town needs or wants (thinking of the future). It was also noted during discussion, that once this is purchased there will need to be ongoing monies budgeted for

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 23, 2021 continued:

repairs/replacements/etc. Members were in agreement this purchase is a necessity and should not take years to complete. The Selectboard members and staff will work on putting together a needs assessment and get quotes. In the meantime some seed money should be placed in this budget. Depending on cost, a consideration could be to use reserve funds to the balance and help to expedite the project.

Committee consensus is to add \$15,000 to this line item as seed money for the Audio & Visual purchase.

Item 10 Replace the East Barre Fire Station furnace. Details are above.

Consensus is not to add the request to this line item as it will be taken care of in the current fiscal year.

Item 11 Remove \$6,200 from the Recreation budget to replace the light pole and electrical service at the Recreation Field tennis court area. Discussion focused on safety, ability to play if no light were installed, and the existing power to the courts.

Consensus is to leave the funds in the proposed budget.

BUDGET APPROVALS.

On a motion by Jim West, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Building Fund Budget in the amount of \$62,240.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Cemetery Fund Budget in the amount of \$70,020.

On a motion by Bob Nelson and duly seconded, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Water Fund Budget in the amount of \$517,515.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Phil Cecchini, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Sewer Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,074,705.

On a motion by Jim West, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Sewer Capital Improvement Fund Budget in the amount of \$18,125.

On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022, Equipment Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,377,355.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Ambulance Fund Budget in the amount of \$2,466,070.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Highway Fund Budget in the amount of \$3,137,705.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Budget Committee voted to approve the proposed Barre Town Fiscal Year 2021-2022 General Fund Budget in the amount of \$4,244,116. The motion passed with one no vote.

FINAL NOTES

Manager Rogers noted with the decrease in the Highway Fund and increase in General Fund budgets, the proposed Grand List, the estimate is the municipal tax rate will increase 1.4¢

Chair Malone thanked the Committee members for their great attendance and work this year. Also a big thank you to the Town Manager, Carl Rogers for all the effort he puts into preparing this budget. It is very much appreciated.

A video presentation will be put together similar to last year. Assistant Manager Wang will contact members to see if they want to participate.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Cedric Sanborn and duly seconded, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Town Clerk-Treasurer – Donna J. Kelty