



BARRE TOWN MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

Vol. 23 No. 1
February 2020
www.barretown.org

P.O. Box 116
Websterville, VT, 05678
(802) 479-9331, Fax: (802) 479-9332

March Town Meeting

Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2020, 7am—7pm at the Barre Town Middle & Elementary School gymnasium. This year there will be three (3) elections: Barre Unified Union School District Annual Meeting, a Democratic Presidential Primary Election, and the Republican Presidential Primary.

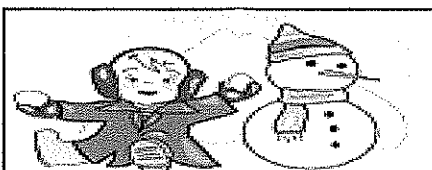
School - Please note this report was written based on a “proposed” warning and is subject to change.

The School ballot will be slightly shorter this year due to the recent merger. Instead of voting on questions for two districts (Barre Town Elementary and Spaulding High School) you will be voting on questions for one district - the Barre Unified Union School District (BUUSD).

Many of the questions/articles will remain the same: elect School

Directors and the annual budgets of BUUSD and Central Vermont Career Center. *(Continued on Page 4)*

(The BTMES and Barre Town Police Department have a School Resource Officer arrangement. Officer Dan Withrow (shown above) was working in the School recently. A SRO is in the School or on the grounds an average of 14 hours per week)



Inside This Issue

Dates & Events.....	2
2020 Dog Licenses Available.....	2
Annual Rabies Clinic.....	2
The Importance of Rabies Vaccinations.....	2
Winter Recreation.....	3
Winter Softball Tournament.....	3
Travis Mercy Skatepark Fund Raiser...3	3
FYI - New Medicare Card Needed.....	3
Voter Registration Opportunities.....	4
Town Caucus and Nomination Papers..4	4
Snowmobiling in VT/Barre Town.....	4
Tree Clearing - Game of Logging.....	4
Reappraisal Update.....	5
Summer Employment.....	5
Attn. VT Resident Homeowners.....	5
Participate in the Census.....	6
Ice Jams.....	6
Town Engineer Hired.....	6
Employee Changes.....	6
Project Updates.....	7
Board and Commission Vacancies.....	7
Board and Commission Reports.....	8



Budget Review Started

The 2020 Town Budget Committee held its first meeting on Tuesday, January 28. The Committee will meet Tuesday nights from 6:00 - 8:00pm until the end of March. The public is welcome to attend these meetings, which are held in the Municipal Building. As fund budgets are completed the summary or cover page is posted on the town website.

Five citizens and the five Selectboard members form the Committee. This year the 5 citizen members are: Mike Gilbar (appointed by the Town Clerk-Treasurer), Justin Bolduc and Cedric Sanborn (appointed by the Selectboard), Alan Garceau and Debra Pierce (appointed by first 3 appointees). The 10 Committee members will review 9 fund budgets: General Fund, Highway Fund, Sewer Fund, Sewer Capital Improvement Fund, Water Fund, Equipment Fund, Ambulance Fund, Cemetery Fund and Building Fund. Town staff and the Committee are working on these budgets in preparation for Town Meeting in May.

Health insurance has been a common factor in reports about other public sector budgets this year. Health insurance premiums for the 2 plans Town employees use went up 14.3% and 11.0% for 2020. There are 3 times as many employees enrolled in the plan that saw a 14.3% increase than in the other plan. The weighted average health insurance premium increase is 13.5%. The General Fund health insurance premium account is going up \$10,075 or 5.3% and the Highway Fund account is increasing \$27,145 or 17.9%. The percentages are not equal because of employee turnover and existing employees changing level of coverage.

Equipment rates, the money departments pay to the Equipment Fund to buy, maintain, repair and operate Town vehicles, are expected to rise 4.0%. This percent increase in rates would cost the General Fund \$13,585, across all departments with vehicles. The Highway Fund's increase would be \$30,235.

(Continued on Page 4)

Dates & Events:

- TBA - Rec. Board Snow Shoe & Sledding Parties
- Feb. 18 - Property & Sewer Taxes Due
- Mar. 3 - School Election & Presidential Primary
- Mar. 6 - 8 - Charity Co-Ed Softball Tournament
- Mar. 16 - Town Caucus
- Mar. 21 - Rabies Clinic
- Apr. 1 - Dog Licenses Due
- Apr. 1 - Winter Parking Ban Ends
- Apr. 15 - Homestead Declaration Due

2020 Dog Licenses Available

Vermont law (20 VSA Sections 3541-3591, 3801-3813) requires dogs to be **licensed annually** in the Town where they live.



So what do I need to get a dog license?

A current copy of the rabies certificate, payment for the license (by April 1 \$10.00 for a spayed or neutered animal and \$14.00 for an animal that is not fixed). Unlicensed dogs (after April 1, 2020) will be charged a late fee plus you could receive a fine of \$35.00 from Barre Town. You can license your dog in person, by mail, or at the rabies clinic.

License by Mail: If the Town Clerk's office has a current rabies certificate on file for your pet, a license renewal form was mailed to you in early January. Upon receipt of the form be sure to check the information carefully (make corrections if necessary), sign the license, and enclose the payment and license in the return detachable self-addressed envelope. A tag will be returned to you by mail.

However, if the **rabies certificate** on file has or will **expire** before April 1, 2020, you will receive a **postcard reminder** by the end of January in lieu of the license renewal form.

By Donna Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Annual Rabies Clinic

The Barre Town Fire Department will once again be holding a rabies clinic on Saturday, March 21, 2020, 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. at the South Barre Fire Station. Cost is \$15.00 per vaccination (cats and dogs). Be sure your pet is leashed or caged. Residents and non-residents are welcome.

The Barre Town Clerk will be at the clinic to license Barre Town dogs only.



Be a responsible pet owner and license your dog!

By Chris Violette, Fire Chief

~ Sponsored by the Barre Town Fire Department Auxiliary ~

The Importance of Rabies Vaccinations

A few of you have been through the drill. Sparky, your favorite pup is out in the yard playing with the kids. The little fella gets a little too rambunctious and accidentally bites your child. Fearing the worst and being cautious on the side of safety, you take your child to the emergency room. In the flurry of questions and forms at the ER they ask you some information about the dog. You leave the ER with your child none the worse for wear. The next day you get a call from either the health officer or the animal control officer questioning the validity of your dog's rabies

certificate. It seems like an inconvenience and you produce the information and are asked to confine your dog for ten days to make sure it doesn't show any signs of sickness.

Why such a big deal over rabies? It is nearly 100% fatal. There is only one known survivor of the disease. Rabies is prevalent in Vermont and is found predominantly in skunks, foxes, raccoons, bats, but can show up in any warm-blooded animal.

Rabies is caused by the lyssa virus and is spread when an infected animal scratches or bites a human or other animal like your dog. Saliva from an infected animal can transmit rabies if the saliva comes into contact with the eyes, mouth, or nose. Even if your pet is vaccinated for rabies it can transmit the disease to you. If your pet has been bitten and the saliva from the infected animal is still on the wound and you get it in your mouth or eyes you could get infected. It's extremely important to wash the wound with soapy water and take your animal to your vet.

From the bite, rabies virus travels along nerves to the spinal cord, then to the brain, where it multiplies. From the brain the virus travels along the nerves to the salivary glands and into the saliva. It typically takes from 10-60 days for the virus to reach the brain, but in can also take months or even years to make the same journey.

Rabies at first will show no signs. Over time it may begin with a fever, headache, and a general feeling of malaise. You may become restless, confused, and uncontrollably excited. Your behavior may be bizarre or crazy to family members. At this stage it cannot be cured.

Rabies is one of the most dangerous diseases if left untreated, but it's also easily preventable. If treated early it is easy to overcome.

The number one thing to prevent rabies from infecting your family or pets is have both your dogs and cats vaccinated against rabies and keep their vaccinations up to date. Get a dog license so if your dog is loose and it bites someone, we know that it has been vaccinated. If we can't find the owner it may have to be destroyed to check the brain for the rabies virus.

Secondly, avoid being bitten by animals, including wild animals. Wild animals and pets you don't know should not be approached. Signs of rabies may not be apparent, but their behavior is typically abnormal, with the following as a good guide:

- Wild animals may not appear shy or afraid when people approach them.
- Nocturnal animals (such as bats, skunks, raccoons, and foxes) are out during the day.
- Bats make unusual noises or have difficulty flying.
- Animals bite without being provoked.
- Animals are weak or agitated and vicious.

If you are bit by a wild animal or an unknown pet, seek medical help immediately. The sooner you can get the rabies vaccine, the better your chances of surviving. If you can capture or make note of where the animal is located, the better your chances of not having to go through the vaccine process.

Please take note that the only way for medical personnel to verify that an animal is infected with rabies is to examine its

(Continued on Page 3)

www.barretown.org

brain after death. If you see an animal that doesn't look right call Animal Control. In Barre Town call 802-479-0508. If it's a wild animal, call the state Rabies Hotline at 1-800-472-2437.

On an ending note: if you plan to travel to countries that have a rabies problem or you work with animals, please protect yourself and get a rabies vaccination.

Take rabies seriously because it is!

By Bill Kirby, Barre Town Health Officer

Winter Recreation

No need to suffer from cabin fever in Barre Town! Take yourself and loved ones out for a walk, snowshoe, cross-country ski, or fat bike ride in the Barre Town Forest. When snow conditions allow, nonprofit Millstone Trails Association grooms a variety of trails to meet low to high levels of experience. They also groom an easy loop at the Barre Town Rec Area at 46 Websterville Rd. To keep up on trail conditions for your activity of choice, visit millstonetrails.org.



Prefer something indoors? The Barre Town Recreation Board is hosting open pickleball play on Sundays 9am-12pm through March 15 at the Barre Town School Gym at 70 Websterville Rd. Never heard of pickleball? Could draw the outline of a kitchen in your sleep? All are welcome at open play. Paddles and balls available to borrow. You'll want to bring a filled water bottle and dress to sweat!

If the weather cooperates, the Rec Board may host a snowshoe party at the Barre Town Forest and sledding parties at the hill behind municipal building. Stay tuned to barretown.org or facebook.com/ArreteVT for these announcements. Speaking of, if you're looking for a gentle hill, the hill behind the town offices is available for public sledding anytime. Just park in the municipal building parking lot at 149 Websterville Road.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Recreation for Teens – Your Ideas Wanted!

The Recreation Board is looking for input on what types of events they could provide for 10-15 year-olds. Please take the survey available from www.barretown.org.

Winter Softball Tournament

What do winter, recreation and worthy causes have in common? Barre Town is proud to host two long-standing fundraisers held in the winter that involve recreation:

Freezing Fun for Families March 6-8: This Guinness Record-holding winter co-ed softball tournament has been raising money for families battling childhood cancer for over two decades. The tournament will be held March 6-8. Those who play softball should register their teams now because there's a cap of 64 teams! However, if you don't play softball,

you can still help this year's beneficiaries by contributing money to a team's fundraiser for the tournament, or by purchasing concessions as a spectator at the games in March. You can also purchase tickets to the banquet and silent auction taking place on February 29 at the Barre Elks Lodge.



This year's beneficiaries are 7-year old Logan Morrill from Morrisville and the Vose family from Brattleboro. More information about these deserving families are on the Freezing Fun for Families Facebook page: facebook.com/freezingfunforfamilies.

Travis Mercy Skatepark Fundraiser February 22: The pro-level skatepark (open to all ages) in the Barre Town Rec Area was developed and is maintained as a joint effort by the Mercy family and the town. The Barre Town Thunder Chickens VAST snowmobile club



has helped raise significant funds to maintain and improve the park over time. 2020 marks their 20th annual Snowmobile Poker Run & BBQ Chicken Dinner with all the fixin's, Silent Auction and Quilt Raffle extravaganza! Those who want to snowmobile can find the poker run route at barretownthunderchickens.com/events. Registration for that starts at 8:15am at the Great Energy Store, a.k.a. the Shell station at 509 South Barre Rd. Anyone is welcome to the Barre Town School Cafeteria at 70 Websterville Road for the rest of the fun starting at 11am. Meal by Randy Henry and The Racing Chefs at 12:30pm; \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 5 and up; free for children under 5.

This is the main fundraiser event held each year and look forward to seeing you all there! For more information please feel free to contact Linda Mercy at 279-7515 and Dave Rouleau at 839-0553.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

FYI - New Medicare Card Needed

MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE
Name/Hombre JOHN L SMITH
Medicare Number/número de Medicare 1EG4-TE5-MK72
Entitled to/Con derecho a HOSPITAL (PART A) MEDICAL (PART B)
Coverage starts/Cobertura empieza 03-01-2016 03-01-2016

If you currently are on Medicare, you should have received a new Medicare card over the past few months. Medicare's new ID#'s are alpha numeric and do not include your social security number. Medicare will no longer accept your old ID#'s after January 1, 2020. You can request a new card via online or phone: Online at www.ssa.gov or by phone at 1-(800) 772-1213 (TTY users, dial 1-(800) 325-0778), Monday through Friday, from 7AM to 7PM. If you have questions, feel free to contact the Barre Town EMS department.

By Chris LaMonda, EMS Director

Look for the next Barre Town newsletter in April, 2020!

www.barretown.org

(Cont'd - March Town Meeting)

A final article on the proposed warning is asking voters to approve bonding in the amount of \$2,000,000 (subject to reductions from available state and federal grants-in-aid and other financial assistance) to acquire and rehabilitate the real estate at 91 Allen Street in Barre City for the Spaulding Educational Alternatives Program.

The School Board is expected to approve a warning on January 23, 2020. The School ballot should be available by the end of January 2020.

Presidential Primaries: Presidential Primary Election (Democrat and Republican) ballots are available. However, to participate in this election State law mandates a voter "must declare a political party when voting in a Presidential Primary and your party choice will be recorded on the entrance checklist" (V.S.A. Title 17, Chapter 56, section 2704). The entrance checklist is a public record. Please keep in mind that just because your political party choice is recorded this does not mean you are a member of that party.

Printed School budget books will be made available at various locations throughout the Town and City. For more information on the proposed school budgets and bond question, or to review the ballots and warnings, visit the Town's homepage (www.barretown.org) and look under Announcements. To request an early ballot, call the Town Clerk's office at 802-479-9391 or email wmoore@barretown.org.

By Donna Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

(Cont'd - Budget Review Started)

The Building Fund contributions are not changed. Road paving expenses in the Highway Fund are even. No major increases for projects or purchases are foreseen. Computer system maintenance and support and the new accounting software support contract will increase.

For context, the current General Fund budget total is \$3,867,941. The current Highway Fund budget is \$3,100,810.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Voter Registration Opportunities

Have you been planning to register to vote or change your voter registration from one Town to another? Just never seem to have enough time to do it. No worry - you can register anytime using one of the options below:

1. Contact the Clerk's Office (802) 479-9391 and request a voter application be mailed to you or stop by the office and complete the voter application on site.
2. After hours you can register/change your registration online through the Secretary of State's Office (<https://olvr.sec.state.vt.us>). Follow the prompts.

3. Or, on election day go to your polling place, complete the voter registration application, and vote immediately.

Make sure you keep informed on local election happenings and visit the Barre Town website (www.barretown.org).

By Donna Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

**Property and Sewer Taxes Due
Tuesday, February 18th!**

Town Caucus and Nomination Papers

Barre Town's municipal Annual Election of Officers (Town Meeting) will be on Tuesday, May 12. Voters will elect town officers: 2 Selectboard members, moderator, constable and an auditor. Voters will also decide if the proposed General Fund and Highway Fund budgets will be approved.



Every March a Town Caucus is held. This nonpartisan gathering of voters is intended to nominate candidates for the various elected offices. The Town Caucus will be held Monday, March 16 at 6:30 pm in the Municipal Building. All Town voters are invited to attend.

Town residents also may seek office by circulating a nomination petition and having it signed by not less than 30 registered Town voters (Section 7, Town Charter). These nomination petitions must be submitted to the Town Clerk's Office by 5:00 pm, Monday, March 30.

Please contact the Town Clerk's Office for details and other information about these processes.

Snowmobiling in Vermont/Barre Town

Recently some residents have inquired about laws pertaining to snowmobiles. Generally snowmobiles can not be operated on town roads unless the road has been opened to snowmobile travel by the Selectboard or the snowmobile is at least 5 feet from the plowed portion of the roadway. In addition, you must have permission from the landowner of any land on which you ride. To ride legally your snowmobile must be registered, you must belong to a club and you must have purchased a trail pass through VAST. Your snowmobile must also be insured, and if you were born after July 1, 1983 you must complete a snowmobile safety course. For more information on snowmobile laws in Vermont go to <https://legislature.vermont.gov/statutes/chapter/23/029>.



By Bill Dodge, Chief of Police

Tree Clearing - Game of Logging

Would you like some trees cleared on your property? The state's program to train local Department of Public Works workers, Vermont Local Roads, is looking for a site to host a Game of Logging training in October 2020 and in future years.



Finding a suitable site can be a challenge. The ideal site will have limited exposure to external safety concerns, and where a bit of a mess won't be viewed as a problem. Typically, a Game of Logging training needs to fell 30-35 trees that are mostly healthy and somewhat mature, meaning at least 10" diameter at breast height. They can be of any species. Cut trees will be left on the ground, mostly tree length and not limbed. An additional dozen saplings will be cut to provide experience with storm damage work. Landowners or their representatives can observe the program. If you have questions or are interested, contact Stu Johnson at Vermont Local Roads at stu.johnson@vermont.gov.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Reappraisal Update

The town-wide, complete reappraisal is underway. Work is being done by Interim Town Assessor Russ Beaudoin and two property inspectors now. The reappraisal started in September in anticipation of the Town's common level of appraisal (CLA) falling below the state's minimum 85.0%. Indeed, in late December the state advised the Town the Barre Town CLA is 83.48%.

Some progress has been made on the reappraisal. The 2 inspectors are working in the second area now; approximately 180 inspections have been done. The rate of progress is not surprising. Beaudoin didn't plan to perform inspections with snow on the ground. "Inspections will be spotty until March, depending on ground conditions", Beaudoin said. The second area that the inspectors now are working in is the Rt. 14 north, Plainfield Brook Road, Cassie Street area.

Beaudoin will perform commercial and industrial property inspections starting in the spring. There will be no pre-arranged order for those inspections. He also reminded property owners that the annual permit inspections must be done too. Owners who made property improvements since April 1, 2019 will receive a Notice of Change in Appraisal in May or June because of those improvements, not because of the reappraisal.

The property inspectors should have a Barre Town Assessor magnet sign on the side of their car and be wearing a Town photo ID card.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Summer Employment

This summer Barre Town will employ six people from mid May to late August. Four of the seasonal employees will work with the Department of Public Works (DPW), one will work with the Town Engineer and one will work with the Cemetery and Recreation crews. Because use of power equipment is required, applicants must be at least 18 years of age. Applicants also must have a valid drivers license.

For the DPW workers and Cemetery - Recreation helper the first summer pay rate is \$11.75 per hour. A bonus up to \$1.25 per hour is offered for good work attendance. Overtime is paid for hours exceeding 40 hours per week.

Department of Public Works: The regular work hours for DPW are Monday - Friday, 7:00am - 3:30pm. The department might use a 4 - 10 hour day schedule during part of the summer. The workday during the four day schedule likely will be 6:00am - 4:30pm. The DPW summer helpers will receive the same flagger (traffic control) training as the full-timers. Flagging will be required. The helpers' typical duties include clearing brush (branches) around road signs, assisting full-timers with lowering and repairing manholes and catch basins, and assisting with seeding and mulching. Summer helpers do not drive the large dump trucks or operate equipment, but should be able to drive a one-ton dump truck, and operate a chain saw.

Cemetery - Recreation: The regular work hours are Monday - Friday. Starting time will vary - 7:00am with Recreation and 8:00am with Cemetery. A regular work week would be 40 hours. Most of the work at both divisions is lawn maintenance. At the Recreation Division the work also will include athletic field maintenance, light building maintenance and general park clean-up.

Town Engineer: A student majoring in civil engineering or closely related field is hired to work with the Town Engi-

neer. The helper will assist the Town Engineer with his duties connected to the Town's summer construction and road paving. There will be in-office assignments, too. Starting times vary from 7:00am to 8:00am depending on what needs to be done. A regular week is 40 hours. A first-year town engineer helper will be paid \$13.40 per hour.

Applications can be picked up at the Town Manager's Office or by calling 479-9331. The employment application also is accessible through the town's website, www.barretown.org/Permits_Forms/employmentapplication.pdf. Applications can be dropped off at the Town Manager's Office, mailed to P.O. Box 116, Websterville, VT, 05678 or emailed to offices@barretown.org. Application review will begin March 27.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Attention VT Resident Homeowners!

If you own the Vermont home in which you live, you must file the Homestead Declaration Form (HS-122) every year. This is true even if you don't have to file a state income tax return. Filing the HS-122 on an eligible property ensures that you will pay the lower tax rate assessed by the state for education, and not the higher non-homestead education tax rate. If you don't file an HS-122 each year by the deadline, your taxes for the coming year will be based on the non-homestead rate. In Barre Town, the non-homestead education tax rate has been higher than the residential rate for the last fifteen years. On average over the last five years, the non-homestead total tax rate in Barre Town has been over 14% higher than the residential rate.

Deadline and penalties: The deadline to file your HS-122 with the Vermont Department of Taxes is April 15, 2020 for the home you own and occupy as of April 1, 2020. The penalty for filing after April 15, 2020 is 3% of your education tax bill because of the extra work it creates to correct your taxes after they've already been changed for the new tax year. If you miss this deadline, you can still file by October 15, 2020 and have your tax rate corrected.

Take note: If your household made less than an amount specified by the state during calendar year 2019 (whether from a job, retirement income, or other income), you may be eligible for a property tax adjustment. To claim a property tax adjustment, file a Household Income (HI-144) Form with your HS-122 (both parts a and b) by the same deadlines, April 15, 2020 to be on time, and by October 15, 2020 with a \$15 penalty. Filing the HI-144 with your HS-122 will potentially reduce your tax burden even more. The 2019 maximum household income to be eligible for a property tax adjustment is not yet available. The 2018 maximum was \$136,500. If your household made less than that in 2019 it's likely worth filing an HI-144 in 2020.

Since retirees often don't file income taxes, they sometimes overlook filing an HI-144 and HS-122 and potentially are paying thousands of dollars more than they need to in property taxes. If you have an older family member or friend, check to make sure they are submitting their forms.

If your home is leased on April 1, 2020, but for not more than 182 days in the 2020 calendar year, you may still claim it as a homestead.

Accessing the forms: The 2020 HS-122, and HI-144, can be completed online once my VTax becomes available February 3rd at <https://myvtax.vermont.gov>. If you would rather fill out a paper form, you can get one from the Barre Town Assessor's office. Stop by or call 479-2595 to have one mailed to you. The

(Continued on Page 6)

www.barretown.org

(Cont'd - Attention VT Resident Homeowners!)

Aldrich Library can also print out the HS-122 and HI-144 for you for 60 cents for all 4 pages.

More information is online at tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/homestead-declaration. If you have any questions, contact the VT Department of Taxes Homestead specialists at 828-2865.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Participate in the Census

What is a Census? Once a decade, America comes together to count every resident in the United States. The count is mandated by the Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency. The 2020 Census counts the population in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories. Each home will receive an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire - online,



by phone, or by mail.

Why is the census important? The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

The results of the census also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives. The census results are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts.

How the census benefits our community: Federal funds, grants and support to states and local governments are based on population totals and breakdowns by sex, age, race and other factors. Our community benefits the most when the census counts everyone.

Important dates:

In mid-March 2020: Homes across the country will begin receiving invitations to complete the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail.

April 1, 2020: Census Day is observed nationwide. By this date, every home will receive an invitation to participate in the 2020 Census. Once the invitation arrives, you should respond for your home in one of three ways: online, by phone, or by mail. When you respond to the census, you'll tell the Census Bureau where you live as of April 1, 2020.

April 2020: Census takers will begin visiting people living in senior centers, and others who live among large groups of people. Census takers also begin conducting quality check interviews to help ensure an accurate count.

May – July 2020: Census takers will begin visiting homes that haven't responded to the 2020 Census to help make sure everyone is counted.

December 2020: The Census Bureau will deliver apportionment counts to the President and Congress as required by law.

March 31, 2021: By this date, the Census Bureau will send redistricting counts to states. This information is used to redraw legislative districts based on population changes.

Your response matters. Participate in the 2020 census.

Editor's note: This article was largely borrowed from 2020census.gov.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Ice Jams

In Barre Town ice jams are most likely to occur in the Jail Branch of the Winooski River between East Barre and Barre City because that stretch of stream has 4 of the 5 prime locations for ice jams. Meteorologists and emergency managers estimate 12" thick ice is sufficient to cause ice jams. At this point in late January the Jail Branch has two-thirds open channel and ice is 8" thick, on average (at least from what is observable from the road). There still is time, however, for ice to thicken and possibly choke the channel.



Town staff continues to monitor the ice jam season - observing ice development along the Jail Branch; reading National Weather Service bulletins; and attending Vermont Emergency Management's spring flood training.

The public can help by - calling the Town (476-3522), 479-9331 or 476-3147) if an ice jam is suspected, not walking on ice along or in a stream; and not driving through flood waters.

Last fall a resident reported a large tree fell across the Jail Branch bank to bank. Indeed, it was a very large tree, 3' - 4' above the water. DPW, with the cooperation of a landowner, removed the tree. Please report obstructions.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Town Engineer Hired

Joshua Martineau has been hired as the Town Engineer/Director of Public Works. He begins work February 10.

The new Town Engineer hails from Washington and graduated from Spaulding High School, after which he enrolled in Vermont Technical College's architectural engineering technology program. He worked as Barre Town's engineer's helper 2 summers while attending college. After earning his Bachelor's degree in architectural engineering technology he immediately began his professional work career. He worked for 2 employers over 2 years before joining VT Agency of Transportation (AOT) in 2009. During his 10+ years work with AOT he worked in construction inspection, asphalt and concrete plant inspection, bridge inspection, and as a railroad crossing engineer. He left AOT as a Railroad and Aviation Project Manager.

His education and work experience will be put to good use with Barre Town. The Town Engineer is responsible for the Town's buildings and building projects. His education in architectural engineering and some work experience with building projects will be useful. His work experience inspecting public works contracts from guardrails to bridge construction give him a solid background for planning, arranging and overseeing public works contracts. His experience inspecting asphalt plants and road paving will be valuable in writing road paving specifications and inspecting the asphalt product and paving. Martineau lives in Graniteville and is a Barre Town firefighter.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Employee Changes

BTEMS welcomed AEMT Eden Towers into its full-timer ranks December 30, 2019. She had been a reliable per diem employee for the department since the end of September. Previously she has worked for Stowe Rescue, Mt. Mansfield Ski-Patrol and a rescue squad in Virginia. Eden is working on her

www.barretown.org

Paramedic certification now which will allow her to do even more in the medical field, her profession of choice.

Animal Control Officer **Loretta Wilson** resigned due to the low amount of work. Animal nuisance complaints are being handled by an officer on duty. To report an animal nuisance call the non-emergency line at (802) 479-0508. Search for a new ACO is underway.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Project Updates

Rt. 110/Mill Street Intersection: VT Agency of Transportation's contractor, J.P. Sicard, completed all the sidewalk last fall. Heated hoses and heavy warming blankets were used to cure the concrete properly. This spring all new pavement will be milled and the streets will be re-paved. Following the paving the road lines and other road markings will be laid. Restoration work - top soiling, grading, seeding and mulching - will be completed in the spring. The federal government provided the funding for VT AOT to improve this intersection.

Rt. 110 Bridge: On January 14, 2020, during the Selectboard meeting the VT AOT staff conducted a Local Concerns (information sharing and public input gathering) meeting. The meeting can be viewed by going on the town website, clicking on Boards and Commissions, then Selectboard and Watch Selectboard Meeting. AOT completed its scoping study and had enough other information to present 3 construction alternatives and to recommend one. The recommended alternative is closing the bridge for demolition and reconstruction. A signed detour would be established. The big benefit of this alternative is a 60-day construction period, the shortest of the 3 alternatives. A second alternative is constructing one lane at a time. This option would require temporary traffic control lights on both sides of the bridge. Due to the proximity of the bridge to Rt. 302 this is not a viable alternative. The third alternative is building a temporary bridge before demolition of the existing bridge. The temporary bridge and lanes to and from it would disrupt abutting private properties. On January 28 the Selectboard will decide if it endorses the bridge closure option and if it approves a signed detour over Websterville and Quarry Hill Roads.

During the Local Concerns meeting AOT staff announced the bridge will not carry the Town's water line across the Jail Branch. The new bridge essentially replaces the current bridge as it is - location, 2 lanes and sidewalk on the east or upstream side. The Town will resume planning to construct a pedestrian and waterline crossing on the downstream side.

This is a state bridge on a state road, therefore there is no local match for the project. Construction would take place during 2023 at the earliest.

Rt. 14 - Bridge Street - Sterling Hill Road: The scope of AOT's project includes: installing a traffic signal, creating left turn lanes on Rt. 14, improving sidewalks in the immediate vicinity, and cutting down the crest of the hill near Christie Street. AOT currently is incorporating plans for replacing a City of Barre waterline into its project. AOT also is re-surveying the abutting storage units property. When this new information is added to the plans AOT will re-enter the right-of-way acquisition phase. The new project manager hopes the r.o.w. acquisition phase could begin this summer. Right-of-way or easements are needed for 22 or so properties. When all r.o.w. is acquired final plans and bidding documents will be prepared. AOT currently is looking at advertising for construction bids during the winter of 2022 and constructing the improvements during the summer of 2022. There is no local match for this state funded project.

Rt. 14 - Quarry Street: This intersection project is almost en-

tirely in Barre City. The end of the Quarry Street improvements cross over the town line a very short distance. The project will continue Quarry Hill Road's 2 down-hill lanes to Rt. 14. A traffic signal will control traffic in the future. AOT expects to begin right-of-way meetings with about a dozen owners this winter. Construction is anticipated to start in 2022 and continue into 2023. Barre Town has a very small local match for this project. The Town's share for some aspects is less than 1% and for others is about 3%.

To check on the progress of these AOT projects visit the state's website: <https://vtrans.vermont.gov/vtransparency>. Click on Project - Maps.

Ash Tree Removal: The DPW is beginning the program to take down ash trees within road rights-of-way (r.o.w.). The Selectboard will hold a public hearing on the matter in February. The VT Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation's county forester will work with 2 DPW crew members marking ash trees to increase the crew members' knowledge and ability to correctly identify ash trees. The ash tree removal will begin in the northeast corner of the Town, closes to where the emerald ash borer (EAB) first was found in Central Vermont. The Town will notify all owners along roads to be worked on. The roads in the first area are: Curtis, Barclay, upper Sunset (Windywood to Phelps), Neddo and upper Phelps (Windywood to Osborne). Owners will be given the option to keep the wood. The DPW will mark ash trees, probably with spray paint. When weather allows, DPW will start removing the ash trees. Any trees the crew doesn't feel confident felling because of wires, nearby buildings or fences, or angle of the tree will be left. A contractor or appropriate utility company will be notified about removing those trees. DPW is instructed to complete an entire or road section before moving to another.

Green Mountain Power has a contractor removing ash trees that threaten its wires. GMP also is giving owners the opportunity to keep the wood.

A resource for landowners who want to learn more about the EAB and ash trees is <https://vtinvasive.org/land/emerald-ash-borer-vermont>.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Board and Commission Vacancies

The Barre Town Development Review Board (DRB) needs two alternate members. Alternates sit on the board when a regular board member can't. The DRB meets on the second Wednesday of every month, holding public hearings for items such as subdivision request, site plan and conditional use review, variances, etc. No prior knowledge of land use regulations or development practice is required. Joining the DRB as an alternate is a great way to get involved with Town government without making a huge commitment of time.

The Housing Advisory Board also has a vacancy. This board works with housing rehabilitation programs. Meetings are on an as need basis which do not occur regularly.

Finally, an alternate is needed for the Central Vermont Fiber Board. Barre Town is a member of Central Vermont Fiber (CVF), a nonprofit organization of 16 Central Vermont towns that are working to create fast and dependable internet service to its member town's in Central Vermont. CVF meets the second Tuesday of the month, more if necessary. If interested, you can sit in on a meeting to see what its all about.

Questions can be directed to the Town Managers office at 479-9331 or by emailing crogers@barretown.org.

Board and Commission Reports

Development Review Board – *By Chris Violette; Members: M. Reaves, C. Sanborn, C. Thygesen, C. Neddo, J. Valsangiacomo, A. Valentinetti, and J. Fecteau.*

AUD=Allowed Use Determination; CUP=Conditional Use Permit; SD=Subdivision; BLA=Boundary Line Adjustment

November 2019: Appr. BLA, J&P Benoit & W. Morse (Home Trust) Airport and Jensen Roads; Appr. Rev SD (deferral lifting) J&P Green, Taplin Road.

December 2019: Appr. Amend SD (lot merger), J. Pinard/S. Bailey, Cassie Street.

January 2020: Appr. SD (preliminary and final) G. Booth Living Trust Airport Road, Upper Prospect Street, Jensen Road.

Planning Commission – *By Chris Violette; Members: C. Sanborn, C. Thygesen, C. Violette, D. Pierce, B. Atwood, G. Clain, M. Gilbar.*

AUD=Allowed Use Determination; CUP=Conditional Use Permit

November 2019: Reviewed proposed Town Plan amendments.

December 2019: Reviewed proposed Town Plan amendments.

January 2020: No meeting, worked on Town Plan amendments.

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee - *By Carl Rogers; Members: S. Corbett, J. Blow, W. Kirby, Dave Freeman, and Bret Meyer.*

November 2019: Discussed new School Bus Stop Ahead sign on East Cobble Hill Road near #410; scheduled speed study on Windywood Road for spring 2020; discussed narrowing marked travel lanes from 11' to 10' in 25-mph zones entering developed areas.

December 2019: Recommended School Bus Stop Ahead sign on East Cobble Hill Road near #410; continued discussion and planning for experiment of marking 10' travel lanes in some 25-mph zones; decided not to approve request for crosswalk across Graniteville Road at picnic area; bid farewell to Town Engineer Harry Hinrichsen.

January 2020: At Selectboard's request reconsidered recommendation for second School Bus Stop Ahead sign on East Cobble Hill Road; recommended existing sign be relocated toward #410; for travel lane narrowing experiment selected 4 locations to have speed study and traffic counts done in spring.