



BARRE TOWN MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

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

Alice Bartlett Retiring

Much to our sorrow, the town staff must say farewell to Assistant Town Clerk Alice Bartlett, at least as a coworker, upon her retirement at the end of February. Alice has been a pillar of the community for many decades, including an astounding 32 years with the Town of Barre, and at Barre Town School for 9 years before that. Her primary responsibility has been the town's land records. Thanks to her diligence and work ethic, she is known statewide for how impeccably the records are kept. She has trained town clerks in other municipalities new to the task. Alice has always gone above and beyond in her duties, whether it is showing kindness and respect to whoever comes in the door or calling up attorneys and paralegals when she sees mistakes so they can be fixed prior to documents being recorded. Her role as keeper of records matches one of her invaluable traits—her amazing memory. Alice's knowledge of the town and its past and present residents has been a tremendous asset to town work on uncountable occasions. Not only that, she uses that trait to take care of people, one of what co-worker Assistant Town Clerk-Treasurer Deb Lefebvre called her "old school" ways.



Alice remembers grandchildren, pets, and vacation plans and inquires after them from quarter to quarter when residents come in to pay their taxes. The "old school" comes out another way: Alice is no fan of technology or computers! She has threatened, with her dry sense of humor that has kept her coworkers entertained for decades, to quit each time new technology was introduced. This started with the transition to the digital land records management system - almost twenty years ago! Lucky for the town and her colleagues, her commitment to Barre Town stayed her hand for a long time...until now. Alice will be sorely missed.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager



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Bond Vote

The Selectboard approved a Warning calling for a Special Town Meeting (election) on March 2, 2021. The Warning lists one article (ballot question). That article asks if bonds of the Town of Barre, in an amount not to exceed \$450,000 subject to grants and State loan forgiveness, shall be issued to construct approximately 2,700' of 8" waterline in the Wilson Industrial Park.

In the original plans for the Wilson Industrial Park (WIP), an 8" waterline was included along the road that now is known as Parker Road. The plan called for the waterline to connect with the Bolster Road waterline creating a loop which benefits Bolster Road residents and WIP businesses because water can reach their connection from both directions. The waterline in Bolster Road has been upgraded to 8" nearly to the end of the road. The waterline in the WIP has been extended by the Town as needed to serve new buildings, thus the existing waterpipe in Parker Road terminates near the former SBE building.

Acting on advice from Otter Creek Engineering (OCE), the Town's consulting water engineers, the Selectboard agreed to have certain engineering work done this winter and to call the Special Town Meeting because the State accepted applications for a drinking water funding in January. The Town applied. The funding is a loan with 75% forgiveness. The Town water system customers, through the Town's Water Fund, would re-pay the remaining 25%. However, prepayment of the loan is

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Dates & Events:

Feb. 16 - Property & Sewer Taxes Due
Mar. 2 - Special Town Meeting - School Elections
Mar. 5-7 - Annual Winter Softball Tournament (**Tentative**)
Mar. 15 - Town Caucus (**Tentative**)
Mar. 20 - Rabies Clinic (**Tentative**)
Apr. 1 - Dog Licenses Due
Apr. 1 - Winter Parking Ban Ends
Apr. 15 - Homestead Declaration Due
May 11 - Barre Town Annual Elections

(Cont'd - Bond Vote)

possible. Until now, the Town has paid for waterline and road extensions from sale of lot proceeds. When the Town sells a WIP lot it could use some or all of the lot sale income to pay off the loan. The WIP was intended to pay for itself.

Receiving voter approval of the borrowing and award of the State funding would allow the Town to complete the waterline in one contract. Connecting the Parker Road and Bolster Road water pipes might allow the Town to stop bleeding off water saving water and money in the Water Fund budget.

OCE's conservative (cautious) estimate for administration, engineering, and construction came to \$437,000. It was rounded up for the ballot question. Due to the excellent working conditions, except on Bolster Road no traffic and no pre-existing service connections, competitive bidding should yield lower construction prices. If there is a loan funded project, the loan amount will reflect actual project costs. In a worse case scenario, if the project costs \$450,000 the Town would have to re-pay \$112,500. If the Town never sells another WIP lot the Water Fund would re-pay \$5,740 per year for 30 years.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Employee Changes

New Director of Finance Position: The town is pleased to announce its first Director of Finance, Katelyn Kran, will start on March 8. Over the last decade Kate has held various finance-related roles, including five years at Barton Village, VT, where she most recently served as their Business Manager. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Gordon College in Massachusetts. Her experience, education and go-getter attitude will be great assets for helping Barre Town establish its first Finance Office, from its policies to its operations. The Director of Finance will report to the town manager.

Critical Care Paramedic Steven Miles joined the full-time ranks of Barre Town EMS in November to fill the vacancy left by Michelle Brock. He started with BTEMS as a per diem in October 2019, then served as a temporary full-timer from June 2020 while the department was short-staffed due to injuries. Before Barre Town, Steven had 9 years of experience in the medical field as an EMT, nursing assistant, paramedic technician for Clear Choice Medical, medical assistant for Northwestern Medical Center's Urgent Care clinics in St. Albans, and flight medic for the Vermont Army National Guard in the Middle East.

Full-time police officer Jamie Palmisano will go back down per diem duty in February for personal reasons. The department appreciates his full-time service since April 2020, especially since he preferred the third shift!

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

2021 Dog License and Rabies Clinic

Vermont law (20 VSA Sections 3541-3591, 3801-3813) requires dogs to be licensed annually in the Town where they live. With COVID-19 still in our midst dog licensing in Barre Town is still evolving around how to obtain a license.



So what do I need to get a dog license? A current copy of the rabies certificate, payment for the license (\$10.00 for a spayed or neutered animal and \$14.00 for an animal that is not fixed), are needed to purchase the license by April 1, 2021. Unlicensed dogs (after April 1, 2021) 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 or by mail. If you decide to license in person be sure to allow ample time as the Municipal Building is currently closed to the public. Service will be provided using the doorbell system.

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. I strongly encourage you to mail or deposit your license packet in the Municipal Building drop box. A dog license tag will be returned to you by mail.

However, if the rabies certificate on file has or will expire before April 1, 2021, you should have received a postcard reminder near the end of January in lieu of the license renewal form.

Rabies Clinic

Due to COVID-19, the Annual Fire Department Rabies Clinic is **TENTATIVELY** scheduled for Saturday, March 20, 2021, with the time and place to be determined. The cost for the vaccination is \$15.00 per pet (cat/dog). Unfortunately, the Town Clerk's Office will NOT be available to license your dog that day. For up-to-the-minute rabies clinic information stay tuned to the weekly Selectboard meeting Announcements, visit the Town Website (www.barretown.org), or telephone the Clerk's Office at 802-479-9391.

Be a responsible pet owner and license your dog!

By Donna Kely, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Town Clerk Election - Position Open

The current elected Barre Town Clerk-Treasurer, Donna Kely, has decided to retire at the end of her term this May. Are you interested in working in a rewarding, challenging, and important position, and a registered voter in Barre Town? If so, consider running for the non-partisan position of Town Clerk. The term is 3 years.

This important position is responsible for managing elections and voter registrations; processing and maintaining official records pertaining to real property, vital records, permits, licenses, meeting minutes and other matters; and billing for the Barre Town water system. The new Town Clerk has supervisory duties and works cooperatively with the Town's department heads and other elected officials. Skills with Microsoft Word and Excel are needed, as is a team-player attitude.

As a new Town Clerk you will have access to plenty of training and guidance documents from state and regional organizations. The Clerk will work a minimum of 40 hours per week in

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exchange for a full-time salary and the same benefits as other management staff.

Due to the pandemic, and as allowed by recent state legislation, no petition is required to run for office this year. To appear on the ballot, fill out a Consent of Candidate form and return it to the Barre Town Clerk's Office. The consent form can be downloaded from the Vermont Secretary of State at this link: <https://sos.vermont.gov/media/e3pkphur/local-candidate-consent-pdf.pdf>. Completed forms can be mailed to Barre Town Clerk, PO Box 124, Websterville, VT, 05678 or put in either drop box at 149 Websterville Road. The deadline to submit is 5:00pm Monday, March 29, 2021.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

March Town Meeting

Our next election, known state-wide as Town Meeting Day, will be held on Tuesday, March 2, 2021. In Barre Town the election will be for school issues, plus the Town's special election. The Polling Place will be at the Barre Town Middle & Elementary School gymnasium and hours will be 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. (Barre Town Municipal/Town Elections are held in May by Town Charter.)



During 2020 COVID-19 definitely changed how elections were conducted. The Vermont Legislature, for 2021 has once again signed emergency legislation governing how Town Meetings can be held. There will be NO from the floor voting (unless all the ACCD guidelines are met). As a result, the Barre Unified Union School District will be voting on ALL issues by Australian ballot. This means there will be no traditional from the floor election the night before Australian Ballot voting. All questions have been placed on the ballot. A public information meeting will be held via Google Meet on Monday, March 1, 2021, 5:30 p.m. for the purpose of explaining the articles to be voted on by Australian Ballot. Visit the BUUSD.org website for the meeting details.

So what will be different about the school ballot this year? New ballot questions will include the election of a Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, elected School Officer compensation, and a question authorizing the School Board to borrow in anticipation of taxes. Other standard questions include approving fiscal year operating budgets (School District to include the Central Vermont Career Center), and electing School Directors.

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 (as available), visit the Barre Town's website (www.barretown.org).

There is no deadline to register to voter. There are several options to register to vote: paper applications are available by contacting the Town Clerk's Office, you can go to the My Voter Page (<https://mvp.vermont.gov/>) or come to the polls on election day.

To request an early ballot, call the Town Clerk's Office at 802-479-9391, email wmoore@barretown.org, or use the My Voter Page portal. Ballots are expected to arrive no later than February 8, 2021.

The Town of Barre is strongly encouraging residents to vote by mail. However, if you choose to vote at the polls please note elections will be conducted within ACCD guidelines which will once again include social distancing, sanitizing, and mask wearing. Capacity in the gym is limited. Be sure to dress according to the weather in case you have to wait outside.

Be safe and be smart when casting your ballot this March!

By Donna Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

COVID-19 & Other EMS Updates

The Vermont Department of Health will begin COVID vaccine for the general public greater than 75 years old starting the week of 1/25/2021. For details on vaccine eligibility and recommendations go to <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>.



Below are the online and phone registration contacts. These contacts are for registering for your 1st vaccination dose. At the time of the first vaccination dose, you will be registered for your second dose. Registration options:

Online: <https://vermont.force.com/events/s/selfregistration>

Phone: (855) 722-7878.

BTEMS Testing: Barre Town EMS continues to work with the Vermont Department of Health on COVID testing. The primary work has been focused on going to private residence to test for COVID in cases where the patient's health or transportation is a concern. If you believe you would benefit from this form of testing contact your primary care office.

Barre Town EMS is also developing a COVID vaccine team to work with the Vermont Department of Health. Details have yet to be finalized. The EMS department has been focusing on training on vaccine types and administration processes.

New Ambulance Arrival: In late December, the 2 ambulances purchased from Bert's Emergency Vehicles arrived. These ambulances were part of the current replacement cycle. They have been equipped and began service in early January. They replace two ambulances purchased in fiscal year 2016/17. The ambulances going out of service combined for over 310,000 miles in 4 years of service. They are now being prepared for auction on www.govdeals.com.

BTEMS Staff Donate to Local Organization: The year 2020 was a stressful year for many people and the staff at BTEMS wanted to show our appreciation and support for two local organizations who continue to meet the needs of our community. This year the staff at Barre Town EMS pulled together \$630.00 to be distributed evenly to Prevent Child Abuse Vermont and Good Samaritan Haven. Each of these organizations offer both preventative resources in regards to handling high emotions in stressful situations as well as short and long term support for those who are working to get back on their feet. We're grateful to have them as essential resources in our community.

By Chris LaMonda, EMS Director

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New Wilson Depot hours are Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Town Caucus

Barre Town typically holds a Non-Partisan Town Caucus, where the political parties hold their meetings together and all Barre Town residents are welcome. This was decided years ago to ensure there are enough candidates for all the elected positions, such as Selectboard member, Moderator, or Town Clerk. Plans for the 2021 Barre Town Non-Partisan Town Caucus have not been finalized. The tentative date is Monday, March 15, 2021. For updates and how it will be held due to the pandemic, visit barretown.org or call 802-479-9391.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Be Ready for an Emergency

Preparing for emergencies might be simpler than you think, and if you're a bit stuck at home, this might be a great time to do some planning! Get started by thinking through for yourself, or discussing with your household, each of these questions:



1) How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings? This may include a battery or hand-crank powered radio or your cellphone. If you haven't already, sign up for VT-Alert at www.vtalert.gov. This service can provide alerts by email, phone call, and text message.

2) What is my shelter plan? Have a list of neighbors, friends, family both nearby and out of state and their contact information that would shelter you depending on how widespread the emergency is. Call 2-1-1 to find your options for emergency shelter near your home or place of work, or for your pets if you have any and the primary emergency shelter can't take them. Barre Town has some space for temporary sheltering, but cannot take pets. Also call 2-1-1 if and when you need emergency shelter.

3) What is my evacuation route? Know all the ways to get out of your home if you had to.

4) What is my household communication plan? If you get separated from those in your household, where should you contact each other and how? More guidance for making an emergency plan can be found at the source of this information, www.ready.gov/plan.

People with special needs should consider:

1) What will you need during an emergency? This could include a flashlight with extra batteries, an extra battery for your cell phone, and a sheet of paper listing your emergency health information, like major health conditions, disabilities, cognitive impairments, allergies, medications, special medical equipment you use, and emergency contacts. If you have special medical equipment, ask the company that you bought it from about alternative power sources.

2) Do I need to update my support team's contact information? Places to keep this information includes next to each home phone, in your cell phone, in your car glovebox, in your wheelchair if you have one, at work, and with a neighbor.

3) What do I need to be safe in my home if I can't leave it for a few days? This includes non-perishable food, medicines, water, and other emergency supplies.

4) What do I need to be ready to evacuate my home if I needed to? Know all the exit routes from your home, and plan where you would go and how you would get there. If you would need emergency shelter, call 2-1-1 and ask which

ones could accommodate your needs. If you would need transportation, register with Vermont CARE (Citizens Assistance Registry for Emergencies) here: e911.vermont.gov/care.

More guidance for making a special needs emergency plan can be found at the source of this information, vem.vermont.gov/preparedness. Scroll to the Publications section and click on the "Just in Case" link.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Help Wanted

As might be deduced from the article on the first page and other articles in this edition and the previous edition, the Town will be seeking employment applications for two positions imminently. Watch the local papers or check the Town website for the vacancy announcements soon.

Assistant Town Clerk: The assistant town clerk (ATC) works a 37.5 hour week. The position is covered by the office/clerical union contract. Good benefits are provided. Starting pay rate is \$17.38 to \$17.89 depending on experience. The primary duty is recording and administering the land (deeds, mortgages, easements, etc.) records. The ATC helps with all duties and functions of the Town Clerk's Office such as issuing licenses, collecting payments, and helping with election tasks. Must be a team player, keep a good attitude working with the many daily visitors (in person and by phone) and be mindful of detail.

Town Treasurer: This is a new part-time position resulting from the Town Clerk/Finance Director restructuring. The Treasurer will be appointed by the Selectboard and report to the Town Manager. The Treasurer should expect to work 15 hours per week, 10 of which must be at stated times (office hours). Pay will be based on hours worked. The hourly rate will be about \$26.00. Treasurer's duties are described in state law, the Town Charter and adopted Town policies. The Treasurer will work with the Finance Director and full-time assistant treasurer. The Treasurer will sign all finance related documents, including weekly checks; will make bank deposits, will assist the Finance Director, as needed, to prepare for the annual audit; will oversee and assist Finance and Clerk's Office with annual printing and mailing of the tax bills. The Treasurer must have one to three years experience in a related field and a working knowledge of computerized accounting; intermediate level working knowledge of Microsoft Excel and Word needed.

See the full job description on the website on the home page. Click on Employment with Barre Town.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Summer Jobs

Seasonal Employment: The town needs six seasonal employees from mid-May to August. Four will work with the Department of Public Works (DPW), one with the Town Engineer's Office, and one with the Cemetery and Recreation crews. During the pandemic, the town takes employee and public health seriously and will provide COVID-safe protocols and equipment.

Only applicants 18 years of age or older and who have a valid driver's license can be considered. For all positions: a regular week is 40 hours, any hours worked over 40 per week will be paid at time and a half, and a bonus of up to \$1.25 per hour will be paid for good attendance.



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Department of Public Works: Four seasonal DPW employees are needed to keep up with summer road and utility work. Tasks include clearing road side brush blocking drivers' view, lowering and repairing manholes and catch basins, and traffic control at work sites. Flagging training will be provided. The regular schedule is Monday through Friday, 7:00am -3:30pm. The department may use a four, 10-hour day schedule during a part of the summer. In that case the hours would be 6:00am - 4:30pm. The first summer pay rate for 2021 is \$12.75 an hour.

Recreation and Cemeteries: One seasonal Recreation and Cemetery employee is needed to help mostly with mowing, as well as trash pickup and other grounds maintenance tasks. The position will work Monday through Friday. When assigned to Recreation, the schedule is 7:00 am - 3:30 pm. When working with the Cemetery the schedule is 8:00 - 3:30. The first summer pay rate for 2021 is \$12.75 an hour.

Town Engineer's Office: A student majoring in civil engineering or a closely related field is needed to assist the Town Engineer oversee summer construction and road paving, and complete office work. Start times will vary between 7:00am and 8:00a.m. depending on the day's work. The first summer pay rate for 2021 is \$14.40.

To apply: The application for these positions can be picked up at the Town Offices at 149 Websterville Road or downloaded from the Town's website (www.barretown.org/Permits_Forms/employmentapplication.pdf). Submit your application by email to offices@barretown.org or by mail to Town of Barre, PO Box 116 Websterville, VT 05678. Application review will begin on March 26.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager

Reappraisal Update

At the end of December, 2020 Interim Town Assessor Russ Beaudoin and his residential property inspectors were 91.5% done inspecting those properties. At that time there were 261 properties to inspect. There were no inspections during January. The properties yet to be inspected are in the East Barre, and Cherrywood-Silver Circle neighborhood.

Because of COVID-19 the inspectors have not been entering homes to inspect the interior. While performing the exterior inspections they did talk to some owners and collect information about the interior. For the vast majority of other residential properties the Assessor's Office is mailing a letter asking the owner(s) to verify necessary information shown on the letter and to answer 6 questions. The letter then is mailed back to the Assessor's Office. The letters are being mailed to neighborhoods same as the exterior inspections were done. At the end of January the Office was mailing letters to the second neighborhood. Letters are mailed weekly.

Beaudoin is inspecting commercial and industrial properties. At the end of January he was about 40% through the list.

Reappraisal expenses are paid from the Reappraisal Fund which receives a State grant each year.

The reappraisal will be complete in time to use the new Grand List total for setting the 2021-2022 property tax rates.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

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Lot for Sale....

A 5 acre lot at 20 Buick Street in Lower Websterville. Very High Density Residential zone. Flat and partly cleared. Town water and sewer connections possible. Contact 479-9331.

Filing Homestead Declaration Form

Do you own and live in a Barre Town home? **Note: The deadlines in this article are what they would be in a normal year. With COVID-19, the Vermont Department of Taxes could change the dates.**

If you own the Vermont home in which you live, you must file the Homestead Declaration Form (HS-122) every year. **You must file the HS-22 even if you do not have to file a state income tax return**, for example if you are retired. 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 nonhomestead education tax rate. If you do not 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 seventeen 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, 2021** for the home you own and live in as of April 1, 2021. You will be assessed a penalty if you file after April 15, 2021 because of the extra work it creates to correct your taxes after they've already been changed for the new tax year. The penalty is up to 3% of your education tax bill if the non-homestead rate is higher than the homestead rate, and penalty up to 8% if the non-homestead rate is lower than the homestead rate. If you miss this deadline, you can still file by October 15, 2021 and have your tax rate corrected.

Take note: If your household made less than an amount specified by the state during calendar year 2020 (whether from a job, retirement income, or other income), you may be eligible for a property tax credit (formerly known as an adjustment). To claim a property tax credit, file a Household Income (HI-144) Form with your HS-122 (both Sections A and B) by the same deadlines: April 15, 2021 to be on time, or by October 15, 2021 with a \$15 penalty. Filing the HI-144 with your HS-122 will potentially reduce your tax burden even more. The 2020 maximum household income to be eligible for a property tax credit is \$138,500. If your household made less than that in 2020, file an HI-144 this year.

Since **retirees** often do not file income taxes, they sometimes overlook filing an HI-144 and HS-122 and potentially are paying a total of 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, 2021, but for not more than 182 days in the 2021 calendar year, you may still claim it as a homestead.

Accessing the forms: The 2021 HS-122, and HI-144, can be completed online once myVTax becomes available at <https://myvtax.vermont.gov>, planned for February 15. If you would rather fill out a paper form, you can get one from the Barre Town Assessor's Office. Call 479-2595 to have one mailed to you. Or you may arrange to print out the HS-122 and HS-144 forms at the Aldrich Library for 60 cents for all four pages in black and white. Call the Library at 476-7550 for a computer appointment.

More information is online at tax.vermont.gov/property-owners/homestead-declaration. If you have any questions, call the Assessor's Office at 802-479-2595.

Budget in Process

The 10-member Budget Committee started its weekly meetings on January 26. The Committee will meet, at a minimum, every Tuesday night through March 23. March 30 is the Selectboard's deadline to sign the Town Meeting Warning which includes the amount of the proposed General Fund and Highway Fund budgets.



A LOOK at the BUDGET

This year the Selectboard appointed Mike Gilbar and Cedric Sanborn to the Committee. Both residents have served on the Committee in the past. Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna Kely appointed Phil Cecchini, who served on the Committee in 2019. Those members appointed newcomers James West and Terry Reil. The Selectboard members are the other Committee members.

Barre Town has nine fund budgets: General Fund, Highway Fund, Sewer Fund, Sewer Capital Improvement Fund, Water Fund, Equipment Fund, Ambulance Fund, Cemetery Fund and Building Fund. The Budget Committee reviews all nine budgets submitted by the Town Manager. The Manager's budgets are based on input from the appropriate department head.

So far, the Sewer, Sewer Capital Improvement, Water, Equipment, Cemetery and Building Fund budgets are completed and in the Committee's hands.

The Manager's proposed Sewer budget proposes a yearly sewer fee increase from \$316 to \$330. The Water Fund budget includes a 4% water rate increase. Each department with a building will contribute 3% more to the Building Fund raising the total contributions from \$59,580 to \$61,375. Equipment charges, what Town departments pay the Equipment Fund for their vehicles and equipment, are going up increasing the total from \$1,429,050 to \$1,434,505.

The budget summary pages are posted on the website at www.barretown.org/annual_budgets.php. Budget Committee meeting agendas are posted at Trow Hill Grocery, Graniteville General Store, Hannaford and the town website. Click on Boards and Commissions then select Budget Committee. Residents are welcome to "attend" Committee meetings (Tuesdays 6:00 pm—7:55pm) by calling 477-1200 and entering Participant Code 489078#. Meetings also may be attended via Microsoft Teams. Contact the Town Manager's Office (479-9331) for connection information. Pre-election information is provided in the April newsletter and in a booklet made available at least ten days before the election on May 11.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Barre Town Elections - May 11, 2021

COVID-19 changed everything about the 2020 elections. The Open Meeting was canceled; business was placed on the paper ballot. The annual election was postponed. Drive-through voting was set up; the counting of ballots was livestreamed on the website.

The pandemic continues and the 2021 Open Meeting and annual election will not be exactly normal. Candidates for elected office will not be required to collect signatures on a petition; instead candidates will submit a Consent to Candidate form to the Town Clerk's Office before 5:00 pm on March 29. If approved by the Selectboard the election could be by mail only, but plans are being made to have the polls open (7am to 7pm) in the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School gym.

The Open Meeting might be canceled again and the articles placed on the paper ballot. 2021 is shaping up to have its own healthy share of changes.

FFF Winter Softball Tournament

As of this writing, on March 5 -7 the Freezing Fun for Families plans to hold its annual softball fundraiser to benefit families battling childhood cancer. Usually a tournament, the format has been changed to be COVID-safe. The Rec Board will consider the use request at their regular February 1 meeting. Because of the pandemic emergency, the Town Manager will also have to approve. If the pandemic worsens, Governor's Executive Orders may require canceling the event.

This year, softball teams do not need to pay a registration fee. Instead, teams are encouraged to raise money. Individuals can donate and learn about this year's beneficiaries, at www.freezingfunforfamilies.com.

By Elaine Wang, Assistant Town Manager



Project Updates

Wilson Industrial Park – The Town of Barre has applied for funding to complete the water pipe for phase 2 of the Wilson Industrial Park. The funding will help pay for the installation of the water main, connecting Parker to Bolster Road. The project includes 2,700 ft of 8" water line, and also includes fire hydrants and lot connections for future development of the industrial park. Connecting the waterline from Parker to Bolster Road will increase fire protection in the industrial park and increase water quality.

VT 14 and Bridge Street Intersection – The Vermont Agency of Transportation VT 14 and Bridge Street project is tentatively scheduled for construction in 2023. The project will include waterline upgrades and the reconfiguration of the VT 14 intersection with Bridge Street. Survey was conducted in the summer of 2020; the next step includes revising the waterline design and developing right of way plans and titles.

Littlejohn Waterline Project – Last fall the Town installed 500' of waterline on Littlejohn Road. This was part of an ongoing waterline upgrade project for the Websterville area. This summer we will continue to install another 500' of water line on Littlejohn and 500' on Libercent Street. These upgrades bring better fire protection and water serviceability to the neighborhood.

Rt. 110 Bridge: Vermont Agency of Transportation and its contracted engineers continue to work on plans and designs of the bridge. AOT had a soil boring company at the site collecting samples this past late fall. AOT sought Town approval to attach the water pipe to the side of the bridge rather than underneath. Reducing work underneath will help re-opening the bridge on schedule, a 60-day construction period is anticipated. Construction is expected during 2023.

Turf Repairs, Roadside Plow Damage

As we get closer to Vermont's 5th season, Mud Season, the snowbanks will start to melt and reveal damage from snowplows. The Department of Public works will be fixing damage created by the snowplows this spring as conditions allow. If there are any questions or concerns please call the Public Works Department at 476-3522.

By Josh Martineau, Town Engineer

Town Forest Logging

After competitive bidding, on November 17 the Selectboard awarded the 2020-2022 logging contract to Limlaw Pulpwood. Limlaw's high bid, based on the forester's forest product production estimates, was \$37,462. If Limlaw harvests the exact amount of products estimated the Town would be paid \$37,462. In late December Limlaw moved in equipment and shortly afterwards began logging.



This contract covers two areas totaling 93 acres. The largest area is along the eastern edge and center of the town forest. The second area is in the southwest corner behind the St. Sylvester Church. Limlaw started in the eastern, center area. The log landing for this section is off of Violette Street. The logger must finish this area before starting work in the second. Per the bidding specifications and agreement, logging must cease on or before April 30. Restoration work may be done as late as June. Logging could be performed over two winters.

On January 30 the Town's forester, Jeff Smith, led a workshop in the logging area. Despite the frigid temperatures 8 residents and a handful of town representatives attended. Smith expressed his satisfaction with Limlaw's work so far and said he estimated the logger was 30% complete with the first area. Workshop attendees learned the town forest is a young, recovering forest with predominately lower-value trees. Smith explained many factors are considered in marking trees to be cut. Overall the goal is to raise the timber value of the forest over decades, while maintaining wildlife habitat now, protecting sensitive features such as brook crossings and vernal pools, and promoting tree diversity. Attendees stood on one protected brook crossing and at another location observed large timber mats used in soft soil. Smith discussed ash trees. Many are being removed but a select few not near a recreation trail are being left in hopes of re-generation post emerald ash borer. Smith offered to lead another workshop during the summer.

Limlaw is using large equipment. The entire tree is being harvested minimizing tree tops left on the ground and perhaps crossing a trail. Forest users should be aware of the logging; listen for the large equipment and trucks. The logger does work on weekends, too.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Ash Tree Removal

The public works department is working on roadside ash tree removal, as weather allows. Late last fall the weather was too good. DPW worked on gravel road maintenance. Colder but drier weather brought that gravel work to a halt and ash tree removal began. Unfortunately there were numerous snow events in January requiring the DPW's time.

This winter DPW has finished Neddo Road and made good progress on Cummings Road. Upper Phelps will be next. The DPW Superintendent is talking to the tree removal company about taking down the large ash trees on Barclay Road.

Property owners in the northeast corner of the Town should call the DPW (476-3522) if they want to keep the wood from trees cut down along their property.

By Carl Rogers, Town Manager

Board and Commission Reports

Development Review Board – *By Cindy Spaulding; Members: M. Reaves, C. Sanborn, C. Thygesen, C. Neddo, J. Valsangiacomo, A. Valentinetti, and J. Fecteau, C. Chase, M. Gilbar.*

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

November 2020: Approved BLA (2) at 236 & 240 Osborne Road, and at 401 Camp Street.

December 2020: Approved BLA at 330 Phelps Road and Sunset Road; continued BLA on Nichols Road and variance on East Barre Road.

January 2021: Continued 2 BLA's, Nichols Road and Baptist Street; continued variance on East Barre Road.

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

AUD=Allowed Use Determination; CUP=Conditional Use Permit

November 2020: Approved AUD for storage and a small woodshop at 127 Birchwood Park Drive; continued discussion of possible zone change.

December 2020: Zone change proposal rescinded; began review of Zoning Bylaw and Town Plan for amendments as needed. Heard presentation of possible 500kW solar farm plans on Bridge Street and Allen Street.

January 2021: Approved Novus Energy 500kW Bridge Street Solar "preferred site" and tabled request for a "preferred site" for Allen Street.

Traffic Safety Advisory Committee - *By Josh Martineau; Members: W. Kirby J. Blow, S. Corbett, D. Freeman, and B. Meyer.*

November 2020: Discussed Sunset and Cummings Road intersection and traffic calming devices. No issue voted on.

December 2020: No Meeting.

January 2021: No Meeting.



VOTE!
NEXT ELECTION AT-A-GLANCE

When: Tuesday, March 2, 2021; 7:00 am - 7:00 pm

Where: Barre Town Middle and Elementary School Gymnasium

What: Election of Barre Unified Union School District board members, and other District officers; consider approval of BUUSD budget; other BUUSD articles (ballot questions); and Barre Town Special Meeting for waterline bond vote.

Registration: Same day voter registration (at the polls) but preregistration through the Town Clerk's Office is encouraged.

Early Voting: Voting by mail is encouraged during the pandemic. Ballots now available; contact the Town Clerk's Office (479-9391) or use postcard mailed to registered voters.

Sample ballots: Posted at Hannaford's Market, Trow Hill Grocery, Lawson's Store, Graniteville General Store and on the Barre Town website (www.barretown.org).

Voter rights: Secretary of State's website: <https://sos.vermont.gov>

More information on pages 1, 3 and 6



LOOK FOR THE NEXT EDITIONof the Barre Town newsletter in April, 2021!