

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING AGENDA
February 16, 2021

1. Call to order 8:05 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consider approving agenda.
4. Consider approving February 9, 2021 meeting minutes.
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests (by phone) for non-agenda items.
7. Consider approving Assessor's "Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending."
8. Consider ambulance billing issues: a) bill form; b) when to bill for excessive mutual aid service; and c) revised paramedic intercept service fee.
9. Discuss office space in Municipal Building.
10. Consider approving weekly Accounts Payable Warrants for February 16, 2021.
11. Miscellaneous: including licenses or permits if any.
12. 'Round the table.
13. Executive session
14. Adjourn.

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MINUTES
February 16, 2021

The duly warned meeting of February 16, 2021 was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville, Vermont at 8:05 p.m. and remotely using Teams.

The following member attended in person: W. John "Jack" Mitchell. These members attended remotely: Paul White, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, and Bob Nelson.

Attendance in person for the regular meeting: Town Manager Carl Rogers and Assistant Manager Elaine Wang. Attendance remotely for the regular meeting: Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, and EMS Director Chris Lamonda.

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 8:05 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVE THE AGENDA

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the amended meeting agenda; Item 13 Executive Session, add contracts and personnel.

MINUTES

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of February 9, 2021 with minor spelling and grammatical corrections as presented to the Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ✓ Listening in to the Barre Town Budget Committee meetings is a great way to get a detailed understanding of Town operations. The Committee will meet every Tuesday, 6:00 p.m. through the end of March. You can find the telephone number and video conference information at www.barretown.org. The Tuesday February 23rd meeting will cover the Highway and possibly Ambulance Fund proposed budgets.
- ✓ On March 2, 2021, the Special Barre Town election on the water line bond will be held. If you missed the public information session by the Selectboard last week, you can find a link to the recording at www.barretown.org.
- ✓ The Town of Barre Selectboard would like community input on a potential, new, town-owned natural area between Camp Street and Lague Lane. The Recreation Board and Selectboard have been reviewing results of a direct mailed and online survey. To provide input directly to the Selectboard, plan to join their regular meeting on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 by phone or videoconference. Details are at www.barretown.org. The meeting starts at 8:00 p.m. with the discussion about the natural area beginning around 8:30 p.m.

GUESTS - None

CERTIFICATE OF NO APPEAL OR SUIT PENDING

Background: Once a year, after Errors & Omissions, if there are no open tax appeals or lawsuits pending the Grand List is closed. From this point forward no changes can be made for the remainder of the fiscal year to property values. The Selectboard was provided a draft copy of the document they are being asked to approve and sign stating the Grand List for the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 is closed.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the Certificate of No Suit Appeal or Suit Pending for the Fiscal Year 2020 – 2021 Grand List.

During the motion discussion Manager Rogers informed the Board the Assessor has stated the town-wide reappraisal will be ready on time. By law, the filing with the Town Clerk will take place in June. Late last year the Selectboard approved a data mailer to be mailed to property owners in lieu of inside home inspections. Those mailers are being sent in batches and response has been good.

AMBULANCE BILLING

Background: The Selectboard was provided with information on a proposed bill layout, information on excessive mutual aid by other ambulance services, and a revised paramedic intercept service fee.

- A. Billing format: enlarging the payment stub and credit card box on the back side were noted. EMS Director Chris Lamonda noted the Programmers at Zoll (software being used by billing company) has been contacted for a quote and we are awaiting a response. He asked for the cost and timeline to implement the bill. There is concern for the Town paying to create this form and then not having any hold over the layout. Basically, once the form is created the software vendor could use it as one of billing software options.
- B. There has been an ambulance service using Mutual Aid to such an extent it should no longer be considered mutual aid. To address the issue the EMS Director recommended implementing a mutual aid fee. Selectboard concerns include calling this “mutual aid fee,” repercussions for instituting such a fee, and drawing the line as to when mutual stops being just that.

Board consensus is this should be called a “coverage fee” and a Policy should be worked on. However, things should begin with the two agencies that raise the red flags.

- C. The various Paramedic Intercept fee chart was reviewed. It was determined this could be part of the Policy noted above and a couple of the fees need to be lowered.

During final discussion it was noted that Director Lamonda was conversing with other agencies regarding fees since December and they are aware this may be coming. Concerns regarding fiscal year and municipal budgeting for other Towns were noted.

For future quarterly meetings with the Selectboard reports will be received from the various Shift Supervisors.

On a separate note, last week the Selectboard inquired why there are so many refunds to Medicare – Part B (CMS). The majority of refunds are due to skilled nursing facility (SNF) charges. When our ambulance service picks up a SNF patient 90% of the time we are unaware. This results with Barre Town billing Medicare. Why Medicare does not catch this and reject immediately is unknown. Eventually, usually 2 to 3 months later, during Medicare’s review they find the erroneous payment and request a refund. The Town is not out the money as we in turn will bill the Nursing Home and they pay.

OFFICE SPACE IN THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING

Background: With the Administration changes (hiring a Finance Director, hiring an appointed Town Treasurer), creating office space is now at the top of the list of things to do. The Selectboard was provided with various options (and costs), all impacting the Town Engineer. These options involve the Municipal Building and DPW Shop. The new Finance Director is due to start March 8, 2021.

Bob Nelson stated he spoke with the Town Engineer who informed him he felt it would be best if his office was relocated to the DPW Shop since this is where he spends most of his time. Discussion focused on his interaction with other admin staff, numerous map drawer cabinets, and the map copy machine.

Asst. Manager Wang advised the Board that moving the Town Engineer to the DPW Shop with have more costs than noted due to having to lay line for internet connection and monthly fees. Currently their internet is “beamed” over to the Shop. Various options including the Assessor’s Office needs were noted.

Consensus of the Board is the Town Engineer should move to the DPW Shop.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted to approve the accounts payable warrants dated February 16, 2021. Bob Nelson abstained due to an employer conflict.

There was brief discussion regarding the Barre City Sewer bill and the percentage the Town is being charged. The Manager will have the Town Engineer double check the bill.

MISCELLANEOUS

Asst. Manager Wang spoke to an article in VT Digger regarding BT EMS COVID vaccinations. The Selectboard can also expect notes in their next meeting packet regarding the comments/concerns from residents living in the Camp Street area.

‘ROUND TABLE

Jack Mitchell inquired on the status of early ballots for the upcoming March 2, 2021 election. The Clerk stated ballots were mailed beginning Friday February 12th. However, remember Monday was a holiday which may slow delivery a day or two.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to find the need to go into executive session citing premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage.

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to go into executive session at 10:15 p.m. for contracts and personnel.

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to come out of executive session at 10:53 p.m.

ACTION

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the expenditure of up to \$260 for the personnel request as discussed in Executive Session.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:55 p.m.

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Selectboard Chair

Barre Town Selectboard