



Town of Barre VERMONT

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING

May 2, 2023

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....4:30 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Executive session (personnel)
4. Pledge of allegiance.....6:00 p.m.
5. Consider approving April 25, 2023 meeting minutes
6. Announcements
7. Receive guests for non-agenda items.
8. Discussion with Mark Dessureau regarding complaint about Partridge Road
9. Consider awarding contracts for: **a)** automatic flagging equipment **b)** crack sealing
10. Consider appointing Acting Town Manager
11. Consider approving the sale of excavator
12. Consider authorizing the purchase of municipal building and EMS base radio equipment
13. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants for May 2, 2023
14. Miscellaneous: **a)** Jockey Hollow Deli and Catering Request to Cater Permit; **b)** other licenses and permits, if any
15. ‘Round the table
16. Executive session: personnel, labor contracts (action possible)
17. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of May 2, 2023 was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville at 4:30 p.m.

Selectboard Members Present: Paul White, Norma Malone, Bob Nelson, Justin Bolduc, and W. John “Jack” Mitchell.

Selectboard Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Chris Violette, Town Clerk Tina Lunt, Town Engineer Josh Martineau, Shop Foreman Mike Martel, Assistant Town Clerk Jennifer Bushway, and Cindy Spaulding. Those present virtually: DPW Supervisor Richard Tetreault

Others Present: Times Argus Reporter Eric Blaisdell, Mark Dessureau, Doug Farnham, Mike Gilbar, Dawn Farnham, and Paul Malone.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair White called the meeting to order at 4:36 p.m. at the EOC Conference Room in the Municipal Building.

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the agenda as follows:

1. Add item #7.5: Approval of Resolution No. 7-23

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to go into executive session at 4:38 p.m. for personnel matters, joined by the Town Manager and Police Chief.

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to exit executive session at 5:48 p.m.

The Selectboard recessed the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

The Selectboard reconvened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. in the Selectboard Meeting Room.

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

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the April 25, 2023 Selectboard meeting minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Barre Town Lawn Waste site is open! It will be open on Saturdays, into the fall, from 8:00 a.m. to noon. The only weekday opening scheduled at this time will be Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Also, please note, we are still looking for volunteers to help expand those hours. Please contact the Town Manager’s Office at 479-9331 for more information or to sign up.
- Spring bulk trash collection will be Saturday, May 13 at the Public Works Garage, 129 Websterville Road. This service is for Barre Town residents and is a great way to economically dispose of large (bulky) items not appropriate for weekly trash pickup or disposal in trash bags. For more details about what can and can’t be disposed of at bulk trash, look for the recently mailed newsletter or check barretown.org.
- Green Up Day is Saturday, May 6. Supplies, such as green trash bags and gloves, are available at the Town Manager’s Office, 149 Websterville Road between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Don’t forget the free BBQ being held at the Barre Town Recreation Center from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. for Green Up volunteers. Tickets are available at the Town Manager’s Office. Also, please be aware that racing at Thunder Road begins that same Saturday, so traffic on the main roads may be heavier than normal. In all cases, please use caution while working adjacent to the traveled way.

Selectboard Minutes of May 2, 2023 Continued:

- The Vermont Homeowner Assistance Program (VHAP) has announced that its application portal will close after Monday, June 12, 2023. After that, getting assistance is more complicated. VHAP can provide financial assistance to pay overdue property taxes and local utilities bills. Many Vermonters have taken advantage of this program so if interested, reach out to the Vermont Housing Finance Agency.
- Mr. Mitchell announcement regarding Bulk Trash: Mr. Mitchell reminded residents that roofing shingles must be in containers (boxes, buckets, or bags) Those who arrive with loose shingles will be asked to wait to unload the materials. Additionally, residents are asked to stay in their vehicles while the volunteers unload materials. The Barre Town Fire Department Auxiliary will be the volunteer group soliciting donations.
- Chair White reminded residents that Open Town Meeting will be held tomorrow evening at the Municipal Building in the Selectboard Meeting Room at 7:30 p.m. Highlights include the Wendell Pelkey award presentation and an informational presentation of the FY '23-'24 budget. Budget booklets are available at the Town Office and local stores.

GUESTS: None.

RESOLUTION NO. 7-23:

Background: Jack Mitchell has been a lifelong resident of Websterville in the Town of Barre, Vermont. Mr. Mitchell has served the Town of Barre for over five decades. He has served in numerous elected and appointed positions. Additionally, Mr. Mitchell has performed as a public safety officer and bus driver. The Selectboard has honored Jack Mitchell with a resolution declaring May 13 has “JACK MITCHELL DAY”, inviting all Town residents on such day to make merry to honor this auspicious occasion.

Mrs. Malone read the resolution.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adopt “Resolution No. 7-23, A Resolution of the Town of Barre, Vermont to Honor W. John “Jack” Mitchell In Recognition of Over Fifty Years of Dedicated Public Service”.

Mr. Mitchell expressed that he was pleasantly surprised and said the resolution was totally unexpected, thanking all that were present.

The conversation began as Mr. Malone shared that Mr. Mitchell has added direction and growth to Barre Town. Mr. Malone noted that Mr. Mitchell’s continued dedication to the Town is rare.

Board members shared their appreciation for Mr. Mitchell commenting that it has been a privilege and honor to serve with him over the years. Mr. Mitchell said that all the Boards he has served on have been respectful and civil and this was something he appreciated throughout his years.

Those present shared hugs and well wishes with Mr. Mitchell.

PARTRIDGE ROAD COMPLAINT:

Selectboard Minutes of May 2, 2023 Continued:

Background: Barre Town resident Mark Dessureau reached out to the Town Manager a few weeks ago to express his displeasure with the condition of Partridge Road, especially along his significant road frontage. Mr. Dessureau has numerous complaints about how Partridge Road has been improved. In his opinion, the road has risen several feet over the years making it harder to get to the undeveloped portion of his land as well as gravel and water runoff impacts. Additionally, ditching along the southerly side of the road has caused his field to be wetter than it use to be.

Chris Violette, Carl Rogers, and Josh Martineau arranged a site visit with Mr. Dessureau. Mr. Violette reports that the stretch of road has seen muddy conditions in the spring and the Town has worked hard to improve the road. Last year a culvert was replaced, and ditching work has been completed.

Mr. Dessureau stated his concerns are the Town gravel roads in general, and not specifically Partridge Road. He shared his discouragement on how the Town has been maintaining dirt roads. Personally, he has lost several feet of road frontage and a boundary marker due to the Town having to enlarge a culvert. Additionally, Mr. Dessureau stated he feels the Town now has a safety concern with the height of the road that needs to be addressed.

Town Engineer Josh Martineau shared Mr. Dessureau came to them in 2021 and the following spring work was completed which included ditch work, removing fabric, and replacing a culvert. Mr. Martineau shared the Town could go back and clean up the ditch but as far as the road height and loss of road frontage the Town would have to lower the road. Mr. Violette noted he has already started the process of replacing the boundary line that was lost.

Mrs. Malone stated she does have concerns about “building up” the roads, and she agrees this is a safety concern. She recommends the Town having a future conversation regarding the quality of the gravel, along with the benefits of building up the gravel roads for drainage purposes. Town Engineer Josh Martineau shared the gravel the Town uses meets all State specifications. Additionally, Mr. Martineau shared the Town can treat the roads in many ways. The difference comes down to the cost, the time involved, and manpower.

The Board thanked Mr. Dessureau for coming in and stated they will discuss these concerns further when they tackle the 5-year Road Plan.

CONTRACTS:

Automatic Flagger

Background: Last May, Town Engineer Josh Martineau made a presentation to the Selectboard proposing to purchase two automated flagging devices using ARPA funds. Mr. Martineau made the case that these devices would eliminate the need to have flaggers at each end of a construction zone, resulting in fewer personnel needed. The devices are remote controlled, requiring just

one person to operate the devices. The Board approved an expenditure of ARPA funds of \$34,000. Bids were solicited for two of the devices. Worksafe Traffic Control Industries of Barre was the only timely bidder.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the purchase of two (2) Automatic Flagging devices to Worksafe Traffic Control Industries of Barre, VT for the total amount of \$27,950.

Crack Sealing:

Background: Road crack sealing is completed annually on various roads throughout Town. Bids were solicited on April 7, and opened on April 27. One bid was received from Indus Inc of Braintree, MA in the amount of \$13.94 per gallon. Indus Inc. completed the crack sealing last year satisfactorily.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the 2023 crack sealing service to Indus Inc. of Braintree, MA for the per gallon price of \$13.94.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING TOWN MANAGER:

Background: Chris Violette currently holds the title of Acting Town Manager, having assumed the position of Town Manager, this position now needs to be filled.

Mr. Violette intends to almost always be reachable when he is out of Town, however, there is still a need for somebody in the building or close by to handle situations that arise needing an in-person presence. He has recommended Finance Director Katelyn Kran to be appointed as the Acting Town Manager. Mr. Violette stated that Mrs. Kran has insight into many of the day-to-day operations, especially budgetary. Mrs. Kran makes careful decisions, considering many factors. She also has a great rapport with department heads and staff. Town Manager Chris Violette noted that he has spoken to Police Chief Dodge, and he has agreed to be available to assist Mrs. Kran because she is relatively new to the Town and the area.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Norma Malone, The Selectboard voted unanimously to designate Katelyn Kran as the Acting Town Manager.

SALE OF 2003 WHEEL EXCAVATOR:

Background: After putting the recently purchased wheeled excavator in service, an attempt was made to sell the one it replaced, a 2003 Caterpillar wheel excavator. Over the course of a few weeks, numerous ads were placed in publications and websites asking for bids. No bids were received. Two weeks ago the Selectboard authorized the excavator to be posted on govdeals.com. The auction on govdeals.com ends on May 1.

Mr. Violette noted a high bid was received, however, it did not meet reserve. The Board will continue this discussion in executive session.

PURCHASE OF MUNICIPAL BUILDING AND EMS BASE RADIO EQUIPMENT:

Background: The Town is in the process of pursuing upgrades to their emergency radio communication. This includes the replacement of all the tower radio equipment and adding a second site on Taplin Hill. Part of the improvement plan includes replacing existing radio equipment at most of the facilities such as the municipal building, fire stations, both EMS buildings, and both DPW locations.

The major windstorm that hit the area the day before Christmas 2022 highlighted significant shortcomings with the Town radio communication from the municipal building, especially the Emergency Operation Center (EOC). The Town Manager's Office hasn't had communication ability for a few years. The municipal building, as most of the Town facilities either did or do, used UHF radios. While fire, EMS, and DPW use VHF radios and communication between UHF and VHF was possible because of equipment at the

Selectboard Minutes of May 2, 2023 Continued:

town that allowed both bands to crossover and be heard. Unfortunately, the Town has not had that ability for the municipal building for several years now. This was very problematic during the windstorm and the first ever opening of the EOC.

Mr. Violette is proposing to use some of the allocated ARPA funds for radio improvements that are planned as part of the overall project, to upgrade the municipal building and the East Barre EMS station now as opposed to later. Additionally, Mr. Violette is suggesting a second VHF radio be added to the EOC to allow the monitoring of both fire/EMS and DPW frequencies simultaneously at an additional cost of approximately \$1,500.

Chair White inquired about the amount of time involved with the replacement of the equipment. Mr. Violette noted the installation will take more than one trip and they will need to run cable.

Mr. Mitchell stated for a number of years he has been trying to help with radio communication issues. He said he is in favor of the upgrade. This would be especially beneficial for the EOC operations.

There was a brief discussion regarding the location of the EOC.

Mr. Nelson asked if the \$14,109.40 is an additional amount being requested out of the ARPA funds or if this amount would come out of the already allocated funds for the radio system. Mr. Violette confirmed this amount is included in the previously allocated funds.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the Town Manager to sole source and issue a purchase order to Burlington Communication in the amount of \$14,109.40, to install three (3), VHF radios, associated antennas, and hardware and one (1) UHF radio, associated antenna, and hardware.

It is noted for the record that the \$14,109.40 are designated ARPA funds.

Mrs. Malone thanked Mr. Violette for his continued work on the radio project over the last few years.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable warrants for the week of May 2, 2023.

Chair White inquired about the Town Manager's new cell phone number. Mr. Violette noted he is slowly transitioning from his previous phone due to all his contacts over the years.

Mrs. Malone inquired about the warrants being sent out electronically noting for the past two weeks the Board has not received them this way. Mr. Violette was not aware of this process but will be sure these are sent out electronically in the future.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Violette updated the Board on the following items:

- Munson will be here on Monday, May 8 to finish up the work in the Wilson Industrial Park and on Bolster Road
- Mr. Violette noted the he is working with a new landscaping individual

Selectboard Minutes of May 2, 2023 Continued:

- The Municipal Building multi-function printer arrived yesterday (Monday, May 1) and was successfully installed

ROUND TABLE:

Jack Mitchell:

- Mr. Mitchell read a brief script to the Board. The script highlighted that on February 22, 1918 Al Gross invented the walkie talkie. He created and patented many communication devices. He said he thought it was fitting regarding the Boards earlier discussion regarding the radio system.
- Mr. Mitchell shared a brief history regarding the Towns back roads. He said Barre Town use to get numerous complaints during the mud season. The Town hired a company to complete a road study and in return followed their recommendations for fixing the conditions. Mr. Mitchell stated he feels the Town has done a good job of maintaining the gravel roads.
- Mr. Mitchell shared a list of highlights he was part of over his years with the Town. Some of those include:
 - Upgrade to the Municipal Building in 1991
 - Replacement of the original Selectboard Meeting Room carpet this year
 - Proposal for new Town Garage complex
 - Generators in all facilities
 - Chipper approval in '23-24' budget
 - Change in Lamoille dispatch
 - Bulk Trash collection that was started over 30 years ago

In closing, Mr. Mitchell expressed his appreciation for all and said he is going to miss these conversations. He noted that he has felt very comfortable with all the new staff transitions, and it has been nice getting to know the new staff. Additionally,

Mr. Mitchell shared he would like to be on a Charter Revision Committee when the time comes that the Board begins to review Town Charter changes.

Norma Malone:

- Mrs. Malone shared the Good Samaritan Working Group met last Thursday. They are proposing to change the way they function, and they will be sharing more information regarding these modifications soon. She said that things have been going well at the location. Downstreet will be completing renovations. Additionally, Mrs. Malone noted the MOU is to be reviewed on an annual basis. She asked the Town Manager to have this added as a future agenda item.

Bob Nelson:

- Mr. Nelson shared he will not be attending Open Town Meeting tomorrow evening. Nelson's Hardware won a small business sweepstakes. The Celtic's Organization offered him two Celtic's tickets and he will be attending a Celtic's game.

Paul White:

- Chair White shared that Bill H-418 has cleared both houses but has not yet been signed by the Governor. The Board will need to discuss the appointment of a Constable. This will need to be a future agenda item.

Selectboard Minutes of May 2, 2023 Continued:

- Chair White stated that Mr. Mitchell has been the anchor of the Selectboard table and will be missed by all. He thanked him for his contributions throughout the years.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to go into executive session at 8:09 p.m. for personnel, labor contracts, and contracts with possible action.

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to exit executive session at 8:50 p.m.

ACTION:

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize a second chance offer for the sale of the 2003 wheel excavator to the GovDeals high bidder as discussed.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:51 p.m.

APPROVED MINUTES

Barre Town Selectboard

Paul White, Chair

Norma Malone, Vice Chair

Justin Bolduc

Jack Mitchell

Bob Nelson

Filed in the Barre Town Clerk's Office on this _____ day of _____, 2023.

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.