



BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING
April 23, 2024

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Consider approving the agenda.
4. Consider approving April 16, 2024 meeting minutes
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests for non-agenda items.
7. Consider approving National Volunteer Week Resolution
8. Consider awarding EMS Transport Contracts: **a)** CVHH&H; **b)** Mayo Healthcare; **c)** Barre Gardens
9. EMS Director’s Report
10. Considering awarding a five-year contract for police cruiser in-car video cameras
11. Discuss and consider approving a Town Fraud Prevention Policy
12. Consider approving Annual Contracts for: **a)** Grass cutting; **b)** Trash & Recycling; **c)** Spring Bulk Trash Collection and Green-up Day Roll-Offs; **d)** Port-a-lets; **e)** Roadside Mowing; **f)** Line Painting
13. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants for April 23, 2024
14. Miscellaneous: **a)** Tobacco License for DG Retail, LLC; **b)** Second-Class License and Tobacco License for Lawson’s Store; **c)** other permits and licenses if any
15. Round the Table
16. Executive Session: as needed
17. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of April 23, 2024, was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville at 6:00 p.m.

Selectboard Members Present: Paul White, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, Bob Nelson, and Mike Gilbar.

Selectboard Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Chris Violette, Town Clerk Tina Lunt, and EMS Director David Danforth.

Others Present: Times Argus Reporter Eric Blaisdell.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair White called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the amended agenda as follows:

1. Item #16 Executive Session: add personnel

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the April 23, 2024, Selectboard meeting minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Spring Bulk Trash Collection is scheduled for Saturday, May 11th from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm at the DPW garage located at 79 Pitman Road; stay tuned for more details. To continue to make this very popular event successful, we need help. Volunteers can work the entire event or part of it, and we provide everything you need including safety equipment and food. Free disposal is offered to those that help and sometimes you might even find a treasure to take home.
- Green Up Day is Saturday, May 4th. Supplies, such as green trash bags and gloves are available now at the Town Manager's Office, in the Municipal Building between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. You can also sign up for certain sections of road while picking up your supplies.
- The Fiscal 2025 budget booklets will be available soon. The booklets will provide an explanation of the budget voters will be asked to vote on during the May 14th Annual Election of Officers and Voting by Australian Ballot. Look for the booklet at area stores and on the Town website.
- The Town's Lawn Waste Site located on Holden Road, is now open for the season. Summer hours will be Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. to noon. Weekday hours, starting April 30th, will be Tuesdays, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If you would like to volunteer to help out at the LWS feel free to call the Town Manager's Office at (802) 479-9331. With an extra volunteer we would most likely be able to offer an additional weekday service for a few hours.
- Chair Announcement: At the conclusion of last week's meeting after coming out of executive session, the Selectboard voted unanimously to amend the non-union wage chart.

GUESTS: None.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION RESOLUTION:

Background: It goes without saying that no municipality could function without volunteers. Barre Town is no exception, The Town depends on many Boards, Commissions, and Committee volunteers who graciously give their time and skills to make Barre Town a great place to live. Nationally, this week is set aside and known as "National Volunteer Week" to recognize the contributions of volunteers. In the past, volunteers were invited to a ceremony to accept small gifts. Although the Town is changing the way they celebrate volunteers this year, they are no less appreciative. As in past years, an ad will appear in Wednesday's Time Argus listing names of those who dedicated their service to Barre Town over the last year. Small gifts are still available for any volunteers who may wish to receive them.

On a motion by Chair White, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adopt "Resolution No. 1-24, A Resolution of the Town of Barre, Vermont in Recognition and Appreciation of All Town and Community Volunteers".

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

Chair White read the resolution.

Chair White expressed a sincere thank you to all volunteers. Board member echoed the Chair's comments.

AMBULANCE TRANSPORT CONTRACTS:

EMS Director David Danforth was present.

Mayo Healthcare:

Background: As previously discussed, this item is to approve a non-emergent patient transport contract between Mayo Healthcare and the Town of Barre through Barre Town Emergency Medical Services. The contract establishes an agreement to provide non-emergent transports in the event Mayo's primary transport provider isn't available. It also creates reduced rates based on guaranteed payment.

Mr. Danforth stated that it is important to know Mayo Healthcare will contact Barre Town EMS only if Northfield is not available. The Town wants them to take care of their own community first, and if they are not available the Town is available to help.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the contract for transport services with Mayo Healthcare as amended, and designate the Town Manager to sign the contract.

Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice

Background: As previously discussed, this item is to approve a non-emergent patient transport contract between CVHH&H and the Town of Barre through Barre Town Emergency Medical Services. The contract establishes an agreement to provide non-emergent transports when necessary for CVHH&H and creates reduced rates based on guaranteed payment.

Mr. Danforth explained this contract will help streamline the process for the EMS Department.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the contract for transport services with Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice as amended, and designate the Town Manager to sign the contract.

Barre Gardens:

Background: – As previously discussed, this item is to approve a non-emergent patient transport contract between Barre Gardens and the Town of Barre through Barre Town Emergency Medical Services. The contract establishes an agreement to provide primary non-emergent transports for patients from Barre Gardens. It also creates reduced rates based on guaranteed payment.

Chair White stated this agreement is similar to the Mayo Healthcare agreement. The Town is not trying to take work away from Barre City but if the Town is called, they will respond.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the contract for transport services with Barre Gardens as amended, and designate the Town Manager to sign the contract.

EMS DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Background: EMS Director will provide a report on the activities of the department over the last few months.

EMS Director David Danforth was present. Mr. Danforth provided a summary of his report for Board members to review ahead of time. Topics of discussion were as follows:

- Staffing: Mr. Danforth reports they have hired numerous new staff members over the past 7 months, noting 13 per diems. This has significantly reduced overtime hours for full-time staff. He notes overtime hours are down 20% from a year ago. Mr. Violette presented a payroll schedule chart which showed the significant decrease in overtime hours. Mr. Danforth stated he is happy to report he does not expect more than a 3% overage in the budget. Mr. Danforth said the EMS Department has a great per-diem workforce and hopes to continue this staffing in the future.

Mr. Nelson praised Mr. Danforth for the culture he has created within the EMS Department. In return, Mr. Danforth said the hiring process is now much more streamlined with the help of Town Manager Assistant Leslie Babic who is now managing the onboarding process.

- Calls for Service: 3% increase over the last year for the 1st quarter. Mr. Danforth explained he believes this was due to the weather patterns, as activities have already started to increase.
- Trucks & Equipment: Ambulance #6 is scheduled to be completed on June 19th and be delivered the following week.
- Billing: Mr. Danforth reported they have made a great stride in the collection and billing process over the past 7 months. Overall, he said things are going very well with the new billing company. He said the realtime data they receive from Quick Med Claims (QMC) is helpful. Additionally, they are meeting every other month with QMC, and they have fine-tuned the technology piece and things are working seamlessly. Mr. Danforth notes the Town is completely separated from EMS Billing other than a few final cleanups. The last First Financial Collection letters will be sent shortly.
- Key Issues:
 - End of Life notice on current power stretchers (2032). Mr. Danforth said these are purchased refurbished and they last 15 years. The company is eliminating the model and advises purchasing refurbished ones until the new models come out and are tested.
 - Outgrowing the current EMS station in East Barre. Mr. Danforth reports office and training space is limited. Board members discussed adding this facility to the Freeman, French, Feeman building functionality analysis list.

Mr. Danforth shared that the Vermont Department of Health for State Ambulance Bi-Annual ambulance inspection took place today. He learned that these are now surprise inspections. Mr. Danforth read a note that he sent his staff praising them for their good work after he received a note from the Vermont

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

Department of Health that they passed the inspection with “flying colors”. The note praised staff for their dedication, hard work, pride, and integrity. The Vermont Department of Health acknowledged Barre Town EMS for the structured and well put together operation they run, noting they would like to speak with Mr. Danforth to learn more about how Barre Town maintains this well-run environment.

Mr. Nelson said the residents are lucky to have Mr. Danforth working for the Town. Mrs. Malone thanked him for his energy. Board members echoed these comments.

POLICE CAMERA CONTRACT:

Background: Several weeks ago, the Police Chief raised a concern about the ability to continue to download video from the police cruisers in-car cameras. This concern was based on being told by Watchguard, the current vendor, that the program they currently use is no longer supported. Furthermore, while it may continue to work for some time, it isn’t compatible with Windows 11. In order to continue to use the program, they would have to keep a dedicated Windows 10 computer and hope that it doesn’t fail.

This topic about the current Watchguard limitations led to a discussion about what options are available, including upgrading to a newer system with Watchguard or moving the in-car cameras to the same vendor that supplies the body cameras provided by Axon.

The Town currently contracts with Axon for body cameras and there are attractive reasons why to consider having both the in-car cameras and body cameras provided by Axon. Likely the most significant advantage to the Axon cameras is that they will sync together to one file when saved to a cloud-based storage system. Videos upload to the cloud via the police cruisers external data connection and are instantly available to authorized viewers. Axon will install the cameras, and if desired, train somebody to do future installations. Axon provided a quote with a 10% discount and includes an extended warranty that will last for the duration of the contract. Axon’s totals quote is \$44,224.80 over five years.

Watchguard also provided a proposal with a quote that offered five new in-car cameras (which the Town would need to install) and 12 new body cameras. The video storage is not cloud-based, it relies on purchasing a computer from Watchguard that would retrieve files from the cameras when parked in the Police Department parking lot. The two cameras do not sync together into one file. Watchguards quote over five years is \$38,049.

It appears that the Axon proposal, while more, isn’t significantly so to outweigh the advantages. The Police Chief and Manager both recommend awarding a contract to Axon that includes four new police cruiser in-car cameras and their cloud-based storage system.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award a five-year contract for police cruiser in-car video cameras to Axon for a total of \$44,224.80.

Mr. Bolduc asked about redundancy with the cloud-based storage system. Chair White assured him that Axon has this ability. Additionally, Mrs. Malone inquired about the timeline of installation.

FRAUD PREVENTION POLICY:

Background: In filling out a survey for the new auditors, Mike Gilbar looked for but didn’t find a Town Fraud Prevention Policy. Because he knows auditors expect that municipalities will have such a policy, he is suggesting that one be adopted. Mike provided a draft that began as a Vermont League of Cities and

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

Towns template but has been altered to suit our needs. Finance Director Katelyn Kran has reviewed and doesn't have any concern beyond a few tweaks that are incorporated within the draft presented.

Board members questioned 24 V.S.A. § 1686(c) which is placed in Section 3 (Investigation) of this document.

Mrs. Malone stated she has investigated other municipalities to see if they have Fraud Prevention policies. She notes that most mirrored the VLCT model. She advised that the Town have one standard format moving forward. Additionally, the Board suggests creating an indexing system for their list of policies. Mrs. Malone has some ideas, and she will share them with the Manager.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adopt the Town of Barre Fraud Prevention Policy.

CONTRACTS:

Background: – Annually, numerous bid requests are sent out that include grass cutting, trash & recycling services, and port-a-lets for several locations. Additionally, proposals are sent for roadside mowing, spring bulk trash and green up day roll-offs, as well as spring line painting. Bids went out on March 29, 2024, and were all opened at or around 10:00 a.m. on April 18, 2024.

Grass Cutting Services:

Background: Numerous requests for proposals were sent to area landscaping and mowing companies for a total of 19 sites. Three bids were received for some, or all the locations requested. Two of the bidders are the same as have been awarded over the last several years.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the 2024 calendar year mowing contract for the South Barre Fire Station (\$30 per mow), South Barre ballpark (\$60), Upper Websterville playground (\$35), Upper & Lower Graniteville playgrounds (\$35 & \$40) to Robert Booth per specifications.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted to award the 2024 calendar year mowing contract for the South Barre Pump Station (\$25), East Barre Fire Station & bank (\$50 & \$125), EMS (\$45), East Barre playground (\$90), East Barre water storage (\$45), East Barre round-a-bout (\$55), Millstone water storage (\$50), DPW properties (\$55 & \$55), Quarry Hill Picnic area (\$30), Middle Road/Graniteville Road island (\$30), Holden Road Lawn Waste site (\$25), Trow Hill playground (\$40), and Websterville pump station (\$35) to Malone Building and Property Services. Norma Malone abstained.

Mr. Bolduc asked if the third bidder understood this was not a monthly amount. Mr. Violette said the bid sheet was clear and indicated that it was per mow.

Chair White said it was suggested to him a few years ago that the Town take care of the Southeast corner of intersection on Middle Road. This is State owned property, and the question is raised whether the Town would want to award this State-owned property to a contractor.

Trash & Recycling Services:

Background: Two bids were received for trash and recycling for numerous town facilities. Myers was the low bidder again this year and has provided good service in the past.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the FY'25 trash and recycling services contract to Meyers Container Service Corporation per their bid as noted on the bid sheet.

Spring Bulk Trash & Green Up Day Roll-Offs Services:

Background: Only one bid was received for the spring bulk trash and Green Up day roll-off containers. Casella was the sole bidder again this year and has provided good service in the past. Last year's price was \$230 per ton.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the 2024 Spring Bulk Trash and Green Up Day Roll-Off container service to Casella Waste per specification for \$235 per ton of waste.

Mr. Bolduc shared the cost was \$230.00 last year, noting the modest increase.

Port-A-Let Services:

Background: Bids for port-a-lets were received from two companies. The Town's current provider, Wind River, was the low bidder for all locations. Wind River provided good service this past year.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the FY'25 port-a-let service contract to Wind River Environmental per their bid as noted on the bid sheet.

Roadside Mowing Services:

Background: Typically, the Town only knows of one potential bidder for roadside mowing services. This year they sent a bid request to Donnell Dexter and posted it on the State website. Mr. Dexter was the only bid received and has done a good job for the Town in the past. The FY25 budget amount for this service is \$8,000.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the FY'25 Roadside Mowing Contract to Donnell Dexter for \$7,500 per specifications including extra mowing at \$150/hr., if necessary.

Board members stated Mr. Dexter does a great job for the Town.

Spring Line Painting:

Background: Three bids were received for Spring 2024-line painting. K-5 Corporation was the low bidder at \$26,584.80 and has done work for the Town in the past. L&D Safety Marking was second lowest bid at \$30,089. Josh Martineau, Public Works Director, was asked to review the bids and provide a recommendation. Mr. Martineau is not in favor of awarding the contract to K-5 Corp due to poor past

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

performance. L&D has provided good service in the past and the Manager also recommends awarding the contract to L&D.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the FY'25 Line Painting Contract to L&D Safety Marking per specification in the amount of \$30,089.

Chair White notes by not going with the lowest bidder the difference in price is approximately \$3,500.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable warrants for the week of April 23, 2024.

Mr. Nelson said he saw that the EMS Department purchased a new washer and dryer. He notes that it is great that this was purchased locally, however, he does not want the staff to forget about the Town's Purchasing Policy. He said he is only bringing this up as the Town could have saved money by doing some research online. Mr. Danforth followed up by stating that the two online vendors he looked at would have made the Town use a credit card. Additionally, the out-of-town vendor did not offer delivery. He felt this was the best option.

Mrs. Malone inquired about the MSHA (Mine Safety and Health Administration) violation. The Manager said this was an oversight by staff.

MISCELLANEOUS:

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the 2024 Tobacco License for DG Retail, LLC d/b/a Dollar General Store #14217.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the 2024 Second Class License and Tobacco License for Lawson's Store.

Chris Violette updated the Board on the following items:

- The auditors were here today, and they are impressed with Finance Director Katelynn Kran's organization.
- Pike has been grinding and reclaiming Plainfield Brook Road and Richardson Road.
- The Manager shared that he was recently appointed to the Vermont E-911 Board.

ROUND TABLE:

Norma Malone:

- Mrs. Malone asked the Manager about the PVR survey that was circulated. She asked if the Assessor has had a chance to review it, as she does not understand how a Selectboard member would have answers to it. Mrs. Malone notes the deadline is Friday. The Manager will follow up with the Assessor on this item.
- Mrs. Malone asked Clerk Lunt if she could contact Representative Galfetti to check on the status of Bill H.862, regarding the Town's Charter amendment.

Justin Bolduc:

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

- Mr. Bolduc inquired about the budget presentation. Mr. Violette confirmed this will take place on May 8 after Open Town Meeting.

Mike Gilbar:

- Mr. Gilbar said he was asked by a Sterling Hill Road resident about Chloride on the roads. They mentioned that last year it was not treated. He is simply passing on this information.
- Mr. Gilbar shared that Chip Castle inquired about the Opioid Settlement. Mr. Violette said he received word regarding the schedule of town allotments, and Barre Town is scheduled to receive a couple thousand dollars this round. Mr. Gilbar said Mr. Castle is still hoping for these funds to be obligated for the Turning Point.
- Mr. Gilbar asked if quarterly financial statements could be provided. A full statement of revenues, including budget to actuals would be helpful, if possible

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

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

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to go into executive session at 8:20 p.m. for personnel.

Bob Nelson left Executive Session at 8:25 p.m. to deal with a business matter.

On a motion by Justin Bolduc, seconded by Chair White, the Selectboard voted unanimously to exit executive session at 8:48 p.m.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:48p.m.

APPROVED MINUTES

Barre Town Selectboard

Paul White, Chair

Justin Bolduc, Vice Chair

Norma Malone

Mike Gilbar

Bob Nelson

Filed in the Barre Town Clerk’s Office on this _____ day of _____, 2024.

Selectboard Minutes of April 23, 2024, Continued:

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.