



**BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING
February 20, 2024**

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....5:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Consider approving the agenda
4. Consider approving February 13, 2024 meeting minutes
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests for non-agenda items.
7. Discuss disposition of old light poles at the recreation facility
8. Continued discussion of 3-acre stormwater engineering
9. Discuss upcoming April 8th Solar Eclipse plans
10. Continue discussion of Charter Amendment regarding Auditors
11. Award Oil and Grease contract
12. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants for February 20, 2024
13. Miscellaneous: including licenses and permits if any
14. Round the Table
15. Executive Session: as needed
16. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of February 20, 2024 was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville at 5:00 p.m.

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

Selectboard Members Absent: None.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Chris Violette and Town Clerk Tina Lunt.

Others Present: Times Argus Reporter Eric Blaisdell, Doug Farnham, Richard Currier, Johannah Currier, Paul Foley, Steven Simonetti, and Claire Simonetti. Those attending virtually: Lee Walther.

CALL TO ORDER: Chair White called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

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

APPROVE THE AGENDA:

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

1. Private Road name for discussion only – add as #11a.

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the February 13, 2024 Selectboard meeting minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Barre Town Fire Department will be hosting their annual drive-thru rabies clinic on Saturday, March 9th at the Public Works garage, 79 Pitman Road from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. This dog and cat clinic welcomes residents from any town, cost of vaccination is now \$20.00. Please make sure that dogs are leashed and that cats are crated, and that you have filled out an intake and consent form which can be found at barretown.org. The Barre Town Clerk's Office will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the municipal building to license Barre Town dogs.
- The annual Freezing Fun for Families Co-Ed Snowball Softball Tournament will be held at the Barre Town Recreation Fields on March 1st – 3rd. This is the Freezing Fun for Families largest fundraiser and a lot of fun. Money raised from this event will benefit families battling childhood cancer. Check out their website for more details.
- Election Day is fast approaching for Vermont's Presidential Primary Election, Barre Unified Union School District Annual Election, and Central Vermont Career Center School District Annual Election. The polls will open at 7:00 a.m. Tuesday, March 5, 2024 but you can request early/absentee ballots now. Early ballot requests can be made through at mvp.vermont.gov or by calling the Town Clerk's Office at (802) 479-9391 or by emailing Tina Lunt at tlunt@barretown.org. Your Presidential Primary ballot request must include which ballot (Democrat or Republican) you would like. For more information regarding the upcoming March 5 elections, visit the Town Clerk's page at www.barretown.org or contact Town Clerk, Tina Lunt.
- The Town Recreation Department will be hosting the second snowman building competition of the year on Saturday, February 24th. This event will be held at the Recreational Facility off Websterville Road and will have three prize categories awarded: 1. Best Classic Design, 2. Most Creative Design, and 3. Popular Vote. More information can be found on the recreation page at www.barretown.org.

GUESTS:

Mr. and Mrs. Currier were present. The Currier's live at 107 Valley View Circle. They shared concerns regarding the stormwater project at Maple Ridge Common. Mr. Currier feels Maple Ridge Common should be exempt from the 3-acre rule. He presented a letter to Selectboard members highlighting the reasons behind this. He states that Maple Ridge Common was dissolved in 2005 and they should be considered as individual landowners and such the 3-acre rule does not apply.

Furthermore, Mr. Currier notes during his 16 years of living on Valley View Circle he has never observed any erosion. He notes there are existing stormwater treatment practices already built into the development. Mr. Currier pointed out that the permits issued in 2005 and 2012 were issued after the 2002 regulations and therefore could be concluded that the existing stormwater features within the development of Valley View

Circle meets the Vermont Clean Water Act requirements of 2002 and apply to the 2017 requirements today. Mr. Currier asked if the Town has considered hiring an employee to help manage the stormwater permits. Currently, the Town has contracted with Watershed Consulting who is doing an exceptional job but comes with a great expense. Mr. Currier notes other towns have hired individuals who are handling these specific duties. Mr. Currier expressed the 3-acre rule is an unwanted and unfair law. He thanked the Board for their time and the hard work of the community. He notes he is hopeful everyone can work together to solve this problem.

Mr. Bolduc stated the Board has had several discussions regarding this topic. The Board has pushed back on the Legislature and the State. Mr. Bolduc said he has personally reached out to Representative Galfetti regarding this matter. The State has made some changes but has not addressed the funding.

In closing, Mrs. Currier handed out a list of questions regarding the stormwater project. Chair White noted the Board will review the list of questions and attempt to get an answer for the Maple Ridge Common residents.

RECREATIONAL FACILITY LIGHT POLES:

Background: A few years ago, some of the baseball field light poles were removed because of concerns that they were no longer safe to support lights. The poles are being stored at the recreation complex and are likely not something the Town has a use for. Recreation Director Johnny Crossley has been approached by two entities that are interested in using the poles. One interested group is the Dog Park Committee who would use parts of the old poles to create an obstacle course within the park. More recently, Luke Paul has shown interest in the poles for the purpose of cutting them into lumber. Mr. Paul operates a sawmill and could remove the poles himself. Mr. Paul is familiar with the Dog Park and is willing to work with the Committee to provide either the ends that the Committee is seeking or make them something in return. Mr. Crossley notes this is a win, win, for all parties, including the Town, allowing disposal of the poles.

Doug Farnham was present. Mr. Farnham stated in his former capacity as Recreation Board Chair he was not aware of the baseball field poles. He stated there are several options for the use of the poles, noting that they could be used to help designate parking spots at the Dog Park and other uses within parking lots. Additionally, the poles are rotten at the end, therefore, they could be used as a 60' pole instead of an 80' pole and would still have value within the recreation area.

Board consensus is to kick this item back to the Recreation Board to see where there may be value for the use of the poles. Mr. Nelson advised that we should have a definite answer from the Rec Board on how these poles will be used. Additionally, Mrs. Malone asked to confirm where the poles are being stored and to receive an accurate inventory on the number of poles and the condition of storage.

3-ACRE STORMWATER DISCUSSION:

Background: Last week Andres Torizzo of Watershed Consulting presented a proposal to move forward with the engineering of the stormwater systems for seven of the eight developments that Barre Town is responsible for in order to comply with the 3-acre rule. Mr. Torizzo's proposal comes at a cost of \$505,000, assuming that all seven sites receive a \$49,999 grant award from the State. Last week during discussion, the Board asked Mr. Torizzo if he could provide an estimate of the cost per fiscal year for budgeting purposes.

Mr. Torizzo's revised Scope of Work indicates the following estimates:

- 15% of the work will be done in FY24 at \$81,313.
- 65% of the work will be done in FY25 at \$333,813
- 20% of the work will be done in FY26 at \$106,563

Mr. Nelson asked what the plan is if not all sites are awarded the grant. Mr. Violette advised the Town would then be responsible for the cost. Mr. Violette noted he believes all locations will get some funding, but they are not 100% sure at this time.

A discussion regarding the Clear Water Act took place. Mrs. Malone noted this is a massive piece of legislation and the Town must abide by the law as it will come with fines for non-compliance. The cost associated with these laws are enormous. Concerns were shared regarding how municipalities will manage this.

The conversation continued as Mr. Gilbar noted that if this expense goes to the taxpayers, it will affect everyone in town. He said he would be more inclined to move items out of the ARPA list to cover this funding. Mr. Bolduc suggests putting this may need to be put out to voters as a bond vote.

SOLAR ECLIPSE:

Background: Parts of Vermont will experience a total solar eclipse on Monday, April 8, 2024. Vermont is expecting a large influx of visitors seeking to see the eclipse. Hotels and other overnight accommodations have been sold out for months in a good portion of Vermont. Many entities are planning viewing parties and other festivities during the event which will begin in our area at 2:14 p.m., be total at 3:25 p.m., and over at 4:37 p.m. While impossible to know for sure what impacts the region may experience, many are predicting thousands of visitors coming to the area bringing potential heavy traffic and other impacts. This could also occur during mud season which won't be helpful if those seeking to see this rare natural even stray off main roads. Schools and businesses have already announced early dismissal for the day and some businesses are encouraging their employees to work remotely that day.

The Manager notes, as a result from an emergency management perspective, the Town will continue to monitor the situation, attend bi-weekly discussions with Vermont League of Cities and Towns, monitor information from Vermont Emergency Management, and will consider standing up additional emergency services during the event if necessary. Recreation Director Johnny Crossley is considering promoting one viewing venue to be at the recreation area, and he, along with others will be monitoring what towns around may also be doing this.

This Selectboard opted to move this item to next week's agenda.

OFFICE OF AUDITOR - CHARTER AMENDMENT:

Background: A couple weeks ago, while discussing the voter approved Charter amendment abolishing the elected Auditor position, a question was raised about keeping a reference that the voters have the right to bring the position back if desired. Town Representative Gina Galfetti is working with Legislative Council Tucker Anderson to draft the amendment and Mr. Anderson is asking whether the Town is okay with the reference being in the statutory notes within the "green books" supplement that is published in the fall and sent out to be added to the books. This reference would be in lieu of making it within the body of the Charter text.

Clerk Lunt asked Legislative Council Tucker Anderson if the statutory notes would be referenced online, and they confirmed they would be. Chair White noted the annotations are not referenced online.

Mrs. Malone notes the Town did not ask the voters to abolish the sentence in the Charter that references the decision that allows for the vote to be rescinded to abolish the Office of the Auditors. She explained this provision should reside somewhere within the Charter should the voters wish to bring this position back.

Board consensus is to put all the other Charter references, regarding the abolishment of the Office of the Auditor back in front of the voters. Staff will work with the Town Attorney on drafting the ballot language.

OIL AND GREASE CONTRACT:

Background: As part of a regular annual action, bid requests for oil, grease, hydraulic oil, antifreeze and transmission fluid for the ensuing year were sent to five companies on January 22, 2024. Two bids were received by the due date of February 15, 2024, and both bids were subsequently opened. The lowest bid was Dennison Lubricants of Lakeville, Massachusetts (with an office in Williston, VT) in the amount of \$13,345.04. The other bidder was Brenntag Lubricants, LLC of Manchester, NH in the amount of \$17,951.54. Shop Foreman Mike Martel has reviewed the bids and is recommending Dennison be awarded the contract.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the oil and grease contract to Dennison Lubricants of Lakeville, MA (and Williston, VT) in the amount of \$13,345.04 per their bid sheet.

Mr. Bolduc suggested that the discussion regarding a Private Road Name Request (item 11a.) take place during next week’s meeting. It is noted the Selectboard has a Budget meeting to attend at 6:00 p.m.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable warrants for the week of February 20, 2024.

MISCELLANEOUS: None.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 5:59 p.m.

APPROVED MINUTES

Barre Town Selectboard

Paul White, Chair

Justin Bolduc, Vice Chair

Norma Malone

Mike Gilbar

Selectboard Minutes of February 20, 2024 Continued:

Bob Nelson

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

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.