



**BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING
January 16, 2024**

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Consider approving the agenda
4. Consider approving January 9, 2024 meeting minutes
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests for non-agenda items.
7. Interview Energy Committee applicant
8. Discuss Facility Assessment Proposal
9. Award Contracts for: **a)** Paving and Milling; **b)** Truck Chains
10. Discuss future of Town’s Newsletter
11. Appoint Energy Committee members
12. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants for January 16, 2024
13. Miscellaneous: including licenses and permits if any
14. Round the Table
15. Executive Session: personnel and contracts
16. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of January 16, 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, and Mike Gilbar.

Selectboard Members Absent: Bob Nelson.

Staff Members Present: Town Manager Chris Violette, Town Clerk Tina Lunt. Those present virtually: Town Engineer Josh Martineau and Planning & Zoning Administrator Brandon Garbacik.

Others Present: Zach Anderson. Those present virtually: Eric Blaisdell and Ethan Hinch.

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 Justin Bolduc, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the amended agenda as follows:

1. Add labor contracts (no action expected) under item #15 Executive Session.

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the January 9, 2024 Selectboard meeting minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Barre Unified Union School District and Central Vermont Career Center School District elections will be held on Tuesday, March 5 at the Barre Town Middle and Elementary School gymnasium. BUUSD officers to be elected are two BUUSD Board members from Barre Town for a term of 3 years. CVCCSD officers to be elected are one at-large from Washington Central Unified Union School District for a term of 3 years. Nominating petitions for BUUSD/CVCC offices are due to the Town Clerk by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 29, 2024. Candidates are required to submit a completed and signed Consent of Candidate Form no later than the petition deadline.
- Barre Town is looking for a Deputy Health Officer. The Deputy Health Officer fills in for the Health Officer when the Health Officer isn’t available. Barre Town sees about a dozen Health Officer-related calls per year. For more information about this position, contact the Town Manager’s Office at 802-479-9331.

- The Barre Town Budget Committee will begin reviewing proposed FY 2024-2025 budgets on Tuesday, January 30, 2024, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The Budget Committee is made up of 10 residents, 5 appointed just for this purpose, and 5 Selectboard members. This begins a two-month process culminating in a budget that will be voted on May 14th. These meetings are held at the municipal building and are open to the public to attend in person or remotely. Posted agendas will provide remote links and information.
- To accommodate the Budget Committee, Selectboard meetings, beginning January 30th, will begin at 5pm. This schedule will run through the end of March.
- Chair White announced that there will be no Selectboard meeting on Tuesday, January 23. Selectboard meetings will resume on Tuesday, January 30.
- Town Manager announcements:
 - Free Covid-19 test kits are available for Central Vermont residents. Kits are available for pickup at the Barre Town Municipal Building, 149 Websterville Road during normal business hours. Kits are also available at the Barre Town EMS station, 4 McLaughlin Rd, please call 476-3147 to make special pickup arrangements at this location. Kits will be available until gone.
 - The Town of Barre is hosting a vaccine clinic for both Covid-19 and flu on Thursday, January 18 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. at the Barre Town Municipal Building, 149 Websterville Road. Please use the side Annex entrance. Vaccine supply is limited, this will be first come first serve. Please call 802-476-3147 with questions. You can register on site or online at https://www.patientportalvt.com/s/login/SelfRegister?language=en_US.

GUESTS: None.

ENERGY COMMITTEE INTERVIEW:

Background: Last week the Board interviewed two residents as potential candidates for the newly formed Energy Committee. This week, Zach Anderson, a lifelong Town resident, will be present for the Board to interview. Mr. Anderson works in the heating industry and feels his area of expertise is in energy and can bring a perspective on energy efficiency.

Mr. Anderson was born and raised in Barre Town. He attended CVCC where he was introduced to the plumbing and heating/electrical program. After graduation he immediately started working for Cacicio's Heating and has been with the company for the past 6 years. Part of his job is to help encourage, guide, and inform homeowners of possible more cost efficient and energy efficient changes. He states he would love the opportunity to help the community optimize their energy usage. Mr. Anderson shared the idea of hosting a public class for the community to learn about energy efficiency. Additionally, Mr. Anderson confirmed his schedule will allow him to attend the Energy Committee meetings.

ENERGY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:

Background: Energy Committee members must be appointed in hopes of having their first meeting on February 7th. Phil Cecchini and Jeff Gagne Jr. were interviewed last week. This week the Board interviewed Zach Anderson. Lindsey Lozier expressed interest during her interview for the Budget Committee a couple weeks ago and submitted an email of interest indicating that her role in the financial industry would be an asset to the Committee.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to appoint Phil Cecchini, Jeff Gagne Jr., Zach Anderson, and Lindsey Lozier to serve on the Energy Committee.

It is noted for the record that Cedric Sanborn will be the Planning Commission member serving on the Energy Committee.

CONTRACTS:

Milling Pavement Contract

Background: During the December 5th meeting, Town Engineer Josh Martineau asked about putting paving bids out sooner rather than later to hopefully entice more bidders and capitalize on the front end of contractors planning their work. Bids were sent out on December 8, 2023, and due back by January 11, 2024. Four bids were received, the low bidder was ECI Construction \$3.05 (square yard) for cold milling and \$129 (per ton) for hot mix asphalt which are both well over the estimate used for the paving plan. The total low bid price from ECI is \$1,398,197.85. Based on the paving plan which contemplates spending \$1,091,385 in FY25, the bid is \$306,812.85 over budget. The other three bidders were Pike Industries, Johnson Paving, and S T Paving. Johnson Paving did not provide a price for milling.

Town Engineer Josh Martineau provided a memo to the Selectboard recommending the contract be awarded to ECI. The memo offered his thoughts on why the pricing is so high. Additionally, options were shared including going back out to bid, reducing the number of roads paved, or not paving at all this year and creating a reserve fund from what would have been budgeted to help offset paving in future years.

Josh Martineau was present virtually. Mr. Martineau stated that he does not believe if the Town waited until March or April to go out to bid that this would have changed the bid amount. Contractors schedules are already very busy. Conversation began as Board members discussed the options provided by Mr. Martineau. Each option would reduce the amount of work that is needed. Mr. Martineau shared his recommendation is to move forward with the plan or push the paving and milling off a year.

Mr. Gilbar wondered if it would be possible to negotiate with ECI if the Town made changes to the treatments. Mr. Bolduc stated he fully supports Mr. Martineau's plan, noting the overall increase of 58.6%. Additionally, Mr. Bolduc provided the engineer with additional suggestions which would save the Town \$300,500, however, these options would still leave the Town over budget.

Mrs. Malone shared her concerns regarding eliminating roads that need milling/paving. She stated she does not believe putting this work off will play well with the public. She stated she recognizes the Town has many big projects with flood repair but suggests the Board takes more time to think about this decision.

Discussion continued as Board members leaned towards changing the scope of the work and speaking with ECI. Board consensus is to further discuss this item again on January 30 before a final decision is made.

Truck Chains Contract

Background: Bid requests for the FY24 chain purchase were sent to seven vendors on December 28, 2023, and due back for opening on January 11, 2024. Town bids were received, and the low bid from McLeod's Spring and Chassis of Barre in the amount of \$14,065. The Equipment Fund has \$14,000 budgeted for chains this year.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the FY24 truck tire chain purchase to McLeod's Spring and Chassis of Barre, VT in the amount of \$14,065.

FACILITY ASSESSMENT PROPOSAL:

Background: Approximately one year ago, Shawn Brennan from Freeman, French, Freeman (FFF), an architecture firm from Burlington, presented an idea of potentially creating a Facility Condition Assessment (FCA). The assessment could then be used as a guide, or provide a foundation, for future facility maintenance, upgrades, and financial analysis for capital planning and budgeting.

Town Manager Chris Violette reached out to Mr. Brennan after his January 2023 presentation, as a follow-up. Mr. Brennan was provided with an updated list of the Town's facilities that included the square feet of each. This list was used to work up a proposal that lays out the steps to create the FCA along with a cost estimate. The total cost to prepare an FCA is \$67,000. The quoted fee is considerably more than the approximate \$10,000 that was reserved from ARPA funding.

Mr. Violette suggests discussing this further and seeing whether there is an agreement to budget this item for FY'25 or work towards some other funding method. Another possibility would be to reduce and limit

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the scope of the study to the more significant facilities. The downside to that is that all of the Town facilities are important and removing the less significant ones, likely will not save that much.

Mr. Violette stated he would like to see the Town move forward with the Facility Condition Assessment. He understands it is a lot of money, but he finds it necessary.

Board discussion began as members reviewed the FCA. Mr. Gilbar noted there is a great deal of detail and feels there is redundancy. Concerns were shared regarding the FCA lacking the functionality of the facilities and master planning.

Mr. Bolduc noted he sees value in the FCA. Mrs. Malone stated she believes the primary facilities are necessary, however, playgrounds, shelter, etc. are not vital. The Town already understands their needs and is looking for an analysis of the functionality of the aging structures. The idea of amending the facility list within the proposal was contemplated.

Board consensus is to have the Manager have a conversation with Freeman, French, and Freeman. The Manager will ask FFF how much it will increase the cost to add functionality/master plan and how much it will lower the cost if they were to decrease the square footage by eliminating some of the facilities.

The Board discussed Alfred Ladd's great work around the Town facilities. Mr. Bolduc noted a FCA would help close the gap between Mr. Ladd's work and provide him the tools he needs to plan.

TOWN NEWSLETTER:

Background: As you all know, for many years Barre Town has produced quarterly newsletters that are sent to residents. For the most part they are sent in February, April, August, and November. The Manager is proposing to reduce the number of newsletters to three, by eliminating the February newsletter. The cost of producing a newsletter each time, between printing and postage is just shy of \$3,000. Additionally, the effort to produce a newsletter is fairly significant. Additionally, the February edition happens to fall directly during budget preparation.

Board members agree that reducing the newsletter from four to three is a good idea.

Town Manager Chris Violette shared there are some necessary annual announcements shared in the February newsletter regarding elections and dog licensing that come from the Town Clerk's Office. Clerk Lunt and Mr. Violette have discussed this matter. The plan is to send out a flyer in replacement of the newsletter in February to cover these important items. Mrs. Lunt shared that she is hopeful many of these flyers will be sent via email which will also cut down on costs.

Discussion continued as the idea of going digital on the newsletter was shared. Mr. Violette stated that Town staff has been discussing this idea. A hybrid approach to cut costs down is in the works as Town staff will begin to collect emails of residents interested in receiving the newsletter digitally.

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 January 16, 2024.

Chair White asked about the additional air card for the Police Station Clerk.

MISCELLANEOUS: None

ROUND TABLE:

Paul White:

- Chair White noted that the bottom of the agenda date needs to be changed from 2023 to 2024.
- Chair White asked about the Manager's note in the Board packet regarding his meeting with Robert Clark from Otter Creek Engineering regarding the Graniteville Fire District. Mr. Violette confirms these are just the very beginning discussions about the Town's desire to take the district over.

Justin Bolduc:

- Mr. Bolduc asked about the Websterville interconnection. Mr. Violette stated this is on a priority list could be ready for construction in the fall of 2024.

Mike Gilbar:

- Mr. Gilbar noted he is thinking ahead of the budget process, and asked what the Manager is thinking as far as reviewing the budget. The Manager stated his goal is to hand a complete budget to all committee members instead of by funds. He would like to share notes of what changed. The budget does not need to be reviewed line by line item. He hopes to present the budget in a way that it is not necessary to review line by line. Mr. Violette noted Katelyn Kran and himself are working on breaking out the Equipment Fund.
- Mr. Gilbar inquired about the facility assessment proposal. He asked if the Manager could talk to Freeman, French, Freeman and have this item back on the agenda at the end of the month. If ARPA funds can be committed for this project that will help meet the deadline.

Norma Malone:

- Mrs. Malone followed up on Mr. Gilbar’s comments regarding the budget. She asked if the Manager’s intension is to have all 10 funds in the budget packet? Mr. Violette stated, yes, this is his intention.

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 7:57 p.m. for personnel and contracts and labor contracts.

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to exit executive session at 9:18 p.m.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:18 p.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 _____, 2023.

ATTEST: _____, Barre Town Clerk.