



**BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING
October 17, 2023**

AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Consider approving the agenda
4. Consider approving October 10, 2023 meeting minutes
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests for non-agenda items.
7. Discuss possible new employee third party administrator cafeteria plan benefits
8. Consider authorizing purchase of new fencing for Little League field in Rec Area
9. Consider authorizing purchase of new ambulances
10. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants for October 17, 2023
11. Miscellaneous: including permits and licenses if any
12. Round the Table
13. Executive Session: Contracts
14. Adjourn

MINUTES

The duly warned meeting of October 17, 2023 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, Town Manager Assistant Leslie Babic, and Interim EMS Director David Danforth. Those present virtually: Recreation Director Johnny Crossley.

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 Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the amended agenda as follows:

1. Add Item #9a: Discuss paving Plainfield Brook Road
2. Item #13 Executive Session: add personnel

APPROVE THE MINUTES:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the October 10, 2023 Selectboard meeting minutes with minor spelling and grammatical corrections.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Holden Road Lawn Waste Site is open for the month of October on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Saturdays, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m., and Sundays 12:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- We currently have two vacancies on our Recreation Board. The Recreation Board works with the Recreation Director on matters related to town parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities, the Town Forest, and other land used for leisure purposes. The Board also advises on budget preparation and capital improvements. This Board is a great way to have input on matters related to recreation in Barre Town.
- The Selectboard is also seeking a resident of South Barre to sit on the Good Samaritan Working Group. The Working Group's purpose is to ensure good community relations between Good Sam, the Town, and the community of South Barre. The group meets quarterly to get a report on activities at the 580 South Barre Road facility. The group includes the Town Manager, a member of the Selectboard, the Police Chief, Good Samaritan's Executive Director, the House Manager, and others as well.
- For more information about any of these positions or events, feel free to contact the Town Manager's Office by calling 479-9331 or emailing offices@barretown.org.

GUESTS: None.

THIRD PARTY ADMINISTRATOR SECTION 125 HEALTH PLANS:

Background: The Town self-administers several employee Section 125 Plans and has done so for many years. These include Health Savings Accounts (HSA), Health Reimbursement Accounts (HRA), Flex Spending Accounts (FSA), and Dependent Care Accounts (DCA). There are numerous moving parts to managing these plans and it can be cumbersome for both employer and employee. The Section 125 Plans have strict IRS requirements as well as HIPPA rules to follow, which means it takes a fair amount of time to manage to ensure compliance.

The vast majority of time dedicated to managing Section 125 Plan falls on Finance Director Katelyn Kran's shoulders. Executive Secretary Tina Thurston tracks some employee health expenditures for reimbursement purposes as well. Additionally, employees have responsibilities to properly open and use special accounts. Record keeping for both is time consuming yet critical.

Through the School District, Town Manager Assistant Leslie Babic has worked with a Vermont Company called Healthy Dollars. Healthy Dollars specializes in managing Section 125 plans.

Selectboard Minutes of October 17, 2023 Continued:

The startup cost is \$900, and a monthly administrative fee of \$7.60 per enrolled employee. The projected annual cost is \$5,310.

Town Manager Assistant Leslie Babic was present to explain the proposal in more detail. Mrs. Babic stated she has a working relationship with Healthy Dollars through her previous employer. Additionally, they are a local company, which is convenient for employees to be able to communicate with them directly. Mrs. Babic expressed concerns with HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) and the importance of staying in compliance. She noted all claims would be processed through Healthy Dollars, and the Town would be excluded from seeing confidential information.

Finance Director Katelyn Kran and Town Manager Assistant Leslie Babic both support the Town moving forward with Healthy Dollars. They agree it will take work off staff, provide a better overall service to employees, and improve compliance. Additionally, Town Manager Chris Violette supports the idea. Mr. Violette stated Healthy Dollars works with several other Vermont communities, including the City of Winooski. Mr. Violette stated the Town's onboarding process has greatly improved over the last several months. This would be the next step to put the entire package together to offer staff.

Mr. Gilbar stated he fully supports this proposal. He asked if Healthy Dollars will be updating the plan documents for the Town. Mrs. Babic confirmed Healthy Dollars will be updating the documents as this is required annually and the Town is in a position that this needs to be completed. Mr. Violette noted there is a separate quote for this work to be completed in the amount of \$350.00.

Mrs. Malone inquired about the investment capabilities of the HSA accounts. Employees currently have their HSA accounts in a bank of choice. Mrs. Babic stated Healthy Dollars will utilize Avidia Bank. Discussion continued as Board members asked questions regarding how funds would be transferred.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize partnering with Healthy Dollars of Essex, VT to manage the Section 125 Plan and to expend the unbudgeted amount of approximately \$3,180 for the remainder of FY24.

BASEBALL FENCE CONTRACT:

Background: This year's General Fund has \$21,675 for fencing around the Little League field. A request for proposal was sent out on September 21, 2023, seeking bids to remove the existing fencing, and install 766' of new fence from 4' to 12' high and poles. The spec also includes the addition of two foul poles. Bids were due and opened on October 12, 2023. Two bids were received, one from F.E. Hart Fence Co., Inc. \$41,140.00 (2.5" line post as specified w/ option of 2" line post for \$37,861.00) and A.H. Fence Co. \$37,590.86 (2.5" line post as specified w/option of 2" line post for \$34,421.0). It should be noted that A.H. Fence Co's bid also includes a 10' gate and safety caps for all 4' high fences. Those two important items were not included in the bid specifications. The low bidder is A. H. Fence Co. of Milton, VT, which is \$12,746 over budget. Rec Director Johnny Crossley has reviewed both bids and is comfortable with A. H. Fence Co.'s bid proposal an using the 2" line poles.

Recreation Director Johnny Crossley was present virtually. Mr. Crossley shared that last summer the Town received a donation of \$5,000 from Merle Dwyer. Mr. Dwyer was one of the sixteen individuals who helped build the Little League field. The donation is intended to help bring the field back to what it was. In speaking to residents, Mr. Crossley has learned this field use to be one of the best fields to play on. Mr. Crossley would like to get it back to a respected field. Mr. Violette stated there is one caveat to using that donation, and that was to have Barre Community Baseball have a Work Bee to gain access to open the

Selectboard Minutes of October 17, 2023 Continued:

donation. Mr. Crossley stated they had one Work Bee this summer before the July flooding that worked on in-field. Mr. Crossley noted Barre Community Baseball has expressed an interest in getting involved but that is as far as it has gone.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the Little League baseball field fence replacement to A.H. Fence of Milton, VT in the amount of \$34,421.00.

Mrs. Malone shared A.H. Fence of Milton has completed most of the Town's fencing work and has always done a wonderful job.

CONTRACTS FOR NEW AMBULANCES:

Background: During the August 8, 2023 meeting, then Interim EMS Director Carl Matteson, suggested ordering and sole source the purchase of at least the next three ambulances. Mr. Matteson and current Interim EMS Director David Danforth reported that the lead time to receive new ambulances, ordered now, is over two years. The Town's Equipment Replacement Plan suggests the Town would be purchasing a new ambulance this fiscal year, and two in FY'25. It was recommended the Town sole source purchase the next three ambulances from Northeastern Rescue Vehicles. Recently the Town learned there were two cancellations and that if the Town awards the ambulances to Northeastern now, they can obtain the chassis that are available and hope to take delivery a year from now. The third ambulance would be placed in the pipeline. The quoted price from Northeastern for each of the two ambulances is \$171,586.00.

Interim EMS Director David Danforth was present. Mr. Danforth began by explaining that Burt's Emergency Vehicles was rolled into Northeastern Rescue Vehicles as a distributor. Additionally, Mr. Danforth gave a brief update on the current fleet. Mr. Danforth confirmed the proposed trucks meet the Town's specs. The Town would be looking at sole sourcing one ambulance for FY'24 as budgeted and two ambulances for FY'25 as planned in the Equipment Plan.

A brief discussion ensued regarding medical equipment and the need to continue to budget for these items.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Mike Gilbar, the Selectboard voted unanimously to authorize the sole source budgeted and as planned for three Medix Type III, ME-166 ambulances, built on Ford E-450 chassis for the price of \$171,586 each (price may fluctuate especially for the third one) Sole source purchased due to the long-standing relationship with the vendor and many purchases in the past and there is no advantage for the Town to go out to bid due to limited stock of a specialty vehicle and unfavorable delivery options. This would be one ambulance budgeted for FY'24 and two planned for in the Equipment Purchase Plan in FY'25.

PLAINFIELD BROOK ROAD PAVING UPDATE:

Background: Pike is planning to pave Richardson Road and Plainfield Brook Road as early as this week. The estimated cost is \$340,000 - \$350,000. This item has been added to the agenda for discussion.

Mr. Violette shared the Town received a grant for \$200,000 with an 80/20 match. This leaves the Town with \$160,000. Mr. Violette said the Town has an opportunity to put an extra inch of pavement on Plainfield Brook Road. Town Engineer Josh Martineau has estimated this to cost an additional \$75,000 - \$80,000. The completed project would be under budget.

Mr. Nelson asked how the extra pavement affects driveway transitions. Mr. Violette will follow up with the Town Engineer regarding this concern.

The Board was not opposed to moving forward with this work.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE:

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted to approve the accounts payable warrants for the week of October 17, 2023 for FY'23 and FY'24. Bob Nelson abstained.

Chair White inquired about Town credit cards. He stated originally the Board authorized four credit cards, and now there are eight. Additionally, he asked why the Town credit cards are being used rather than the billing/invoice option. He stated the Purchasing Policy does not state the use of credit cards. Mr. Gilbar noted the Town should have this in their Purchasing Policy or have a Credit Card Policy. He recommended having one credit card per department.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Mr. Violette updated the Board on the following:

- Mr. Violette stated he has spoken with Alice Farrell, and she is willing to serve as the Primary on the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission. He assured her that it was fine to continue to serve on the Planning Commission.
- Mr. Violette stated he has two Rec Board candidates. He asked Board members if they would like to interview the two applicants (Kevin Spaulding & Larry Rogacki). Board members agreed that they did not need to interview these individuals. Appointments will be considered during next week's meeting.

ROUND TABLE:

Mike Gilbar:

- Mr. Gilbar inquired about the Fall Festival. Mr. Violette stated from what he heard it went well. He noted that most of the vendors sold out of their food. There was a total of 21 Vendors, a dog costume parade, and several pieces of Town equipment on display. Mr. Bolduc said he was pleasantly surprised to see the number of people that took part in this event.

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 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 7:28 p.m. for contracts and personnel and invite David Danforth to join.

On a motion by Bob Nelson seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to exit executive session at 9:04 p.m.

ADJOURN:

On a motion by Mike Gilbar, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:04 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.