

**MINUTES – REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT  
MONDAY, APRIL 13, 2020**

**Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. via GoToMeeting telephone/video conference. There was no physical meeting place for this meeting. This meeting was audio recorded via GoToMeeting.**

**Board members participating via GoToMeeting telephone/video conference:** Dylan Ford, Benjamin Gates (presiding co-chair), and Mark Jefferson.

**Other Town officials and employees participating via GoToMeeting telephone/video conference:** Road Foreman Mark Chase and Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.

**Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting telephone or video conference:** Jonathan Carpenter, Laurie Jefferson, and Mona Marceau.

**1. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held March 23, 2020**

- Mr. Gates moved to approve as present the minutes of the regular meeting held March 23, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**2. Comment on agenda items, and any other business, by members of the public**

There was no comment by members of the public.

**3. Appearance by Road Foreman Mark Chase regarding Highway Department matters; take any action**

**a. Consideration of, and take any action on, operations under COVID-19 Coronavirus restrictions**

Discussion was had between Mr. Chase and the Board regarding Highway Department operations in light of many recent directives and orders from State authorities in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. These include guidance from the Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development issued on the date of this meeting.

- Mr. Gates moved to authorize Mr. Chase to direct the deployment of the Highway Department on an on-call basis as necessary to keep roads reasonably safe and passable while following all applicable authoritative State directives. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote. Roll-call vote results: YEAs: Ms. Ford, Mr. Gates; NAYs: Mr. Jefferson.

**b. Consideration of, and take any action on, quotes for 2020 paving projects**

The Board reviewed paving quotes from J. Hutchins, Inc. and Pike Industries, Inc. The road projects quoted, which are not identical across the two quotes, include Barnet Center Road, Roy Mountain Road, Town Forest Road, and Meeting House Hill. Below is a summary of the bids submitted:

- J. Hutchins, Inc.: 6,806 tons at \$66.15 per ton = \$450,216.90 total
- Pike Industries, Inc.: 3,582 tons at \$67.00 per ton = \$239,994.00 total

Discussion ensued.

- Ms. Ford moved to accept the quoted per-ton price of Pike Industries, Inc., but to request that this vendor revise its quote to accurately reflect the projects the Board intends to pave. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**c. Consideration of, and take any action on, quotes for 2020 tractor rental**

The Board reviewed an email, rental rider, and agreement from H.P. Fairfield. The quote is for two weeks' rental (June 8, 2020 to June 19, 2020) of a 2016 John Deere at \$3,300 per week, totaling \$6,600. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to agree in principle to the rental agreement, but to require that H.P. Fairfield provide written assurance that the Town will not be obligated to pay rental fees if the Town is unable to take possession of or use the tractor due to COVID-19 restrictions.

**d. Consideration of, and take any action on, town forest tree cutting proposals**

The Board reviewed proposals for harvesting timber in the town forest. The purpose of the project will be to cut approximately ten acres to clear the gravel pit for quarrying. Bids were received from P & L Loggers of Vermont and Kirby Mountain Lawns. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Jefferson moved to accept the bid of P & L Loggers of Vermont. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote.

**e. Consideration of, and take any action on, Municipal Roads General Permit planning report**

The Board reviewed the planning report, as partially completed by Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt. The report indicates that Mr. Gates is the Principal Executive Officer and Ranking Elected Official, and that a Road Erosion Inventory has been completed (March 2020).

- With the Board's approval, Mr. Gates signed the planning report.

**f. Other business**

**i. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and Vermont League of Cities and Towns trainings**

Mr. Chase reported that in-person trainings have been cancelled, but MSHA is offering online training. He asked if the Board would like the Highway Department to obtain this required training online, noting that the Town Garage does not have wireless internet access.

- The Board agreed to instruct the Highway Department to access MSHA training online, and to instruct Mr. Chase to install a wireless internet router at the Town Garage.

**ii. Sand screening and gravel crushing bidding.**

Mr. Chase asked the Board how they would like to proceed with regard to soliciting bids for sand screening and gravel crushing.

- The Board instructed Mr. Chase to mail bid solicitations to certain specific vendors.

**iii. Container sheds**

Mr. Chase asked the Board if they would like him to proceed with installing the new container sheds for the Town Garage, or to delay the project due to uncertainty regarding the location of the proposed new municipal office building.

- The Board instructed Mr. Chase to delay installation of the new container sheds.

**4. Other business presented by other Town officers**

There was no other business presented by other Town officers.

**5. Consideration of, and take any action on, recommendation of appointment for Town Health Officer**

The Board reviewed correspondence from the Vermont Department of Health appointing the Selectboard Co-Chair as Health Officer. This appointment comes in the omission of a nomination of another resident by Board. Ms. Ford indicated that she would be willing to serve in this capacity until another resident can be found.

**6. Consideration of, and take any action on, Town Health Officer Animal Bite Report regarding dog kept at US Route 5 South**

The Board reviewed an animal bite report received from Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital on April 4, 2020 regarding a bite incident occurring on the same date. A dog, Biscuit, kept at 2462 US Route 5 South, bit its owner, Jeannette Wright. The notes of Deputy Health Officer Maurice Roberts, who followed up on the incident, indicate that the dog was vaccinated for rabies in December 2019, and that after the bite the dog was euthanized at the owner's direction. Discussion ensued.

**7. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2020 mowing of town properties**

The Board reviewed the Town's contract with Little Acres Construction. This two-year contract covers 2020 and 2021, and includes mowing and maintenance services at most Town properties. Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that Dennis McLam provided a verbal quote for the remaining properties; Mr. McLam indicated that he would mow the Harvey's Lake beach for \$90.00 for each service, and the landfill and the field at Harvey's Lake for \$65.00 per hour. Discussion ensued.

- Ms. Ford moved to hire Dennis McLam for the proposed mowing services at the quoted rates. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**8. Consideration of, and take any action on, request for temporary parking of bus at Harvey's Lake Public Beach parking lot**

The Board reviewed an email from Barnet resident Abel Bushey requesting permission to park a school bus at the Harvey's Lake Beach parking lot. Mr. Gates indicated that he had already instructed Mr. Bushey that the Board would not permit the requested parking. The Board was in agreement with this action.

**9. Consideration of, and take any action on, bid summary and proposed budget for Town Hall & former Fire Station asbestos abatement**

The Board reviewed the bid summary and proposed budget.

- The Board agreed to table discussion of this matter.

**10. Consideration of, and take any action on, waiver of fees for licensing service dogs**

Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that he had received a request for waiver of licensing fees for a service dog. The Board reviewed an excerpt from the Vermont League of Cities & Towns publication "Big Book of Woof," which indicates that towns may waive the Town's portion of licensing fees for service dogs. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to not waive fees for service dogs.

**11. Consideration of, and take any action on, suspension of patrols by Caledonia County Sheriff's Department**

The Board read an email from the Sheriff's Department indicating that, as a precaution due to COVID-19, patrols had been suspended for a period of time and will now be modified. Discussion ensued.

**12. Consideration of, and take any action on, operations of Transfer Station/Recycling Center under COVID-19 coronavirus restrictions**

Ms. Ford reported that she has been at the Transfer Station/Recycling Center each of the past several weeks to oversee operations. The precautionary rules agreed upon by the Board are in effect, and seem to be working relatively well to maintain safety and promote social distancing.

**13. Consideration of, and take any action on, Transfer Station/Recycling Station project**

The Board reviewed four bids received, as summarized below:

- Simoneau's Construction \$47,992.50
  - Toby Lussier \$44,300.00
  - Graves Builders \$34,630.00
  - Ben Adams \$27,571.65
- The Board agreed to close the bids but to request additional information from the lowest bidder before we making a final award.

**14. Consideration of, and take any action on, applications for Uniform Municipal Excess Weight Permits**

The Board reviewed and approved the fleet applications of Austin Construction, Inc., Agri-Mark, Inc. DBA Cabot Creamery, Chief Crushing & Excavation, Inc., Chief Logging & Chipping Services, Inc., Dead River Company, Fred's Plumbing & Heating, Inc. and Fred's Propane Inc. DBA Fred's Energy.

The Board reviewed and approved the single vehicle application of Nathan Foster.

**15. Other business presented by Selectboard**

**a. Correspondence from Vermont Telephone Co. Inc. (VTel) regarding free public wireless internet sites during COVID-19 crisis**

Ms. Ford reported that she had received an email from VTel offering free public wireless internet for 50 sites in Vermont during the COVID-19 crisis. She asked if the Board would be interested in inquiring about this.

- The Board agreed that Ms. Ford would inquire about this offer.

**16. Adjournment**

- Ms. Ford moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

*A true copy.*

*Attest:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Town Clerk*