

**MINUTES – REMOTE REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT  
MONDAY, JANUARY 25, 2021**

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:** Collector of Delinquent Tax Lisa Bowden and Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.

**Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting telephone or video conference:** Michael Bigelow, Mona Marceau, Kirt Mayland, and Kathleen Monroe.

**1. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held January 11, 2021**

- Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held January 11, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**2. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Frontage Road Land, LLC regarding preferred siting designation request for possible solar/conservation project**

The Board reviewed emails and attachments from Kirt Mayland of Frontage Road Land, LLC and Reservoir River Holdings regarding a request for preferred site designation for a proposed solar project off Garland Hill Road on the property of David Bogie (parcel ID #0014-01-80). Mr. Mayland appeared remotely and discussed the proposed project with the Board.

- The Board agreed that it would discuss the project with abutting landowners, then consider the request again at its next meeting (February 8, 2021).

**3. Other business presented by members of the public**

There was no other business presented by members of the public.

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

Mr. Chase did not appear at this meeting. In his absence, the Board discussed the following items:

**a. Consideration of, and take any action on, speed limit zone and traffic study for West Barnet Road in the proximity of Kid Row**

The Board reviewed a traffic study on a section of West Barnet Road in the proximity of Kid Row, as completed by Constable David Stevenson in 2020. The Board noted that a significant percentage of traffic was reported as traveling in excess of the posted 35 mile per hour speed limit.

- Ms. Ford moved that, whereas an engineering and traffic investigation has been completed, the Board reaffirm its 2018 decision to properly sign and enforce a 35 mile per hour speed zone on West Barnet Road in the proximity of Kid Row. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**b. Other business**

**i. Vehicle at park-and-ride facility**

Ms. Ford noted that a white van, which had been observed at the park-and-ride facility for a long duration, had been removed. Discussion ensued.

**5. Other business presented by other town officers**

There was no other business presented by other town officers.

**6. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2021 penalties for late filed Homestead Declarations**

The Board reviewed its decisions from 2017 through 2020, when it agreed to apply penalties in the maximum percentages allowable pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5410(g). Treasurer Benjamin Heisholt reviewed the content of 32 V.S.A. § 5410(g), which indicates that the Selectboard “may...include a penalty of up to three percent of the education tax on the property” of an owner who files a homestead declaration on property that does not meet the criteria of a homestead or of an owner who fails to file a homestead declaration on a property that does meet the criteria of a homestead. This particular penalty is only applicable when the above-described taxpayer errors are not to the taxpayer’s advantage. In instances when the taxpayer error is to the taxpayer’s advantage, the Selectboard may include a penalty of up to eight percent. Mr. Heisholt asked the Board how they would like to proceed with regard to these penalties in 2021. Discussion ensued.

- Ms. Ford moved to apply penalties in 2021 in the maximum percentages allowable pursuant to 32 V.S.A. § 5410(g). Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**7. Consideration of, and take any action on, Town Hall property boundary agreement negotiations**

Ms. Ford indicated that there have been no new developments in this matter since the previous Board meeting.

- No action taken.

**8. Consideration of, and take any action on, planning for 2021 Town Meeting**

**a. Informational hearing**

Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt asked the Board when they would like to hold a pre-Annual Town Meeting informational hearing, which is required to be held in the ten (10) days preceding a town meeting held by Australian ballot. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to hold an informational hearing via GoToMeeting telephone/video conference on Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

**9. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2021 Annual Town Meeting warning**

The Board reviewed a draft annual Town Meeting warning for Australian ballot articles to be voted March 2, 2021. Discussion ensued regarding the language and number of articles to use to propose a property tax collection policy.

- The Board agreed to approve the draft as proposed, including a single article for adoption of a property tax collection policy.

**10. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District regarding proposed 2021 budget and Vermont Legislature bill H48**

The Board reviewed an email and attached letter, which indicate that, due to complications related to COVID-19, the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District’s budget will be voted on by the Northeast Kingdom Waste Management District’s Board of Supervisors instead of the voters of the district. Discussion ensued.

**11. Consideration of, and take any action on, proposed 2021 budget**

The Board reviewed the fourth draft of the proposed 2021 budget, as presented by Treasurer Benjamin Heisholt based on the Board’s decisions at its previous meeting and changes since that time. Discussion ensued.

**12. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from CAI Technologies regarding tax map maintenance contract**

The Board reviewed the 2022 proposal and contract. Terms of proposal and contract are the same as the 2021 proposal and contract; the cost to the Town increases from \$2,450 in 2021 to \$2,575 in 2022.

- The Board agreed to sign the contract.

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

The Board reviewed and approved the fleet applications of Newport Sand & Gravel Co. Inc./Carroll Concrete Co. Inc, and Barrett Trucking Co. Inc.

**14. Other business presented by Selectboard**

**a. Lease of Barnet Public Library building second floor**

The Board reviewed a proposed lease agreement for rental of the second floor of the Barnet Public Library building to Karne Choling. The terms are the same as the current expiring contract, except that the new contract is for two years, whereas the current expiring contract is for five years. The new proposed lease agreement would commence the same date as the current lease expires: February 1, 2021.

- Ms. Ford moved to sign the proposed new two-year lease. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**b. Library building painting**

Ms. Ford indicated that a new advertisement seeking bids for exterior painting of the library has not been published. She suggested the Board change the deadline for submission of bids to February 22, 2021. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Gates moved to change the deadline for submission of bids for exterior painting of the library building to February 22, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**15. Consideration of, and take any action on, performance evaluations and wage rate adjustments for town employees and wage rate adjustments for other elected and appointed officers**

- Ms. Ford moved to enter executive session to discuss performance evaluations and wage rate adjustments for town employees and wage rate adjustments for other elected and appointed officers pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Entered executive session at 8:17 p.m. Those present in executive session: Ms. Ford, Mr. Gates, Mr. Jefferson, and Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.
- Ms. Ford moved to exit executive session. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Exited executive session at 8:35 p.m.
- Mr. Jefferson moved to ratify the discussion held in executive session regarding performance evaluations and wage rate adjustments for town employees and wage rate adjustments for other elected officers. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote.

**16. Adjournment**

Mr. Jefferson moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

*A true copy.*

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