

MINUTES-REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING

TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 25, 2021

Board members present: Dylan Ford (presiding co-chair), Benjamin Gates, and Mark Jefferson.

Other Town officials and employees present: Collector of Delinquent Tax Lisa Bowden, Road Foreman Mark Chase, Beach Committee Chair Christen Emerson, Lister John Fairchild, Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt, and Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden.

Members of the public present: Jonathan Carpenter.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Barnet Fire & Rescue Station (151 Bimson Drive).

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

- Mr. Gates moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held October 11, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

2. Other business presented by members of the public

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

3. Appearance by Beach Committee regarding 2022 budget and repair requests; take any action

Beach Committee Chair Christen Emerson appeared and discussed with the Board various matters related the beach's 2022 budget. The Board reviewed documents presented by Ms. Emerson: a proposed 2022 beach budget and a list of necessary upcoming beach property repairs. The proposed budget includes \$11,000 in total income and \$25,350 in total expenditures. Ms. Emerson indicated that the Beach Committee plans to increase beach pass fees in 2022: \$3.00 for day passes and \$50.00 for all season passes. She also indicated that the Beach Committee intends to return the beach's open hours to 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., as they were previous to 2020. The Board discussed with Ms. Emerson the funding mix for repairs, including the general fund budget, the Beach Reserve Fund, the Municipal Building Fund, and other sources.

- The Board agreed to budget for a 2022 transfer to the Beach Reserve Fund in the amount of \$1,500 for purchase of large buoys. Ms. Emerson agreed that the Beach Committee would use a \$500 donation to pay for the additional cost of the buoys.

4. Consideration of, and take any action on, sign for Fire & Rescue Station

Mr. Gates and Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse reported that there were no new developments in this matter.

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

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2021 Roy Mountain Road construction project

Mr. Chase reported that the project is nearing completion. He indicated that Mathews Excavating will soon return to complete shoulder work, then Pike Industries will pave a top coat, then Vermont Recreational Surfacing will install guardrails.

b. Consideration of, and take any action on, quotes for deicing salt for the 2021-2022 season

The Board reviewed a quote from Cargill, which provides a delivered price of \$79.00 per ton. Mr. Chase reported that he had not received a quote from American Rock Salt.

- The Board signed the Cargill quote.

c. Other business

i. Church Street speed sign

Resident Lisa Bowden suggested that the Highway Department move the radar speed sign, which is currently located at the east end of Church Street below the bridge, to a different location further west on Church Street. Discussion ensued.

6. Appearance by Beach Committee regarding 2022 budget and repair requests; take any action (continued)

Beach Committee Chair Christen Emerson reported that the Beach Committee has discussed security technology options with security technology professional Sherman Sprague. She suggested that the Board consider installing equipment to deter vandalism and aid investigations of incidents.

- The Board requested that the Beach Committee investigate and report to the Board costs for security equipment.

7. Other business presented by other town officers

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, proposed errors and omissions certificate from Board of Listers

The Board reviewed a proposed errors and omissions certificate for properties owned by Gelinas Family Trust, Kristen McGraw, Phillip Partridge, Gabriel Braley, Charles Stinchfield, Blue Sky Builders, and Melvin and Lana Hale. Lister John Fairchild appeared and discussed the proposed certificate with the Board.

- The Board agreed to approve the proposed errors and omissions certificate; the Board signed the certificate.

8. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Planning Commission/Zoning Board regarding 2022 budget request

The Board reviewed an email requesting an appropriation of funds in the amount of \$5,000 to be added to the 2022 general fund budget for the purpose of updating the town plan.

- The Board agreed to appropriate \$5,000 in the 2022 general fund budget for the purpose of updating the town plan.

9. Consideration of, and take any action on, changes to structure of office of Lister/Assessor

Ms. Ford discussed her communications with the Board of Listers, Property Valuation and Review District Advisor Barbara Schlesinger, and other local towns regarding a proposed change to the structure of the Barnet office of Lister/Assessor. She discussed the various structure options available pursuant to statute, namely: 1) Board of Listers only, 2) active Lister Board with contracted assessor, 3) assessor/essential responsibilities Listers, and 4) assessor only. The Board discussed with Lister John Fairchild these options and the ways in which a particular option may apply and best serve the Town.

10. Consideration of, and take any action on, next steps in municipal office building project

The Board reviewed a proposed request for proposals (RFP) as submitted by Stuart Consulting. The RFP seeks proposals for services for a building and site condition assessment, space needs assessment, conceptual design options and total project budget for the Barnet Town Hall to serve as municipal offices. Discussion ensued. Resident Christen Emerson asked the Board about the process leading to this RFP, including its connection to the borrowing vote at the 2020 Town Meeting; the Board explained this process.

- Mr. Gates moved to approved the proposed RFP. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

11. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2022 health insurance benefits

The Board continued to review the costs and benefits of 2022 Blue Cross Blue Shield and MVP plans, as compared with the Town's current 2021 Blue Cross Blue Shield plan.

- Mr. Gates moved to continue to offer the BCBS Platinum Standard Plan. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.
- Mr. Gates moved to continue to offer a HealthEquity health reimbursement account with an annual maximum reimbursement of \$2,500 for each eligible employee. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

12. Consideration of, and take any action on, Transfer Station & Recycling Center facilities maintenance

Mr. Gates indicated that there was no new information to report regarding this matter.

13. Consideration of, and take any action on, memorial for veterans of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Mr. Gates indicated that there was no new information to report regarding this matter.

14. Consideration of, and take any action on, remote access to Selectboard meetings

The Board discussed logistics for making meetings accessible remotely. Ms. Ford discussed a camera/microphone device, the Meeting Owl Pro, that provides remote participants 360-degree video and audio access to the physical meeting place. Ms. Ford indicated that this device, which costs \$999, appears to be an eligible expenditure for ARPA funding.

- Mr. Gates moved to purchase the Meeting Owl Pro and commence offering remote meeting access. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

15. Consideration of, and take any action on, estimate from Johnson's Heating & Plumbing for replacement of Town Clerk's Office boiler

The Board reviewed and discussed an estimate from quoting a replacement of the Town Clerk's Office boiler for a total cost of \$7,200. Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that while Johnson's Heating & Plumbing recommends the replacement of the boiler because of its age and impending maintenance costs, they also believe it will be functional through at least one more heating season.

16. Consideration of approval of outstanding check warrants

The Board reviewed and approved all outstanding check warrants.

17. Other business presented by Selectboard

There was no other business presented by the Selectboard.

18. Other business presented by other town officers (continued)

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, legal proceedings in Jere Kendall v. Town of Barnet

Collector of Delinquent Tax Lisa Bowden appeared and discussed with the Board pending legal proceedings related to documents filed in Vermont Superior Court, Caledonia Unit in connection with the civil lawsuit of Jere Kendall v. Town of Barnet.

19. Consideration of, and take any action on, tax appeal to Superior Court submitted by Great River Hydro LLC

- Mr. Gates moved that the Board make a specific finding, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (a)(1)(E), that premature public knowledge of discussion concerning pending legal proceedings in the tax appeal to Superior Court submitted by Great River Hydro LLC would clearly place the Town of Barnet at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.
- Mr. Gates moved that the Board enter executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Section 313 (a)(1)(E) to discuss pending legal proceedings in the tax appeal to Superior Court submitted by Great River Hydro LLC, as premature public disclosure of which would clearly place the Town of Barnet at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Entered executive session at 8:40 p.m. Those present in executive session: Ms. Ford, Mr. Gates, Mr. Jefferson, Lister John Fairchild, and Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.
- Mr. Gates moved to exit executive session. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Exited executive session at 9:00 p.m.
- No action taken.

20. Adjournment

- Mr. Gates moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

A true copy.

Attest: _____ *Town Clerk*