

# MINUTES - REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING

## TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2021

Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. in-person at Barnet Town Clerk's Office (1743 US Route 5 South) and via GoToMeeting telephone/online conference. This meeting was recorded via GoToMeeting.

**Board members participating in-person:** Dylan Ford, Benjamin Gates (presiding co-chair), and Mark Jefferson.

**Other Town officials and employees participating in-person:** Road Foreman Mark Chase and Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden.

**Members of the public participating in-person:** None.

**Other Town officials and employees participating via GoToMeeting:** Lister John Cook, Lister Sarah Cook, and Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt

**Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting:** Jonathan Carpenter and Mona Marceau.

1. **Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held November 22, 2021**
  - Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held November 22, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.
2. **Consideration of approval of minutes of special meeting held December 8, 2021**
  - Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the special meeting held December 8, 2021. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.
3. **Other business presented by members of the public**

There was no other business presented by members of the public.
4. **Consideration of, and take any action on, sign for Fire & Rescue Station**

Mr. Gates discussed his communications with Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse. It was noted that traffic cones had been located in the vicinity of the proposed location of the sign. Mr. Gates indicated that he would contact Vermont Agency of Transportation Representative Shauna Clifford to request a site inspection.
5. **Appearance by Road Foreman Mark Chase regarding Highway Department matters; take any action**
  - a. **Consideration of, and take any action on, quotes for deicing salt for the 2021-2022 season**

Mr. Chase indicated that he had not received any new salt quotes.
  - b. **Consideration of, and take any action on, application of James Ball for highway access on Tower Road**

The Board reviewed an application for a permanent driveway access. Mr. Chase discussed his inspection of the site; as indicated by his notes on the application, Mr.

Chase found the site to be acceptable for a driveway access, with the installation of a minimum 15-inch diameter culvert in the road ditch line.

- Mr. Jefferson moved to approve the permit application with the condition of the installation of a minimum 15-inch culvert in the road ditch line. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote.

**c. Consideration of, and take any action on, protocol for Highway Department vehicle accidents**

Mr. Chase discussed a recent accident involving a Highway Department vehicle. He asked the Board for direction with regard to protocol for responding to accidents, including the question of whether or not to call to request police reporting. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to instruct the Highway Department to continue its current practice of the Road Foreman reporting to the scene of vehicle accidents to take pictures and collect information, and also to call to request that police report to the scene.

**d. Other business**

**i. Routine winter maintenance**

Mr. Chase reported that the Highway Department has spent much of its recent time performing routine winter maintenance such as plowing and sanding roads.

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

Ms. Ford reported her communications with NEMRC regarding the possibility of NEMRC providing assessment services as part of a hybrid Lister-Assessor team in 2022. She indicated that hourly rates were quoted at \$95.00 for assessor staff, \$47.50 for travel, and \$145.00 for executive staff. Ms. Dylan discussed a checklist of Lister tasks that must be divided between NEMRC and the Listers.

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

No other business was presented by other town officers.

**8. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Northeast Kingdom Broadband regarding Optical Line Terminal (OLT) cabinet location**

The Board reviewed emails discussing the possibility of siting the OLT cabinet and back-up generator at Town-owned land at the corner of West Barnet Road and Gilfillan Road. This site currently is used for storage and stockpiling of gravel and stone materials.

- The Board agreed to communicate to Northeast Kingdom Broadband that the Board is open to exploring the West Barnet Road/Gilfillan site as a possible location for the OLT cabinet and generator, but wishes to be involved in discussion and retains the right to decline the proposed project.

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

Mr. Gates reported that there were no further developments regarding this matter.

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

Ms. Ford reported that she had not yet spoken to David Curtin, as discussed at the previous meeting.

**11. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2021 year-end employee bonuses**

The Board reviewed minutes of Board meetings held December 14, 2020 and December 28, 2020, which indicate that the Board had agreed to pay 2020 year-end bonuses of \$350 to full-time employees, \$200 to Assistant Town Clerk Catherine Roy, \$175.00 to part-time Highway Department Employee Paul Gibson, and \$150 each to Transfer Station/Recycling Center employees Daniel Ehlers, Bruce Marston, Donald Nelson, and Shirley Warden. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Gates moved to pay 2021 year-end bonuses of \$350 to full-time employees, \$200 to Assistant Town Clerk Catherine Roy, \$175.00 to part-time Highway Department Employee Paul Gibson, and \$150 each to Transfer Station/Recycling Center employees Daniel Ehlers, Bruce Marston, Donald Nelson, and Shirley Warden. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

**12. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Caledonia County regarding fiscal year 2023 budget**

The Board reviewed notices of meetings to be held December 21, 2021 and January 25, 2022 to present the 2023 county budget.

**13. Consideration of, and take any action on, proposed 2022 Town General Fund budget**

The Board commenced review and discussion of the 2022 General Fund budget, beginning with the Highway Department.

**14. Consideration of approval of outstanding check warrants**

- The Board reviewed and approved all outstanding check warrants.

**15. Other business presented by Selectboard**

There was no other business presented by the Selectboard.

**16. Consideration of, and take any action on, tax appeal to Superior Court submitted by Great River Hydro LLC (executive session anticipated pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(E))**

- Ms. Ford 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.
- Ms. Ford 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 9:05 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 9:23 p.m.
- No action taken

**17. Adjournment**

- Ms. Ford moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:23 p.m.

*A true copy.*

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