

MINUTES - REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING

TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT

MONDAY, MARCH 14, 2022

Meeting convened at 7:00 p.m. in-person at Barnet Fire & Rescue Station (151 Bimson Drive) and via GoToMeeting telephone/online conference. This meeting was recorded via GoToMeeting.

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

Other Town officials and employees participating in-person: Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Benjamin Adams, Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Dakota Butterfield, Lister John Cook, Lister Sally Cook, Road Foreman Mark Chase, Fire Chief Ronald Morse, and Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden.

Other Town officials and employees participating via GoToMeeting: Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.

Members of the public participating in-person: Shawn Larocque.

Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting: Robert Joly, Mona Marceau, Kathleen Monroe, and Lisa Von Kann.

1. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held February 28, 2022

- Mr. Gates moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held February 28, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

2. Consideration of approval of minutes of special meeting held March 2, 2022

- Mr. Gates moved to approve as presented the minutes of the special meeting held March 2, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

3. Preliminary annual review of Ordinance for Regulating All-Terrain Vehicles (ATVs); take any action

The Board reviewed a list and a map of town highways, or sections thereof, requested. The Board explained that this preliminary review is to accommodate ordinance compliance in connection with the changed date of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting. The ordinance calls for review of town highway access at the first regular Selectboard meeting after Annual Town Meeting; in 2022 this meeting will be May 9, which is an inconveniently short time before the beginning of the ATV season on May 15. Discussion ensued. Residents Lisa Von Kann and Robert Joly asked if the requested access is an expansion of previous access. The Board indicated request is for the same access as was granted in 2021 and several years previous to that. The Board members indicated that they had not received any complaints about operation of ATVs on town highways during the 2021 season.

- The Board agreed to give preliminary approval to the requested Town Highway access, contingent upon official approval May 9, 2022.

4. Other business presented by members of the public

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

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

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, approval for Winterset, Inc. and J. Hutchins, Inc. to place job trailers on Town Garage property

Mr. Chase reported that Winterset, Inc. and J. Hutchins, Inc. are road construction contractors performing work on Interstate 91 in the upcoming construction season who have requested permission to place job trailers at the Town Garage property and to dispose of waste road materials in the Barnet gravel pit. The Board reviewed an Off-Site Activity Submittal (placement of job trailer at Town Garage property) and an Off-Site Activity Exemption Record (disposal of materials in gravel pit) from Winterset, Inc. Discussion ensued.

- With the Board's approval, Ms. Ford signed the two documents presented by Winterset, Inc.

b. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Vermont Agency of Transportation regarding 2023 town highway grant applications, etc.

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

c. Consideration of, and take any action on, Town Garage moisture issue

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

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

The Board reviewed and approved the single vehicle application of Swan Sitework, LLC and the fleet applications of Connecticut Valley Trucking, Inc., Dead River Company, N.A. Manosh, Inc., r.k. Miles, Inc., and VELCO.

e. Other business

i. All-seasons road maintenance

Mr. Chase reported that the Highway Department has been spending much of its time maintaining roads under a variety of conditions in changing weather.

6. Other business presented by other town officers

There was no other business presented by other town officers.

7. Consideration of, and take any action on, requests for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding

The Board considered a request from McIndoe Falls Fire District (Barnet Fire District #3) for ARPA funding for repairs to their water system's water building. The Fire District submitted an estimate for replacement of the roof of the building with a total cost of \$18,000. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Gates moved to approve \$15,000 in expenditure of ARPA funding for repairs to the McIndoe Fire District (Barnet Fire District #3) water system water building. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

8. Consideration of, and take any action on, request for Town Meeting warning article relating to town forest accessibility

The Board reviewed an email from Grace Gershuny, Sara Demetry, Crystal Zevon, and Kathleen Monroe requesting an article on the 2022 Annual Town Meeting warning with the following language:

Shall the Town of Barnet direct the Town Planning Commission & Zoning Board to identify requirements that must be met in order to make all property owned by the Town, especially the Town Forest, fully accessible to the public, and commit to taking actions necessary to meet all such requirements by the end of calendar year 2022? At such time that the requirements are met to permit access by members of the public to the Town Forest, the Town of Barnet shall grant permission to the Abenaki people to gather medicine, food, and art materials in our Town Forest. In the spirit of reconciliation and good relations we hereby acknowledge and regret the fact that Europeans took land from the Abenaki when they settled here.

The request was not accompanied by a petition of Barnet voters pursuant to 17 V.S.A. § 2642(a)(3)(A). Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to not include the requested article on the 2022 Annual Town Meeting warning.

9. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Barnet Planning Commission/Zoning Board regarding Zoning Administrative Officer nomination

The Board reviewed a letter indicating that the Planning Commission/Zoning Board voted unanimously to nominate Shirley Warden for reappointment to the Zoning Administrative Officer position and would like to request that she be appointed to the position for a new three-year term commencing March 23, 2022.

- Mr. Gates moved to reappoint Shirley Warden to the position of Zoning Administrative Officer for a new three-year term commencing March 23, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

10. Consideration of, and take any action on, procurement of services for 2022 mowing of town properties

Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that a two-year contract with Little Acres Landscaping expired in 2021; he asked how the Board would like to proceed with regard to procuring services for 2022.

- The Board agreed to solicit bids for mowing services, including advertising in the Caledonian-Record, requiring submission of bids no later than April 11, 2022.

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

Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse appeared and discussed with the Board his communications with The Sign Depot regarding options and pricing for a sign as per discussions at previous Board meetings.

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

The Board reviewed a proposed contract with New England Municipal Resource Center (NEMRC) for assessment services in the context of a hybrid Lister-Assessor model. Ms. Ford reported that NEMRC indicated that approximately 120 hours at the quoted assessor services rate of \$95.00 per hour would be required under the task-sharing template proposed by the Listers.

- Mr. Gates moved to accept the proposed contract with NEMRC. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Ms. Ford signed the contract.

Ms. Ford reported that she had received confirmation from John Cook that he will not seek re-election as Lister in 2022 and from Sarah Cook that she intends to resign from the office of Lister after 2022 Annual Town Meeting. The Board discussed recruitment of Listers to fill these impending vacancies.

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, proposed 2022 Town General Fund budget

The Board continued its review, discussion and amendment of the 2022 General Fund budget.

- Mr. Gates moved to approve a final proposed budget with total tax appropriation of \$1,673,637.04. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

15. Consideration of approval of outstanding check warrants

- The Board reviewed and approved all outstanding check warrants.

16. Other business presented by Selectboard

a. Annual Town Meeting warning

The Board reviewed the draft of a proposed 2022 Annual Town Meeting warning. The Board agreed to sign the warning with minor revision. The final warning will be similar to the 2021 Annual Town Meeting warning, with differences in connection with a return to a floor meeting format and the addition of an appropriation request from The Community Restorative Justice Center.

17. Consideration of, and take any action on, evaluation of appointed public officers/employees

- Mr. Gates moved to enter executive session to discuss evaluation of appointed public officers/employees pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a) (1,3 & 4). Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Entered executive session at 8:08 p.m. Those present in executive session: Ms. Ford, Mr. Gates, Mr. Jefferson, Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Benjamin Adams, Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Dakota Butterfield, 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 9:48 p.m.
- No action taken.

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

The Board noted that there was no new information to report regarding this matter.

- No action taken.

19. Adjournment

- Mr. Gates moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

A true copy.

Attest: _____ *Town Clerk*