

MINUTES - REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING

TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT

MONDAY, OCTOBER 10, 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, Benjamin Gates (presiding co-chair), and Mark Jefferson.

Other Town officials and employees participating in-person: Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt.

Other Town officials and employees participating via GoToMeeting: None.

Members of the public participating in-person: Ross Page and Jeremy Roberts.

Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting: Jonathan Carpenter and Amy Ash Nixon (Caledonian-Record).

1. Consideration of approval of minutes of special meeting held September 26, 2022

- Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the special meeting held September 26, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

2. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held September 26, 2022

- Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held September 26, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

3. Annual review of snowmobile travel on town highways; take any action

The Board reviewed a request from the Bayley Hazen Road Snowmobile Club for snowmobile access for trail connection purposes during the 2022-2023 season. This request is for access on portions of Laird Road, Somerhill Road, Stevenson Road, and West Main Street, as has been granted in previous years. Ross Page, of the snowmobile club, appeared and indicated he was not aware of any complaints lodged regarding highway access for snowmobiles in the previous season. The Board also reviewed a request from the Waterford Ridge Runners for snowmobile access for trail connection purposes during the 2022-2023 season. This request is for access on a portion of Meeting House Hill.

- Ms. Ford moved to grant the Bayley-Hazen Road Snowmobile Club access as requested for Laird Road, Somerhill Road, Stevenson Road, and West Main Street and the Waterford Ridge Runners access as requested on Meeting House Hill. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

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

Mr. Chase was not present at this meeting. In his absence the Board discussed the following Highway Department matters:

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, complaint regarding dumping of waste off North Monroe Road

Mr. Gates reported that there was no new information to report or discuss regarding this matter.

- No action taken

b. Other business

i. Comerford Dam Road beaver dams

Mr. Gates reported that beaver dams are presenting drainage problems on Comerford Dam Road. The Board discussed possible solutions.

ii. Anderson Street bridge

Mr. Gates reported that the Vermont Agency of Transportation has requested to meet with the Town to discuss an erosion problem on an Anderson Street bridge.

iii. Dump truck bids

Mr. Gates reported that Mr. Chase has begun to receive quotes for a new dump truck. Total cost for a truck appears to have increased in recent years; quotes range from \$240,000 to \$260,000. Discussion was had regarding purchase of a six-wheel dump truck versus a ten-wheel dump truck.

iv. Salt quote

The Board reviewed a quote from Cargill for delivery road salt during the forthcoming 2022-2023 winter season. Delivered cost is quoted at \$94.00 per ton.

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

v. West Main Street bush

Mr. Jefferson reported that he had spoken to Margaret Clayton regarding a bush that is partially obstructing vision from the intersection of West Main Street and Harvey Mountain Road. Ms. Clayton had indicated that she was willing to trim the bush to improve lines of sight.

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, next steps in Town Hall project

a. Consideration of, and take any action on, hiring of contractor for construction management

The Board and Jeremy Roberts discussed proposals received and in particular the details of the proposal submitted by Estes & Gallup.

- Ms. Ford moved accept Estes & Gallup's proposal for construction management services for the Town Hall project, with the following conditions: 1) The Town of Barnet will contract with St. Johnsbury Academy Electrical Trades program and a certified electrical firm to complete the drawings, electrical, communications and alarm systems. The St. Johnsbury Academy will be available to work until May 15, 2023 and be able to resume work September 15,

2023. The Board fully understands this may impact the timeline of this project. 2) The Board will prioritize the use of local contractors and resources whenever feasible and realistic. The Board would like this to remain a community project to maintain support and enthusiasm for this project.

- Ms. Ford's motion was seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

8. Consideration of, and take any action on, planning for expenditures of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds

The Board discussed a second request for funding from McIndoe Falls Fire District #3, as reviewed at previous meetings. Further funding of the originally funded project (water system roof replacement-\$5,000) and three additional request items (reservoir cleaning expense-\$5,000, sand filter sand-\$8,000, well pump replacement-\$4,000) total \$20,000 in additional requested funding. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to request that, before the Board's consideration of the Fire District's requests, the Fire District seek funding from the State of Vermont for sand filter sand and inquire with the Barnet Village Fire District #2 regarding the well pump.
- The Board agreed that it will not set aside a separate pool of ARPA funds for Fire Districts, but will respond to requests on an ad hoc basis.

9. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2023 health insurance benefits

The Board reviewed 2023 health insurance plan summaries from Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont (BCBS) and MVP Health Care (MVP). They also reviewed a report from Treasurer Benjamin Heisholt that indicates the costs of the 2022 Town health plan from BlueCross BlueShield of Vermont (BCBS) and projects the costs of 2023 plans for BCBS and MVP Health Care (MVP). The Town's total annual expense for 2023, with the current benefit offering, under the BCBS plan would represent an increase from 2022 of \$11,456.98, and under the MVP plan would represent an increase from 2022 of \$8,998.25. Discussion ensued.

- Ms. Ford moved to continue to offer the BCBS Platinum Standard Plan. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.
- Ms. Ford 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.

10. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Northeast Kingdom Broadband (NEKBB) regarding optical line terminal siting

The Board reviewed emails indicating that NEKBB is reconsidering its choice to remove from consideration for optical line terminal siting a Town-owned parcel on Gilfillan Road. NEKBB would like to schedule a meeting with town officials at the site.

- The Board agreed that Mr. Jefferson and Road Foreman Mark Chase will meet with NEKBB at the site.

11. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Caledonia Central Supervisory Union (CCSU) regarding request for proposals for vendor to site a solar array at the Barnet School property

The Board reviewed an email indicating that CCSU's request for proposals for a vendor to site a solar array at the Barnet School property expired without a single proposal.

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

Mr. Gates reported that there was no new information to report or discuss regarding this matter.

- No action taken

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

Mr. Gates reported that there was no new information to report or discuss regarding this matter.

- The Board agreed that Ms. Ford will contact the Vermont Office of Veterans Affairs to discuss this matter.

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

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

- No action taken

17. Adjournment

- Mr. Gates moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

A true copy. Attest: _____ *Town Clerk*