

**MINUTES - SPECIAL SELECTBOARD MEETING
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
MONDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2023**

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: Benjamin Gates (presiding co-chair) and Mark Jefferson.

Board members participating via GoToMeeting online video conference: Dylan Ford.

Other Town officials and employees participating in-person: Road Foreman Mark Chase, Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt, Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Dennis McLam, and Planning Commission/Zoning Board member Eric Skovsted.

Other Town officials and employees participating via GoToMeeting online video conference: None.

Members of the public participating in-person: Melissa Fournier, Shane Fournier, Kenneth Tyda, Tammy Tyda, and Sheryl Whitehill.

Members of the public participating via GoToMeeting online video conference: Stephen Riehl.

1. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held December 11, 2023

- Ms. Ford moved to approve as presented the minutes of the meeting held December 11, 2023. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote.

2. Public Hearing – Town Plan (for public review of and comment on proposed amendment of the Barnet Town Plan, pursuant to 24 VSA Chapter 117 – see separately warned public hearing notice)

The Board held a second public hearing for review of the Town Plan pursuant to 24 VSA Chapter 117. The Board reviewed the amended Town Plan, including changes made by the Board at the first public hearing. Planning Commission/Zoning Board members Dennis McLam and Eric Skovsted represented the Planning Commission/Zoning Board. There were no comments made by members of the public.

- The Board agreed to make no further changes to the amended Town Plan.

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

- a. **Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from Town of Waterford regarding maintenance of Smith Road**

The Board read a letter from the Town of Waterford, which indicates that the Waterford Selectboard has decided to discontinue plowing of the Barnet portion of a private road, Smith Road. Historically, Barnet end of this road, which crosses the Barnet/Waterford town line and becomes a town road in Waterford, was plowed because a Waterford employee resided on it. Residents of the private road in Barnet, Melissa Fournier, Shane Fournier, Kenneth Tyda, Tammy Tyda, and Sheryl Whitehill, appeared at this meeting to discuss this matter with the Board. These residents presented a petition requesting that the Town reclassify Smith Road as a Town Highway. They also presented a letter from Butler's Bus Service, Inc., which requests that the private road be maintained by the Town for the safety and convenience of school bus routes. The Board reviewed the process for laying out/adopting a new Town Highway, as summarized in the Vermont Agency of Transportation's Handbook for Local Officials ("Orange Book"). Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to instruct Mr. Chase to inspect the private road and report back to the Board at its next meeting for further consideration of this matter.

b. Consideration of, and take any action on, Highway Access Permit application of Peter Lewis for access on Warden Road

The Board discussed this permit application, which has been discussed at previous meetings. At the most recent meeting, it was brought to the Board's attention that a highway access permit for the same location had already been approved. At this meeting, the Board reviewed an approved permit issued to the previous owner of the property, Heather Babcock, for the same access location in 2022. Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that he had returned Mr. Lewis's application with a copy of the permit issued to Ms. Babcock.

c. Other business

i. Winter rain

Mr. Chase discussed the rainstorm occurring the day of this meeting, which, combined with snow melt, posed a threat of flash flooding. He indicated that Barnet roads remained passable, with none closed. He reported that the greatest damage caused by the storm was related to muddy road surfaces, which were deep in some areas.

5. Other business presented by other town officers

No other business was presented by other town officers.

6. Consideration of, and take any action on, next steps in Town Hall project

a. Progress report

Mr. Gates reported that interior demolition/renovation work continues. The Building Working Group is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, December 19.

b. Other business

No other business was discussed.

7. Consideration of, and take any action on, correspondence from NEMRC regarding proposed Assessor Services Agreement for 2024

The Board reviewed a proposed contract for assessor services. Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt reported that the proposed agreement is identical to the 2022 agreement; no agreement was in place 2023.

- The Board agreed to sign the agreement; the Board signed the agreement.

8. Consideration of, and take any action on, animal control complaint form received from Marta Pierce regarding dog kept on Bimson Drive

Ms. Ford reported that she had spoken to Ms. Pierce, as per the Board's discussion at their most recent meeting. Ms. Pierce had provided contact information for the landlord of the property where the dog alleged of animal control violations is housed; Ms. Ford is attempting to contact the landlord to find information about the dog's owners.

9. Consideration of, and take any action on, appointment to fill vacancy on Dam Committee

Ms. Ford indicated that there was no new information to discuss or on which to take action regarding this matter.

- No action taken.

10. Consideration of, and take any action on, appointment of Animal Control Officer

Ms. Ford indicated that there was no new information to discuss or on which to take action regarding this matter.

- No action taken.

11. Other business presented by Selectboard

There was no other business presented by the Selectboard.

12. Consideration of approval of outstanding check warrants

- The Board reviewed and approved all outstanding check warrants.

13. Consideration of, and take any action on, zoning permit application for parcel #0014-01-70

Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden did not appear at this meeting. The Board noted that they were not aware of any new information to discuss or on which to take action regarding this matter.

- No action taken.

14. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2024 Town General Fund budget

The Board reviewed an amended draft budget. The Board made various amendments to the draft budget.

15. Adjournment

- Mr. Gates moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Jefferson and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

A true copy. Attest: _____ *Town Clerk*