

**MINUTES – REGULAR SELECTBOARD MEETING  
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2024**

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 Benjamin Adams.
- **Via GoToMeeting online video conference:** None.

**Other Town officials and employees participating:**

- **In-person:** Town Attorney Steven Adler, Flood Recovery Fund Administrator Joseph Breidenstein, Road Foreman Mark Chase, Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt, Planning Commission/Zoning Board Member Dennis McLam, Fire & Rescue Member Deborah Morse, Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse, Flood Recovery Fund Committee Member Jan Parsons, and Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden.
- **Via GoToMeeting online video conference:** None.

**Members of the public participating:**

- **In-person:** Jeffrey Berwick, Irene Jellison, and Ross Page.
- **Via GoToMeeting online video conference:** “Chase,” Caroline DeMaio, Trent Lowell, and “Mona.”

Approval of Minutes

**1. Consideration of approval of minutes of regular meeting held October 14, 2024**

- Mr. Gates moved to approve as presented the minutes of the regular meeting held October 14, 2024. Seconded by Ms. Ford and approved by voice vote.

Appearances by Members of the Public

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

The Board conducted its annual review of the ordinance. They reviewed a request from the Bayley Hazen Road Snowmobile Club for snowmobile access for trail connection purposes during the 2024-2025 season 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 discussed the request with the Board. He also requested that the Bayley-Hazen Road Snowmobile Club be granted access on Brook Hill Road. Trent Lowell of the Waterford Ridge Runners appeared remotely and requested snowmobile access for trail connection purposes on portions of Meeting House Hill, Bridge Street, and County Hill Road. Discussion ensued.

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

#### Appearances by Town Officers

### **4. Appearance by Road Foreman Mark Chase regarding Highway Department matters; take any action**

#### **a. Consideration of, and take any action on, road repairs in connection with July 2024 flooding event**

Mr. Chase provided an update on repair progress. He indicated that the Highway Department continues to work on smoothing washouts. The Vermont Agency of Transportation recently completed inspections of the bridges over the Stevens River. The Carter Street bridge was found to be compromised; a temporary repair rendered the bridge passable until a permanent repair can be completed in the spring. The Anderson Street bridge is undergoing repairs and will be re-opened soon. Mathews Excavating continues to work on Comerford Dam Road.

#### **b. Consideration of, and take any action on, paving of Church Street parking lot**

Mr. Gates suggested the Board consider paving the new parking lot (park-and-ride) at the west end of Church Street. Although paving was not included in the scope of the grant for the project, it is allowable in conjunction with the grant, with the full cost borne by the Town. Mr. Gates suggested that paving the lot would ease and facilitate maintenance efforts. Mr. Chase indicated that he had requested, but not yet received, a quote from Pike Industries. Timing of the project, however, is a concern, as Church Street paving, which would be performed at the same time as parking lot paving, is scheduled for the week of this meeting. Discussion ensued.

- Mr. Gates moved to pave the new Church Street parking lot. Seconded by Mr. Adams and approved by voice vote.

#### **c. Other business**

##### **i. Paving**

Mr. Chase reported that paving projects on Church Street, Carter Street, and Comerford Dam Road are scheduled to be completed soon.

##### **ii. Sand screening**

Mr. Chase reported that the annual sand screening and stock-piling project is complete.

### **5. Appearance by Flood Recovery Fund Advisory Committee regarding allocation of funds to selected applicants; take any action**

Flood Recovery Fund Committee Member Jan Parsons and Flood Recovery Fund Administrator Joseph Breidenstein appeared and discussed the recent activities of the committee. They indicated that they have had several meetings to issue grant applications, receive and review applications, and approve payments to grant applicants. The fund has a balance of \$34,800; the committee will soon forward a list of grant payments to be authorized by Purchasing Agent Ms. Ford.

### **6. Appearance by Town Attorney Steven Adler regarding revision of Animal Control Ordinance; take any action**

The Board reviewed a proposed new Animal Control Ordinance as drafted by Mr. Adler. Mr. Adler appeared and discussed various sections of the new ordinance that are new or revised as compared with the current ordinance. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed that Mr. Adler will finalize a draft, based on the discussion at this meeting, for the Board to review and put forward through the ordinance adoption process.

**7. Appearance by Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt regarding Assistant Town Clerk hiring process; take any action**

Town Clerk Benjamin Heisholt indicated that he plans soon to commence interviews for the open Assistant Town Clerk position. He asked if the Board would like to make more specific approval of hourly wage rate for the position.

- No action taken.

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

**a. Fire & Rescue Station insurance**

Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse appeared, along with Jeffrey Berwick of the Berwick Agency Insurance to discuss the policy of the Fire & Rescue Station. Mr. Berwick indicated that the current coverage limit for guaranteed replacement cost on the building (\$748,707) is inadequate compared to actual cost of construction. He suggested increasing the coverage limit to \$918,438, which would result in an annual premium increase of \$434. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to approve the increase in coverage valuation as suggested by Mr. Berwick, commencing in the 2025 renewal.

**b. Fire district funding option**

Ashley Lucht of the Vermont Drinking Water and Groundwater Protection Division appeared and discussed funding available for municipal water systems.

**c. E911 Ordinance review**

Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden appeared and reminded the Board that an update of the E911 ordinance is necessary.

**d. Compensation for new Zoning Administrative Officer**

Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden appeared and suggested the Board consider what compensation it will offer to the incoming Zoning Administrative Officer. Discussion ensued.

New Business

**9. Consideration of, and take any action on, 2025 health insurance benefits**

The Board reviewed estimated costs for health insurance benefits, as prepared by Treasurer Benjamin Heisholt based on rates published by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont and MVP Healthcare. Discussion ensued.

- The Board agreed to table further discussion to the next meeting.

**10. Other business presented by Selectboard**

No other business was presented by the Selectboard.

**Old/Continuing Business**

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

**a. Progress report**

Mr. Gates presented an update on renovation progress. Ms. Ford reported that Ash Electric will perform installation of telephone service on the main floor. Paving of the parking lot will be performed in conjunction with Church Street within the next few weeks.

**b. Other business**

**i. Emergency services**

Fire & Rescue Chief Ronald Morse inquired about alarm service. The Board indicated that alarm services are installed through Alarmco. Chief Morse suggested the Board consider installation of a lock box for key access to the building in the event of an emergency.

**12. Consideration of, and take any action on, appointment of assistant/acting Zoning Administrative Officer**

Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden reported that there was no new information to discuss or on which to take action.

- No action was taken.

Check Warrants

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

- The Board reviewed and approved all outstanding check warrants.

Adjournment

**14. Adjournment**

- Mr. Adams moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Gates and approved by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

*A true copy. Attest:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Town Clerk*