

**MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2023**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Barnet Elementary School gymnasium by Moderator Dennis McLam.

ARTICLE 1. To elect a Moderator.

- Moderator stated that one-year term of Dennis McLam is expiring.
- Dennis McLam nominated by Mark Bowen.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Dennis McLam.

ARTICLE 2. To elect all other Town Officers as required by law and additional Town Officers as approved by the voters.

Selectboard

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Dylan Ford is expiring.
- Dylan Ford nominated by William Biddle.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Dylan Ford.

Lister

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of David Warden is expiring.
- Lister Chair John Fairchild spoke about the role and tasks of the Board of Listers.
- David Warden spoke, indicating that he was not seeking re-election.
- There were no nominations and no election of a Lister.

Auditor

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Joseph Breidenstein is expiring.
- Joseph Breidenstein nominated by Dylan Ford.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Joseph Breidenstein.

Collector of Delinquent Tax

- Moderator stated that the one-year term of Lisa Bowden is expiring.
- Lisa Bowden nominated by Mark Gilleland.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Lisa Bowden.

First Constable

- Moderator stated that the two-year term of Steve Mosher is expiring.
- Steve Mosher nominated by David Stevenson.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Steve Mosher.

Second Constable

- Moderator stated that the two-year term of David Stevenson is expiring.
- David Stevenson nominated by William Biddle.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for David Stevenson.

Trustee of Public Funds

- Moderator stated that three-year term of Merle Fitzgerald is expiring.
- Merle Fitzgerald nominated by George Coppenrath.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Merle Fitzgerald.

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that five-year term of Julie Roos is expiring.
- Rebecca Pedersen nominated by Julie Roos.
- Julie Roos nominated by Mona Marceau.
- Julie Roos spoke, stating that she declined the nomination.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Rebecca Pedersen.

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that one year remains of a five-year term originally held by Rebecca Boardman. Linda Cochrane was appointed to replace Rebecca Boardman.
- Linda Cochrane nominated by Julie Roos.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Linda Cochrane.

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that three years remain of a five-year term originally held by Ashley Wright. Jacquelyn Verley was appointed to replace Ashley Wright.
- Jacquelyn Verley nominated by Dawn Holtz.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Jacquelyn Verley.

The Moderator allowed a brief intermission for announcements and speeches.

Vermont Caledonia-1 District legislator (and Barnet voter) Robert (Bobby) Farlice-Rubio spoke. Mr. Farlice-Rubio began by presenting a certificate of service to Fire Department volunteer Joseph Barrett, who recently retired after forty-three years of service to the Town. A standing ovation was given for Mr. Barrett. Mr. Farlice-Rubio then spoke regarding various recent actions and potential future actions of the legislature.

Transfer Station attendant Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden spoke about Transfer Station & Recycling Center information in the Town Report, Zoning information in the Town Report, and the requirement of zoning permits for most building activities.

Energy Committee member Harry Adamek spoke regarding recent Energy Committee activities, including installation of window dressers to help energy efficiency of homes.

ARTICLE 3. To consider and act upon the report of the Town Auditors.

- Mona Marceau moved to accept the report of the Town Auditors as it appears on page twenty-nine of the Town Report. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) to the American Red Cross of New Hampshire and Vermont?

- Caroline DeMaio moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to the Barnet Historical Society to be used for maintaining the Goodwillie House?

- David Warden moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to the Barnet Historical Society to be used for conservation and preservation of collections of historical materials associated with the township of Barnet?

- David Warden moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$2,300.00) to Caledonia Home Health Care & Hospice?

- Caroline Demaio moved the article as warned. Seconded by Celina Wright.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 8. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Catamount Arts?

- Dawn Holtz moved the article as warned. Seconded by Kathleen Monroe.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to The Community Restorative Justice Center?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$1,700.00) to Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 11. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00)

to Kingdom Animal Shelter?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 12. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 13. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars (\$1,775.00) to Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) to Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Inc.?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Joseph Fox.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$1,100.00) to Rural Community Transportation?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 17. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,200.00) to Umbrella Inc.?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by William Douglas.
- Mona Marceau spoke, stating that it appears Umbrella has vacated its St. Johnsbury location and inquiring as to Umbrella's current location.
 - Lisa Bowden spoke, indicating that Umbrella's current location is at the former Zuccaro & Willis Law Office on Main Street in St. Johnsbury.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 18. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$280.00) to the Vermont Center for Independent Living?

- Joseph Fox moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 19. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) to the West Barnet Senior Meal Site?

- Kathleen Monroe moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20. To see what arrangements the Town will vote for the collection of its taxes, and its portion of taxes for Caledonia Cooperative School District, and by what lawful official for the ensuing year.

- Lisa Bowden moved that property taxes become due and payable in hand to the town Treasurer during business hours on or before October 21, 2023, with said taxes to be actually received by said Treasurer on or before the due date without regard to postmark; and thereafter said taxes shall be made payable to the Collector of Delinquent Tax with interest at the rate of 1% per month or fraction thereof, for the first three months, and thereafter at the rate of 1.5% per month or fraction thereof, plus the collector's fee of 8% as provided by law. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Mona Marceau asked about the delinquent tax collection policy as regards number of years of arrears before a property is sold at tax sale, noting that several properties are many years delinquent.
 - Collector of Delinquent Tax Lisa Bowden spoke, indicating that the properties with the greatest number of years in arrears have been exempt from tax sale proceedings until recently because of particular circumstances of the owners, including divorce and numerous bankruptcy filings.
 - Selectboard member Benjamin Gates spoke, noting that there are tax sales scheduled.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21. To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise to defray the expenses and liabilities of the Town for the current year.

- Selectboard member Benjamin Gates moved to raise the sum of \$1,828,374.85 for the General Fund budget. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- Mark Bowen spoke, inquiring about this status of the Town Hall project.
 - Benjamin Gates stated that the Town has engaged architectural firm Black River Design, who worked on the feasibility project for the Town, and has agreed to terms with a construction manager, Estes & Gallup Construction. Mr. Gates also indicated that the Selectboard plans to proceed with the renovation in the summer of 2023, with a targeted completion date in winter 2024. Mr. Gates also noted that the Town Hall's former Fire Station addition and annex were demolished as planned in autumn 2023.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

- Kathleen Monroe spoke about Northeast Kingdom Community Broadband (NEKCBB). Ms. Monroe is the former Barnet representative to the NEKCBB Board and current alternate representative. Ms. Monroe noted that new representative Neil Glassman recently was appointed. Ms. Monroe discussed recent and future developments in enhancing access to broadband internet in Barnet.
- Library Trustee Jacquelyn Verley spoke, announcing that the library will hold an open house on March 23, 2023 to celebrate and thank Julie Roos for her years of service to the Library Board of Trustees.
- Selectboard member Dylan Ford spoke on several Town government current events, as summarized below:
 - Thanks to Kathleen Monroe for her service as NEKCBB representative since the organization's inception in 2019.
 - The Planning Commission is working a new Town Plan.
 - The Dam Committee continues its work to find solutions to protect and improve the health of the waters of Harvey's Lake. Recent work has focused on efforts to reclassify the hazard

- status of the dam.
- The Selectboard is working on installing a new plaque at the Soldiers' Monument at Monument Circle in Barnet Village. The Selectboard hopes to have this plaque, in commemoration of the military service of Barnet residents since the Vietnam war, installed in time for the 2023 Memorial Day observance.
 - The Town Hall project continues to move forward. The Selectboard has design concepts in process but not finalized at this time. Copies of the current conceptual designs are available at the Town Clerk's Office, Library, and the Town website.
 - The term of the appointed Town Health Officer expires at the end of March 2023. The Selectboard is seeking a qualified appointee.
 - Thank you to the School District and custodial staff for the use of the building for this meeting.

Hearing no further business, the Moderator announced that the meeting would adjourn. Meeting adjourned 10:57 a.m.

Dennis McLam, Moderator

Dylan Ford, Selectboard Co-Chair

Attest: Benjamin Heisholt, Town Clerk