

MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
TUESDAY, MARCH 5, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. at the Barnet Elementary School gymnasium by Moderator Dennis McLam.

A voter was experiencing a medical emergency at the time the meeting was called to order. The Moderator announced that the meeting would be recessed until the medical emergency was resolved.

The Moderator called the meeting back to order at 10:18 a.m.

Before commencing the warned articles, the Moderator allowed a brief speech by Vermont Caledonia-1 Representative District legislator (and Barnet voter) Robert (Bobby) Farlice-Rubio. Mr. Farlice-Rubio began by presenting Barnet resident Susan Roberts with a Public Service Award for her 42 years as a teacher at Barnet School and nine years on the local school board. Mr. Farlice-Rubio then spoke regarding various recent actions and potential future actions of the legislature and answered several questions from voters.

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.

Town Clerk

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Benjamin Heisholt is expiring.
- Benjamin Heisholt nominated by Dawn Holtz.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Benjamin Heisholt.

Treasurer

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Benjamin Heisholt is expiring.
- Benjamin Heisholt nominated by Roseann Leute.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Benjamin Heisholt.

Selectboard

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

Lister

- Moderator stated that there are two years remaining on three-year term of a vacant Lister position, which expires March 2026.
- Celina Wright nominated by Michael Lamp.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Celina Wright.

Lister

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

Auditor

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Dennis Kauppila is expiring.

- Dennis Kauppila nominated by Janet Heartson.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Dennis Kauppila.

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.

Trustee of Public Funds

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

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that the five-year term of Linda Cochrane is expiring.
- Linda Cochrane nominated by Rebecca Pedersen.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Linda Cochrane.

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

- Mary Faris 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 Alan Boye.
- Historical Society member Alan Boye spoke: The Historical Society will hold an event featuring a topographer of local history on March 24, 2024 at the McIndoe Falls Academy. Also, the Historical Society is seeking volunteers to help catalog antiques in their collection.
- 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 Alan Boye.
- 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?

- Celina Wright moved the article as warned. Seconded by Kathleen Monroe.
- 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?

- Jay Sprout moved the article as warned. Seconded by Linda Warnaar.
- 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?

- Caroline DeMaio moved the article as warned. Seconded by Julia Fuller.
- 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?

- Alan Boye 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?

- Mary Joy Morse moved the article as warned. Seconded by Janet Heartson.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.
- Grace Gershuny spoke, indicating that Kingdom Animal Shelter's report, at the top of page 82 of the Town Report, indicates their request is for \$2,000. It was noted that this appears to be a typographical error, as in body of the report (last paragraph), the amount of \$500 is found, which is the same as the previous year's appropriation.

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 Roseann Drew Leute.
- 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.?

- Caroline DeMaio moved the article as warned. Seconded by Seton Lindsay.
- 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.?

- Lisa Bowden moved the article as warned. Seconded by Janet Heartson.
- 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?

- Caroline DeMaio moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- 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?

- Bradley Geddes moved the article as warned. Seconded by Caroline DeMaio.
- 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.?

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

ARTICLE 18. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Upper Valley Habitat for Humanity in the Northeast Kingdom?

- Dakota Butterfield moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jay Sprout.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 19. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$280.00) to the Vermont Center for Independent Living?

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

ARTICLE 20. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Dollars (\$4,000.00) to the West Barnet Senior Meal Site?

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

ARTICLE 21. Shall the Town of vote to exempt from taxation the property owned by Lakeview Grange #359 located in West Barnet Village, for a period not to exceed 5 years,

pursuant to 32 VSA § 3840?

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

ARTICLE 22. 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 19, 2024, 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 Mark Gilleland.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

The Moderator allowed a brief intermission for comments by Transfer Station & Recycling Center attendant/ Zoning Administrative Officer Shirley Warden. Ms. Warden spoke about a scheduled Household Hazardous Waste collection date in July 2024, other recycling center matters, and zoning permit requirements.

ARTICLE 23. 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 \$1,644,597.89 for the General Fund budget. Seconded by Dennis Kauppila.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.
- Selectboard member Dylan Ford spoke, thanking all the officers and volunteers who work behind the scenes to make the town run smoothly, including prudential committee members, Dam Committee members, listers, McIndoe Falls Academy trustees, and cemetery associations.

ARTICLE 24. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

- Caroline DeMaio spoke, introducing new Karne Choling executive co-director Vegan Aharonian. Mr. Aharonian then spoke briefly about Karne Choling and their programs.
- Collector of Delinquent Tax Lisa Bowden spoke regarding two matters:
 - Ms. Bowden intends to retire from the office of Collector of Delinquent Taxes at the end of her sixteenth year, to which she was just elected. She urged candidates interested in the position next year to talk to her about the job.
 - The Church Street Meetinghouse (formerly Barnert Village Congregational Church) is no longer an active church but is now a public meeting place open for events. She invited inquiries and suggestions for events and programs at the building. Discussion ensued, with Ms. Bowden answering several questions regarding the use of the building.

Hearing no further business, the Moderator announced that the meeting would adjourn. Meeting adjourned 11:26 a.m.

Dennis McLam, Moderator

Dylan Ford, Selectboard Co-Chair

Attest: Benjamin Heisholt, Town Clerk