

**MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
TUESDAY, 4 MARCH 2025**

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

A headcount of attendees was taken; approximately 139 were counted.

The Moderator led those present in the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States.

Before commencing the warned articles, the Moderator allowed a brief speech by Vermont Caledonia-1 Representative District legislator Debra Powers. Ms. Powers spoke regarding various recent actions and potential future actions of the legislature.

ARTICLE 1. To elect a Moderator.

- Moderator stated that the one-year term of Dennis McLam is expiring.
- Dennis McLam nominated by William Biddle.
- 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 originally held by Mark Jefferson is expiring. Benjamin Adams was appointed in October 2024 to finish the term after Mr. Jefferson's resignation.
- Benjamin Adams nominated by Dylan Ford.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Benjamin Adams.

Auditor

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

Lister

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

Collector of Delinquent Tax

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

First Constable

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

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that the five-year term of Laura Goldberg is expiring.
- Hillary Cohen nominated by Jacquelyn Verley.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Hillary Cohen.

At this point in the meeting, the Moderator allowed an intermission for recognition of service of retiring Town Officers. Mark Jefferson was recognized for his time as a Selectboard member. Lisa Bowden was recognized for her sixteen years as Collector of Delinquent Taxes. Shirley Warden was recognized for her more than forty years of service, including as Zoning Administrative Officer, a position from which she will soon retire.

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

- Caroline Demaio moved to accept the report of the Town Auditors as it appears on page twenty-nine of the Town Report. Seconded by Christopher Morse.
- 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?

- Christopher Morse moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Drew Leute.
- 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 Dennis Kauppila.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.
- Mona Marceau spoke, suggesting that if an appropriation requestor does not submit a report for the Town Report, they should provide information on how the funds are expended in some other way.

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?

- Dennis Kauppila moved the article as warned. Seconded by Rebecca Boardman.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

At this point in the meeting, the Moderator allowed a brief intermission to allow Neil Glassman, Barnet's representative to Northeast Kingdom Broadband Communications Union (NEKBB), an opportunity to speak about activities of the NEKBB. Mr. Glassman spoke of efforts to expand access to broadband internet in Barnet and throughout the NEKBB region.

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 Janet Heartson.
- 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?

- Michael Lamp moved the article as warned. Seconded by Janet Heartson.
- 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?

- Jael Luomala moved the article as warned. Seconded by Janet Heartson.
- 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?

- Jeremy Roberts moved the article as warned. Seconded by Rachel Siegel.
- 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.

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

- Jael Luomala moved the article as warned. Seconded.
- 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.?

- Janet Heartson moved the article as warned. Seconded by Rebecca Boardman.
- 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 Jay Abramson.
- 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?

- Celina Wright moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jeremy Roberts.
- 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?

- Jay Abramson moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jael Luomala.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

At this point in the meeting, the Moderator allowed an intermission for Vegan Abaronian, Director of Buddhist meditation center Karma Choling, to speak. Mr. Abaronian spoke of various programs and events at Karma Choling.

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

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

- Lisa Bowden moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jay Abramson.
- 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?

- Jeremy Roberts moved the article as warned. Seconded by Christopher Morse.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20. Shall the Town of vote to exempt from taxation the property owned by the Barnet Historical Society located at Barnet Center for a period not to exceed five (5) years, pursuant to 32 VSA § 3840?

- Janet Heartson moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mark Bowen.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21. 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.

- Jeremy Roberts moved that property taxes become due and payable in hand to the town Treasurer during business hours on or before October 18, 2025, 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.
- Janet Heartson asked if this motion is changed from the motion approved the previous year.
 - The Moderator indicated that the wording of the article was only changed as to the due date.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22. 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 \$1,728,217.91 for the General Fund budget. Seconded by Dylan Ford.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.
- Selectboard member Benjamin Gates spoke. He reported that renovations of the Town Hall are nearly complete and town offices will be moving into the space soon. An open house will follow at a later date. He spoke about recovery efforts from the July 2024 flooding event, discussing its impact on Town roads and finances.

ARTICLE 23. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

- Discussion was had about damages to the Harvey's Lake Beach property caused by July 2024 flooding. Members of the Beach Committee spoke. A fundraiser is planned for 23 March 2025 to help fund repairs. A contractor is hired for major excavation repairs, and the Beach Committee plans to have the beach open for the beginning of the summer season.
- Mona Marceau thanked the Highway Department for repairing roads after the July 2024 flood.
- Mona Marceau also spoke in appreciation of Barnet emergency medical technicians for their training in automated external defibrillators (AEDs).
- Green Up Day Coordinator Allison Vernon spoke about Green Up Day activities planned for Saturday, 3 May 2025.
- Janet Heartson spoke in appreciation of the many Barnet citizens who helped her and her husband when their home was flooded in July 2024.
- Lisa Bowden spoke about the Church Street Meeting House (former Congregational Church), noting its participation in flood recovery efforts and its many community events.
- Lisa Bowden, just retired from the office of Collector of Delinquent Taxes, also spoke in appreciation of her predecessor in the office, Donald Nelson. She said that Mr. Nelson helped her a great deal in her tenure as Collector.

Hearing no further business, the Moderator announced that the meeting would adjourn. Meeting adjourned 11:01 a.m.

Dennis McLam, Moderator

Dylan Ford, Selectboard Co-Chair

Attest: Benjamin Heisholt, Town Clerk