

**MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

**TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
TUESDAY, 3 MARCH 2026**

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 138 were counted.

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

ARTICLE 1. To elect a Moderator.

- Moderator stated that the one-year term of Dennis McLam is expiring.
- Dennis McLam nominated by Mona Marceau.
- William Biddle moved that nominations would cease. Seconded by Mona Marceau and approved by voice vote.
- 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 Dylan Ford is expiring.
- Dylan Ford nominated by Christopher Morse. Seconded by Roseann Leute.
- 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 Celina Wright is expiring.
- Celina Wright nominated by Nancy Bishop.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Celina Wright.

Auditor

- Moderator stated that two years remain of the three-year term originally held by Jeffery Riley, who resigned in February 2026.
- Christopher Morse nominated by Dylan Ford.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Christopher Morse.

Auditor

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

Trustee of Public Funds

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

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that one year remains of the five-year term originally held by Susan Wood, who resigned in January 2026.
- Benjamin St. James nominated by Rebecca Pedersen.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Benjamin St. James.

Library Trustee

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

At this point in the meeting, 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 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 thirty (30) of the Town Report. Seconded by Roseann 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?

- Seconded by Roseann Leute. Mary Joy Morse moved the article as warned.
- 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?

- Leonarda Stewart moved the article as warned. Seconded by David Warden.
- Mona Marceau spoke, asking for an update on the location of the collections of the historical society, in connection with the completion of construction of the renovated Town Hall.
 - David Warden responded: The archives collection will be moved to the Town Hall or the second floor of the library building.
 - Dylan Ford responded: The Selectboard has granted space to the historical society in the lower level vault of the Town Hall. A project for improved dehumidification of this space is in the planning stages; archive materials will be moved there after installation is completed. The second floor of the library building was recently vacated by a former tenant; the Selectboard granted the historical society use of this space as well; the historical society is in the process of renovating this space in advance of moving archive materials to this space as well.
- 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 Mona Marceau.
- 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?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Celina Wright.
- 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?

- Celina Wright moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jael Luomala.

- 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?

- Rachel Siegel moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann 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?

- Michael Campo moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mary Joy Morse.
- 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?

- Caroline DeMaio 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.?

- Mary Joy Morse moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- 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.?

- Celina Wright moved the article as warned. Seconded by Caroline DeMaio.
- 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?

- Michael Campo moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann 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?

- Christopher Morse moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann Leute.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.
- Barnet voter and Rural Community Transportation (RCT) spoke about services provided by RCT, including services performed by volunteer drivers benefitting Barnet residents.

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

- Michael Campo moved the article as warned. Seconded by Jael Luomala.
- 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?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Roseann 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?

- Celina Wright moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- 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.

- Jeremy Roberts moved that property taxes become due and payable in hand to the town Treasurer during business hours on or before October 17, 2026, 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.

- Catherine Baker asked what portion of the tax is paid to the school district.
 - The Moderator indicated that this information is presented on the taxpayer's property tax bill.
- 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 \$1,711,404.70 for the General Fund budget. Seconded by Dylan Ford.
- Celina Wright asked how likely it is that the Town will receive all expected reimbursements for 2024 flood recovery.
 - Benjamin Gates responded: Approximately \$650,000 of anticipated \$3,410,000 in federal and state reimbursements have been received to date. The reimbursement process has been slow, but it seems finally to be moving forward; the Selectboard anticipates receipt of full reimbursement by 2026 year-end.
- Mona Marceau asked if the Town will have recourse with regard to financing costs/interest incurred for 2024 flood recovery financing.
 - Benjamin Gates responded: Financing costs will be reimbursed; this happens at the end of the reimbursement process.
- Benjamin Gates spoke:
 - This year's town report is dedicated to David Shields, who has served as a volunteer firefighter for fifty years. Mr. Gates spoke in appreciation for Mr. Shields's service.
 - A round of applause was given.
 - The Town Hall renovation project is now complete; town offices were moved into the building in March 2025. The Selectboard is pleased with the finished product and believes it to be a good use of an old building.
 - The overall tax appropriation request is approximately \$16,000 lower than in 2025. Although there were a number of inflationary pressures outside its control, the Selectboard tried to compensate by reducing the expenditures budget in areas that will not substantially diminish services to taxpayers.
 - In 2025, a paving and construction project was completed on Roy Mountain Road; the Selectboard plans to perform a project near the western end of West Barnet Road in 2026.
 - The Selectboard appreciates the voters in attendance for participating in local democracy.
- The local Girl Scout troop presented Girl Scout cookies to the Fire & Rescue Department.
- Catherine Baker spoke in appreciation of the Highway Department for their work in recovering from the 2024 flood, and to the Selectboard and the Town Clerk for following through on seeking reimbursement funding for flood costs.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

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

- Shirley Warden spoke: On pages 24-25 of the Town Report is information Household Hazardous Waste collection; there is a collection date on August 22 at the Barnet Transfer Station.
- Neil Glassman, Barnet's representative to Northeast Kingdom Broadband Communications Union (NEKBB), spoke about activities of the NEKBB. Mr. Glassman spoke of efforts to expand access to broadband internet in Barnet and throughout the NEKBB region.
- Barnet voter and Rural Community Transportation (RCT) employee Robert Farlice-Rubio spoke, encouraging Barnet residents to volunteer to provide rides through RCT.
- Caroline DeMaio asked if the Selectboard or any other Town board has discussed the encroachment of emerald ash borer and any proposed any mitigation strategies.
 - Dylan Ford stated that this has not been discussed by the Selectboard.
 - Dennis Kauppila stated that he had encountered employees of Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (VFPR) studying emerald ash borer in Roy Mountain Wildlife area.
 - Barnet voter and VFPR employee Louis Bushey spoke about VFPR's efforts to mitigate emerald ash borer in the Roy Mountain Wildlife area.
- Jennifer Botzjoorns spoke about the Green Up Day, scheduled for May 2, and a card swap for Robert Gibson's 75th birthday.
 - Barnet Green Up Day Coordinator Allison Vernon encouraged Barnet residents to sign up to "Green Up" a portion of Barnet roads.

Hearing no further business, the Moderator announced that the meeting would adjourn. Meeting adjourned 10:59 a.m.

Dennis McLam, Moderator

Dylan Ford, Selectboard Co-Chair

Attest: Benjamin Heisholt, Town Clerk