

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD AGENDA
July 26, 2016

1. Call to order 6:30 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consider approving agenda
4. Interview assessor candidates
5. Discussion with Barre Area Senior Center
6. Presentation by Aldrich Library
7. Consider approving July 12 meeting minutes
8. Announcements
9. Receive guests (for non-agenda items)
10. Consider selecting tenant for 22 Wilson Street
11. Discuss reviewing and taking action on proposed Central Vermont Regional Plan
12. Discuss possible water system merger with Websterville Fire District #3
13. Consider authorizing purchase of power lift stretchers
14. Consider approving closing top half of Cobble Hill Meadows for special occasion
15. Consider approving weekly accounts payable warrants.
16. Miscellaneous: a) fireworks permit for C. Barr, Partridge Road on 8/6/16; b) fireworks permit for M. Lajeunesse, East Cobble Hill Road on 7/30/16; c) other, including licenses and permits
17. 'Round the table'
18. Executive session: (if needed).
19. Adjourn.

BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 26, 2016

The duly warned regular meeting of the Barre Town Selectboard of July 26, 2016 was scheduled and held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Rob LaClair, Rolland Tessier, Paul White, Tom White and W. John "Jack" Mitchell.

Others attending were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Assistant Town Clerk Deborah Lefebvre, and Assistant Town Manger Elaine Wang.

CALL TO ORDER - The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m.

The **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** was recited by those present.

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by Paul White the Selectboard voted to approve the agenda with the following change. Move item #9 to follow item #4.

INTERVIEW ASSESSOR CANDIDATES

Background: An RFP was released to known contracting assessors and was published in several sites. Two proposals were received, after which the board asked to interview both applicants Spencer Potter is scheduled for 6:30 followed by Joe Levesque at 6:50.

The RFP asked that the cost proposal be placed in a separate envelope. Mr. Potter did that, and it has not been opened. The plan was to open the cost proposals after the board discussed and ranked the applicants. Joe Levesque stated his cost proposal in his proposal; there is no separate envelope.

The current contract expires August 31.

The board asked that the BCA be invited to submit questions. Chip Castle submitted one question. Lee Walther submitted 5. You should decide ahead of time what questions

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will be asked of both men. There shouldn't be a problem with also asking each of them questions about details in their proposals.

Spencer Potter: Has been doing Assessment work since 1990 (Vermont Municipal Assessor) for a wide range of municipalities ranging from small towns to larger cities. He proposes 2 full days a week for 50 weeks/year of actual office coverage; prides himself on being accessible even when not in the office via email, cell phone, twitter, facebook and will respond promptly to all.

When asked how he would deal with an upset resident he replied that he would try to base the conversation on the facts and show the resident where the numbers came from. His approach to diffuse the situation is to listen, make sure they have their say and then move on.

With regards to a town wide reappraisal, he has done them, but with a town this size would also probably hire some help. There are many options to consider and he would present them to the town with his recommendations.

How do your number of grievances relate to others? Thinks from talking to others that his might be slightly lower.

Asked what would trigger a reevaluation of a property, he noted that it is typically triggered by a building permit. If you wanted the interior improvements to be included, then you would go the route of requiring a permit when doing that type of work as is the case in most cities. When asked about seeing a construction dumpster at a property if that would trigger any action, he said he would certainly note it.

Joe Levesque: Is the current assessor for the Town of Barre and has been for 18 years. Worked with Jay Hawthorne to learn the ropes and then continued taking course to learn the business. He is now classified as a Project Supervisor so he can value any property in the State of Vermont.

When asked how he deals with the upset resident he tries to get them to listen by showing them how the appraisal is done; walk them through it step by step.

Joe works as the assessor for the Town of Barre and the City of Barre. The Town has a little more work than the City, but it is split fairly evenly. He works here in the mornings and the City in the afternoons. Has evenings available for making visits when it is more convenient for residents.

He has no employees and no plans to take on any other towns.

How do you find out about changes to properties? Pays attention to what's going on when he drives around town. There are quite a few building permits to go evaluate (800+/-) between now and next April.

What about grievances that go to the BCA or above? Some years there are none, or maybe one or two that got to the BCA. Over the years there have been a couple that went to the State of Vermont, notably Rock of Ages. Only ones that won in that were the lawyers.

Jack Mitchell mentioned that both he and Joe have been involved with the Town a long time and there have been some good days and some bad days. He then asked Joe about the bad days. He agreed there have been both good and bad days and regrets saying some of the things he has said to the BCA. He doesn't think it will happen again, there is no reason for it to happen again.

Joe was also asked about the CLA and COD and town wide reappraisals. He reviewed his experience with that and some history with the town and feels that he has done a good job of keeping the CLA in a good range.

After the interviews the Selectboard said they would be shooting for a decision at the August 9th meeting.

GUESTS

Paul Malone was present as Chair of the BCA/BOA. There have been ongoing problems getting decisions made with the Board of Abatement. The issue of what is abatable was addressed before and there was a change to the Town Charter made. The issue now seems to be the need to clarify what the term "tax payer" means in this Town Charter. Does it mean residents of the town or does it include residents of any other town, state etc. He is looking for the Selectboard to clarify this and put the issue to bed once and for all.

The Selectboard will take this up at an upcoming meeting. Carl will go over the research done by the town attorney Mike Monte with him and report back.

DISCUSSION WITH BARRE AREA SENIOR CENTER

Background: When you visited the Senior Center in early June, it was mentioned executive director Cathy Hartshorn could attend a board meeting to talk about the Senior Center.

David James, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Barre Area Senior Center came to talk about what they do. There are currently about 379 members and 153 of those are from Barre Town. The Senior Center receives \$7,500 annually from the Town of Barre and they are very grateful for that assistance. They are making an effort this year to reach out to those who can't get to the center and evaluate what services might be needed. He did note that transportation is an issue for area seniors.

He listed some of the activities the center offers including Seniors in Motion, Yoga, Movies, guided walks, lunch once a week and much more.

When asked how many other communities provide financial support, he was not sure there were any others other than perhaps Barre City. They have been reaching out looking for support, noting a recent meeting with Rock of Ages to discuss engaging them as a sponsor. He also noted when shopping recently that stores might benefit by the addition of benches in various areas where seniors could stop and rest while shopping.

Mr. James thanked the Town for its support, and the board thanked him for his presentation.

ALDRICH LIBRARY

Sarah Costa, Director of the Aldrich Public Library was here to talk about activities going on at the library. It is her desire to try and make a presentation to the board quarterly and be available for questions. In the fall she will be prepared to talk more about finances.

The library in conjunction with the Barre City and Barre Town Elementary schools recently completed a program call Full Steam Ahead @Your Library. STEAM stands for Science, technology, engineering, arts and math which are what is needed for students to succeed today. This was geared toward 4th and 5th graders who might need a little extra help engaging in learning. There were 7 hands on after school programs that focused on the principals of STEAM.

There are free lunches available at the library to anyone 18 or under Monday through Friday at noon. This program is federally funded so there is no cost to the library.

The Porch concerts continue the last Thursday of the month at 6:30 at the York Branch in East Barre.

She also talked about the Authors at the Aldrich series which runs Wednesdays at 6pm.

MINUTES

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by Paul White, the Selectboard voted to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of July 12, 2016 with the following corrections: 1. Page two, fourth bullet under Additional Recycle Center, remove the word "by" after 841.

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2. Page 5 in the motion under *DISPATCH SERVICE CONTRACT*, remove the word "police" after 2016-2017.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Roadwork will take place in Websterville, East Barre, Trow Hill and Graniteville, over the next few weeks. Pavement in those neighborhoods has been milled, paving should occur between August 1st and 12th. The streets to be paved are Websterville Rd from the municipal building to Quarry Hill Road, Graniteville Road from Baptist Street to Church Hill Road, Hebert Drive, the school driveway, High Street, Summer Street, Garden Street, Clyde Street, Norris Street, Teja Street, Church Street, McLaughlin Road and Mill Street.
2. Are you ready for fun times at the end of July? The Barre Heritage Festival and Homecoming Days will be Wednesday July 27 to Saturday July 30. For more information visit barreheritagefestival.org. On Saturday July 30, 8am to 6pm, Millstone Relay will take over the Barre Town Forest. The Millstone Relay is a 7-mile long mountain biking relay race. For more information call GearWorks Productions at 207-221-0203. Finally, on Sunday July 31 at 10am, the Heritage Festival 5K Trail Fun Run or Walk will take place in the Town Forest. For more information on the 5K visit the Central Vermont Runners website at vrunters.org.
3. The Vermont Primary Election is August 9. Early voting ballots for the State of Vermont Primary Election in August are now available at the Town Clerk's Office. You can see samples on the town website by searching for Election Information, or by visiting the Barre Town Municipal Offices at 149 Websterville Rd. To request that your ballot be mailed to you, call the Town Clerk's Office at 479-9391.
4. Barre Town Playground ice cream socials hosted by the Recreation Board will be taking place every Tuesday through mid-August. All ice cream socials are at 6:30pm and FREE. The three remaining are Upper Graniteville on August 2nd, Websterville on August 9th and Trow Hill on August 16th.
5. The property tax and sewer bills have been mailed. The first quarterly payment is due August 15th. You can choose the method that is most convenient for you. You can pay in person at the Clerk's office; enroll in direct debit using the form available on the Town website under Permits and Forms, Town Clerk section; or pay online from the Barre Town website. On the homepage barretown.org, click on "Make a Payment" in the left hand menu.

CONSIDER SELECTING TENANT FOR 22 WILSON STREET

Background: The present day care, pre-school operator is closing the end of July. The Town invited other day care, pre-school operators to submit proposals to rent the building; there are few other such services registered and available in South Barre.

A motion by Mitchell, seconded by Tessier was made to award the building rental at 22 Wilson Street to Susan Uthmann for a term of 5 years. The motion was then revised to award an initial 2 year term with an option for another 3 years and at the rent per her proposal. The revised motion was approved.

Tom White would like the contract to note that if there were major repairs, maintenance, or upgrades required during the term of the lease that there be the option to increase rent more than the rate of inflation.

DISCUSS REVIEWING AND TAKING ACTION ON PROPOSED CENTRAL VERMONT REGIONAL PLAN

Background: The CVRPC adopted a new regional plan on July 12, 2016. By statute member cities and towns have 35 days to reject the plan. The last Selectboard

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meeting before the deadline is August 9. The plan is 223 pages. Byron Atwood (Town representative) has been invited to attend (via voicemail) but has not responded.

You have this opportunity to make comments about the plan if you want.

Most members doubted that they would be able to read and understand the entire plan; or know what changes there are from the previous plan. It was suggested that Carl reach out and try to get a staff person and /or Byron Atwood to come and review the plan with the Selectboard.

DISCUSS POSSIBLE WATER SYSTEM MERGER WITH WEBSTERVILLE FIRE DISTRICT #3

Background: The Selectboard met with WFD officials at the end of May. It was agreed this matter would be researched and discussed in time to schedule a special Town Meeting on General Election Day in November, if the board so chooses after learning more over the summer.

Per Mike Monte's letter, sometime in September the board needs to decide whether to call for a special Town Meeting. To make that decision you need to know how a water system merger would affect our customers and WFD's customers. We've been working on that and will report research done so far. We are working on a budget analysis: What would the Town Water Fund budget look like if the systems merged? Dept service and capital improvements complicate the picture, thus Carl's thought would be that a special assessment district is needed.

Steve Rubalacaba, Chair of WFD Prudential Committee was present to answer questions and Carl went over what we know so far. He reviewed the size and resources of the WFD, including the water sources, pump station, office, hydrants, and treatment plant.

The WFD's water system current debt load is less than the Town water system current debt load, but they have considerable needs. They have a \$1.3-1.5 million project on hold with the state to address these needs. With those improvements their debt load would then be greater than that of the Town's water system. For that reason a Special Assessment District is proposed so that the other town water system customers would not be paying for that debt. It would apply only to customers in the WFD territory and be only the difference between the town water system's debt load and that of the WFD.

- Any merger would require a vote by the entire Town of Barre as well as a vote by WFD residents. If both approve the merger then the legislature would have to approve this because there is a statute which created the WFD.
- Time line: September- meet with WFD to develop plan of merger
 - September 20- Selectboard approve plan of merger and approve warning for special Town meeting
 - October- two public hearings
 - November 8-General election
- If a Special Assessment District is used a vote on that would also be required.
- First projections would be for an increase in the water operating budget of the town by about\$64,800. By charging all customers after the merge the current town rates of \$55 quarterly base and \$6.55/100CF usage rate, the revenues would increase by about \$86,000.

Potential benefits for Town:

An additional supply of water that might be able to reduce the amount of water the town buys. The water supply is plentiful; the plant's capacity would be the limiting factor. To use that extra water, would have to interconnect the two systems, which could be done at the intersection of Gregoire St. and Websterville Rd.

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Potential benefit for WFD:

- Stabilizing rates; Current WFD rates:
- a. water= \$14.00/1,000gallon
 - b. bond=\$27/quarter
 - c. capital reserve=\$58.00/quarter
 - d. meter charge=\$10/quarter

Potential down side for Town:

- 120-125 additional customers would mean more billing work, meter reading, payments to receive, repairs and flushing. This has been taken into account when preparing the draft budget.
- Administration of the special assessment will require additional work.
- There will be another plant to operate.

WFD has been working on a large project to upgrade the pump station, plant and main pipeline. The project would be \$1.3-\$1.5 million. They have a negative interest loan through the State which is subject to the outcome of the merger proceedings. There was some discussion about wanting some sort of assurance that this funding will still be there after the change of Administration at the State come January.

Some questioned whether everything that needs to be done can be done in time for a November vote, but all agreed that was the best time to present it to the voters.

Carl will continue research and fine tuning financial numbers.

CONSIDER AUTHORIZING PURCHASE OF POWER LIFT STRETCHERS

Background: Two new stretchers are needed for the two new ambulances on their way to us in September. The budget plan was to buy two refurbished stretchers using 5 year financing. We budgeted to pay \$5,720 in principal and interest each year or \$28,600 total.

Because of the power load system ordered for the two new ambulances we must buy Stryker stretchers. We could buy all new stretchers from Stryker (\$33,477) for two or buy refurbished from a company offering those products. Chris found JJJ Stretchers in New Jersey. JJJ Stretchers offered quotes for 10 hour (of use) and 20 hour used stretchers.

Authorization to make this purchase is requested now to allow for delivery a couple weeks before the new ambulances arrive. Chris wants the staff to get some hands-on work with the power stretchers before the ambulances and power load systems arrive.

The Town purchasing plan requires competitive bidding for items over \$7,500.

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by Mitchell the Selectboard voted to waive the bidding requirement for the purchase of two refurbished ambulance stretchers and authorize the purchase of said two stretchers from JJJ Stretchers in Elizabeth, NJ per their quote (invoice) #1698 for \$27,500.

CONSIDER APPROVING CLOSING TOP HALF OF COBBLE HILL MEADOWS FOR SPECIAL OCCASION

Background: Cobble Hill Meadows residents have held a "block party" off and on for quite a few years. As in prior years they are asking that the road be closed. Title 23, Section 1010 of VT statutes authorizes the Selectboard to close a road for a special occasion. DPW lends the neighbors some wooden barricades to close the road- from about the middle up to the cul-de-sac.

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On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Tessier the Selectboard voted to authorize closing the top half of Cobble Hill Meadows on Saturday July 30 from 2:30pm to dusk to allow for a neighborhood block party.

WEEKLY ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT

On a motion by Tessier, seconded by Mitchell, the Selectboard voted to approve the Accounts Payable warrant for the weeks of July 19 & 26, 2016.

MISCELLANEOUS

On a motion by Mitchell, seconded by LaClair, the Selectboard voted to approve the following fireworks permits: a) Christina Barr, Partridge Rd on 8/6/16 and b) Michael Lajeunesse, East Cobble Hill Rd on 7/30/16.

ROUND THE TABLE

Mitchell- Asked about any update on the survey project. Carl has none but will follow up.

He also asked if while Graniteville Rd is milled down, any drainage work was being done. Yes there is work being done to get water into the catch basin and keep it off the road.

Lastly he inquired about the EMS contract status. Carl has done work on it but doesn't remember if it was before or after they talked.

Paul White- Was there a reason the department head reports from last week arrived in this week's packets? It was not by design; it was a matter of timing.

LaClair- During the recent candidates' form that was held on the 14th there was a lot of discussion about Act 46 and what it could mean for Barre area schools. There is concern that Barre area schools may not see a savings that some others would and that may be true, because we already pay less per pupil than many other schools. Would encourage people to ask questions and be informed about this important issue.

Tessier- Now that the new Fire Dept. pickup has been put into use will the Hummer be sold? It has been stripped and is out of service they are just looking into which way to go about selling it.

He also noted that there have been many good comments about the ice cream socials that are taking place and that they are very well attended.

Wang- Is there still any interest in live streaming the meetings over the internet. This would require some tech support to make it happen at the rate of \$116/hour and she doesn't want to look into it further if it is not a priority.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None

ADJOURN

On a motion by LaClair, seconded by Paul White, the Selectboard voted to adjourn at 9:11p.m.

Deborah Lefebvre -Assistant Town Clerk

Selectboard Chair

Barre Town Selectboard