

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting
Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2020 - 2021
January 28, 2020
AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:00 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Self introductions
4. Elect Chair and Vice-Chair
5. Information about the budget process
6. Begin review of budget appendices.
7. Public comment: receive guests, if any 7:50 p.m.
8. Adjourn 7:55 p.m.

Minutes for January 28, 2020

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2020-2021 fiscal year budget was held January 28, 2020 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: W. John “Jack” Mitchell, Tom White, Bob Nelson, Paul White, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, Cedric Sanborn, Debra Pierce, Mike Gilbar, and Alan Garceau.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang, and Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty.

CALL TO ORDER

Selectboard Chair Tom White called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Cedric Sanborn, the agenda was approved as presented.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Self-introductions were made and each of the members stated his/her goals, priorities, and objectives for this budget. A contact sheet was distributed. Members were asked to verify their telephone numbers, email address, and to designate those items not to be published on the website. Committee members are encouraged to ask questions and participate, especially if they have an area of special interest. Snacks and beverages will be provided at the meetings.

ELECT A CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

In accordance with the State Open Meeting Law all Committees, like this one, where motions/considerations are made, meeting minutes will be taken. Barre Town does take minutes and they will need to be approved. Future agendas will contain an item for minute approval. Minutes should be available in a draft form no later than 5 days after the meeting and are posted on the Town website (www.barretown.org) under Boards/Budget Committee.

To keep the meetings moving along a Chair and Vice-Chair will be appointed for this Committee.

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Cedric Sanborn, a nomination for Norma Malone was made for Chair. With no other candidates put forth, nominations ceased, and the Committee voted to appoint Norma Malone as Chair.

On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Alan Garceau, a nomination was made for Justin Bolduc as Vice-Chair. With no other candidates put forth, nominations ceased, and the Committee voted to appoint Justin Bolduc as Vice-Chair.

The meeting was turned over to Chair Malone.

BUDGET COMMITTEE OF 10

The Budget Committee consists of the five Selectboard members and five citizens; two appointed by the Selectboard; one appointed by the Town Clerk-Treasurer; this group of three then appoints the final two members. The budgets (General Fund and Highway Fund) approved by this Committee will be the ones presented to the voters. In the event the budgets would fail the Committee would reconvene to make changes for the next vote.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 28, 2020 continued:

OPEN MEETING LAW

The Manager informed the Committee these proceedings are subject to the open meeting law. This means in order to take official action there must be a quorum of 6. While it is okay to email the Manager with questions, he strongly discourages conversations between members via email. If 6 or more get involved in a conversation, even through links, it is a legal meeting and must be warned. Under the open meeting law all proceedings are to have an agenda. He will prepare one which will include some standard items such as approving/amending the agenda, approval of meeting minutes, allowing time for questions and answers. However, it will be flexible to accommodate the unforeseen discussions. Reminder: consensus is not an official action....motions are

Malone also asked the Manager to provide members of this Committee with the "Conflict of Interest Policy."

BUDGET PRACTICES

Barre Town's budget practice is to not inflate line items by percentages. Department Heads are instructed to be precise and not to overstate. Rounding is done to the closest 5 or 10 dollars. Wages, utilities, debt service, employee benefits, and insurances are budgeted by the Manager.

The Committee discussed whether Department Heads should be required to attend the meeting(s) while their budget is being discussed. Department Heads include: Town Clerk's Office – Donna Kelty; Zoning & Planning – Chris Violette; Police Department – William Dodge; Fire Department – Chris Violette; Ambulance Service – Chris Lamonda; Emergency Management – Jack Mitchell; Cemetery & Recreation – Dwight Coffrin; Public Works (Equipment, Sewer, Water and most of the Highway) – Richard Tetreault; and Engineering (Municipal Building, Highway, Sewer, and Water) – to be announced. The consensus is to have Department Heads attend the meeting when their department budget is being reviewed. Department Heads will receive a copy of the tentative meeting schedule so they are aware when their department budget(s) is/are being reviewed.

Other groups sometimes request to make a presentation to the Budget Committee. Last year this Committee requested reports and/or appearance by entities included in the Budget. Those being requested this year include the Aldrich Library, Barre Area Development, Central Vermont Economic Development Corp. and Barre Partnership. The consensus was to limit presentation time before this Committee. (See meeting dates below.)

During the budget review and discussion process each member should make a note of changes they would like to see and/or items which require a more in-depth discussion. These items will be placed on the "white board" for discussion at a future date. Once all fund budgets have been reviewed, individual items remaining on the white board will be acted upon by this Committee. Fund budgets will be approved separately and by motion. Manager Rogers highlighted the importance of the white boards in the meeting room stating they are a good tool to keep the review on track and to better facilitate the discussion of topics important to each member.

The Manager again noted that should you be unable to attend a meeting or will be late, contact him as soon as possible. He will also be available if you want a one-on-one session to catch up on the information you missed. The Budget Committee meetings are audio taped and this will be another resource available to you. All meeting minutes are posted on the website (www.barretown.org). From the homepage, look under the Boards/Commission button, and click on Budget Committee.

MEETING TIME & PROCESS

This Committee will meet Tuesday evenings, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m., in the Emergency Operation Center at the Municipal Building in Lower Websterville. The Manager will prepare a tentative calendar outlining the date a fund is to be discussed. Sometimes the Budget Committee will need to hold an extra meeting or there will be a double session should they fall behind in their schedule or if there is a topic which needs in depth discussion. During these double meetings there will be a recess (8:00 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.) to allow the Selectboard to hold a short meeting to conduct necessary weekly business (approving warrants, minutes, etc.). See the Designated Meeting Dates section for itemized dates.

Budget Committee members stated their preference on how to receive their weekly packet of material via email and/or by paper.

BUDGET TOUR

There will not be a Budget Tour this year. However, for the two new members, a tour would be provided upon request.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 28, 2020 continued:
DESIGNATED MEETING DATES**

Those “in the budget” not for profits (GMT, Barre Area Development, Barre Partnership, etc.) the Committee will hear from are tentatively scheduled for March 10, 2020. There was a brief discussion noting these “in the budget agencies” do not have to be a ballot item as they are services that a municipality may provide (transportation, economic development, etc.). This Committee many years ago decided these agencies would be a budgeted line item.

Double meetings will be held on February 18, 2020 and March 17, 2020. Paul White noted he will not be attending the February 25th meeting. Bob Nelson will be out the week of March 17th.

The Manager will provide the Board with a proposed schedule as to what funds will be reviewed on what dates. This may help to keep things on track. The goal is to wrap up the budget work by March 24th with an absolute completion date of March 30th. The budget warning must be signed no later than March 31, 2020.

BUDGET BOOK CONTENTS

The Budget Notebooks were distributed. Each fund type (tabbed section) within the book is setup in the same manner. Keep in mind that there are no fund budgets currently in your book. Each fund budget section/tab will contain the following: first page is a summary of revenues and expenses for the current fiscal year and the proposed FY 2020-2021. The second page will detail “What’s In, What’s Not & Significant Changes” for the fund. The third page reflects the proposed revenue. The remaining pages (white) are the proposed expenditures. For your information the current fiscal year is 2019-2020 or July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. The proposed budget this committee will review is fiscal year 2020-2021, (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021).

In the very front of the Budget Book (gray paper) is a flow chart detailing the lengthy budget process (beginning to end). Also included, on gray paper, is the list of General Ledger Chart of Account Object Codes. More instruction/information will be given on the Chart Accounts once there is a budget to review. Contact information for each member was provided with the caveat of remember what constitutes a meeting under the Open Meeting Law.

The proposed FY 20-21 expense budgets were prepared by the various Department Heads and reviewed by the Town Manager. The budget being considered by this Committee is the Manager’s revised budget. The Budget Committee will make the final budget decision(s) and adopt all fund budgets except the General/Highway which will be presented to the voters on Town Meeting Day in May 2020.

APPENDIX (Last tab in notebook)

The last section of the Budget Book (Appendix tab) contains the following:

- 5-Year Equipment Purchase Plan
- 5-Year Paved Road Plan
- 5-Year Gravel Road Plan
- 5-Year Building Plan
- Reappraisal Fund
- Debt Service Chart
- Tax Stabilization Contracts
- Housing Loans
- Recreation Facility Maintenance Plan
- Employees’ Pay Department Splits

To create a 5-Year Plan, the Selectboard (who ultimately approve the plans) rely on staff expertise, and recognize that a great deal of time, effort, and research go into their preparation. Information within the plans is used by the Management to assist with the preparation of the proposed budget. Please be aware these plans impact many fund budgets. When preparing the Plan effort is made to keep the numbers somewhat consistent year-to-year. The other appendices are used as aides to assist the Manager with budgeting as well.

The Committee began their review with the 5-Year Equipment Purchase Plan focusing on replacement schedules, inventory list, Computer Replacement component, and financing of larger/more costly items.

While reviewing the 5-Year Paved Road Plan Manager Rogers noted pertinent pages at the end of the plan, priority road score process, and explained how the grouping of roadwork can make a contract more appealing to bidders.

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 28, 2020 continued:

NEXT MEETING

The Budget Committee review will continue. The next meeting will be on Tuesday, February 4, 2020, 6:00 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Tom White, the Budget Committee meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Town Clerk-Treasurer – Donna J. Kelty

Barre Town Budget Committee

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Committee Chair

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