

**BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MEETING AGENDA**  
**January 26, 2021**

1. Call to order 8:00 p.m.
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consider approving agenda.
4. Consider approving January 19, 2021 meeting minutes.
5. Announcements
6. Receive guests (by phone) for non-agenda items.
7. Consider approving preferred site status for Novus Energy Developments proposed solar project on Allen Street and on Bridge Street.
8. Consider awarding contracts: a) plow blades and shoes; and b) tire chains.
9. Consider approving Warning for a Special Town Meeting on March 2, 2021.
10. Consider approving Town Clerk job descriptions.
11. COVID-19 Report, if needed
12. Consider approving weekly Accounts Payable Warrants for January 26, 2021.
13. Miscellaneous: including licenses or permits if any.
14. 'Round the table.
15. Executive session: if needed.
16. Adjourn.

**BARRE TOWN SELECTBOARD MINUTES**  
**January 26, 2021**

The duly warned meeting of January 26, 2021 was held at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Selectboard Room, in Lower Websterville at 8:00 p.m.

The following member attended in person: W. John "Jack" Mitchell. These members attended remotely: Paul White, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, and Bob Nelson.

Attendance in person for the regular meeting: Town Manager Carl Rogers and Assistant Manager Elaine Wang. Attendance remotely for the regular meeting: Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Zoning & Planning Administrator Christopher Violette, Alex Bravakis (NOVUS), Val Vallerand, and Regan Howard.

**CALL TO ORDER** – The meeting was called to order at 8:07 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** - Those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVE THE AGENDA**

*On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the meeting agenda as presented.*

**MINUTES**

*On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the Selectboard meeting minutes of January 19, 2021 with minor spelling and grammatical corrections as presented to the Clerk.*

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- ✓ Barre Town's elected Town Clerk is retiring at the end of her current term in May 2021. Consider running for Town Clerk! More information about the position is in the November Barre Town Newsletter, or you may call the current Town Clerk, Donna Kelty, at 802-479-9391.
- ✓ Barre Town's Department of Public Works collects Christmas trees after the holidays to be chipped into mulch at the Town's Lawn Waste Site. More information on how to use this free service is at [www.barretown.org](http://www.barretown.org). Public Works is scheduled to pick up trees from roadsides south of Route 302 January 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>. If you live north of Route 302, call DPW at 802-476-3522 and they may swing by, winter road maintenance permitting, to pick up your tree.
- ✓ Winter sand is available for Barre Town residential use outside of the Public Works fence at 129 Websterville Road. The best time to get a bucket or two is before you need it. Please follow instructions posted at the sand pile.
- ✓ The Barre Town Selectboard is seeking applicants to serve on the Recreation Board to fill a vacancy for a term to expire May 31, 2021. This very active Board oversees the Town's recreational

Selectboard Minutes of January 26, 2021 Continued:

facilities, approves facility uses, and designs and delivers its own programs. For more information or to apply, contact the Town Manager's Office. Contact information is at [www.barretown.org](http://www.barretown.org).

- ✓ Logging of the Barre Town Forest is underway. For everyone's safety, some trails may be closed this winter. Please pay attention to trail closed signs and listen for logging equipment and chainsaws.
- ✓ Chair Paul White informed the viewing audience the Town is continuing to work through the various technologies in an effort to solve the ongoing audio and video issues associated with these ongoing meetings. Our goal is to keep everyone safe and ensure our Town government continues to function during this COVID pandemic. We thank you for your patience and understanding.
- ✓ Chair White noted that following last weeks Executive Session the following actions were taken:
  - A. The Town Manager was authorized to sign a Purchase and Sales Agreement (prepared by the Town Attorney) for a piece of property located off Sterling Hill Road.
  - B. The Selectboard approved a temporary COVID-19 Leave Policy as discussed and authorized the Selectboard Chair to sign.

#### **GUESTS - None**

#### **ALLEN AND BRIDGE STREETS PROPOSED SOLAR PROJECTS**

Background: The landowner of both sites is Merry Meadows LLC (owned by the Paquet family). They are working with solar farm developer Novus Energy Development owned by Alex Bravakis. Novus has filed their 45-day notice with the State and the Town received a copy in December 2020. Novus is close to starting the State permit decision process and is seeking a "preferred siting status" for both locations.

This past Wednesday, the Barre Town Planning Commission voted to give the Bridge Street site preferred site status with conditions (screening items and consultation with an abutting property owner regarding their well). The Allen Street proposal was continued to their next meeting. They want to visit the site once and again and have further discussion on screening.

Zoning Administrator Violette, Alex Bravakis, Merry Meadows representatives Val Vallerand and Regan Howard remotely attended the meeting to answer any questions.

Selectboard discussion focused on the Bridge Street well concerns, the advantages to the developer when receiving "preferred site" designation, decommissioning the project, and visibility of the two projects.

*On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Justin Bolduc, the Selectboard voted unanimously to grant "preferred siting" status to the Bridge Street solar project on the property of Merry Meadows LLC, with the condition of the added language for project screening and to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign the letter.*

#### **EQUIPMENT CONTRACT – PLOW BLADES, SHOES, CHAINS**

Background: Annually, the Town purchases blades, shoes, and tire chains. The Town budgeted \$8,500 for these items in the Equipment Fund. Bidding specifications were mailed to eight companies. Bid results were provided to the Board for review prior to the meeting.

- A) Blades & Shoes: *On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the Winter 2021 snowplow blade and shoe contract to Jordan Equipment Company based on their unit price bids.*

There was brief discussion as to why Tenco the other bidder did not meet bid specs.

- B) Tire Chains: *On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to award the Winter 2021 tire chain contract to McLeod's based on their unit pricing.*

#### **SPECIAL TOWN MEETING FOR MARCH 2021**

Background: The Selectboard is looking to hold a special election for the purpose of obtaining voter authorization for the borrowing of money which might give the Town an advantage in receiving one of the few State grants and loans. Having voter authorization checks another item off the list and gets the Town another step closer to going to construction.

The Warning is based on our usual warning language. The Town Attorney provided the Article language. The dollar amount came from our Engineering firm and is based on the high estimate. If the Town receives a State grant the Town would owe \$112,500. Of the amount due, the Town could borrow or use the funds from a possible upcoming sale of land in the Wilson Industrial Park. The deadline for approving the warning is January 26, 2021.

Selectboard Minutes of January 26, 2021 Continued:

The Manager noted there are changes to the Warning which were provided earlier this evening to Board. The biggest change pertains to the language of how bonding would be repaid.

*On a motion by Norma Malone, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve calling for a Special Town Meeting on March 2, 2021 and to sign Version C as presented.*

### **TOWN CLERK JOB DESCRIPTION**

Background: Tonight discussion will resume regarding the elected Town Clerk job description. Comments from the last meeting were incorporated. The Town did learn that the Town Clerk's FLSA status is Exempt, while the Treasurer is Not Exempt.

*On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the elected Town Clerk Job Description as presented (with the minor spacing change).*

Jack Mitchell noted this is a job well done – the Selectboard finalizing all the job descriptions for the 3 new positions (Finance Director, elected Town Clerk, and appointed Town Treasurer). This was a major undertaking marking significant change in the Town. Thank you to the staff as well.

The Selectboard asked that the job descriptions for the appointed Treasurer and elected Town Clerk be posted on the website. Normally job descriptions are not posted unless there is a vacancy. In this case there are two and individuals have been inquiring about the duties. Staff will work on getting these items online.

### **COVID-19 REPORT**

Manager Rogers reported as follows:

- Staffing – zero reports of COVID. One part-timer is under quarantine.
- Vaccine – All but one (1) Police Department staff have received their first vaccination. The majority of EMS have completed their second vaccination.
- EMS will be assisting at vaccinations at the Barre Auditorium. They can be called on if necessary to go to other locations (voluntary) and are discussing possibly making home visits to administer the vaccine.
- There have been zero reports of public issues.
- Department supplies are good.
- Our door bell has been out of service and had to be moved back to the front of the building. There are wi-fi issues. Ms. Wang noted the other option may be to hardwire the bell which would cost around \$3,000. More information may be forthcoming.

### **ACCOUNTS PAYABLE WARRANT**

*On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Jack Mitchell, the Selectboard voted unanimously to approve the accounts payable warrants dated January 26, 2021.*

There was a brief discussion regarding an ambulance insurance company refund (result of their company audit) which the Manager will look into and the recent electric bills from Green Mountain Power (our solar farm during the winter months does not provide enough electricity to cover our usage).

### **MISCELLANEOUS - None**

#### **'ROUND TABLE**

Bob Nelson received an email from a resident on Meadow Lane stating they are having issues with packages being delivered. Too many Meadow names with varying extensions are causing the problem. Mr. Nelson reached out to the Zoning Administrator (also E-911) who stated there are quite a few roads that have Meadow in their name. More research will be done.

Jack Mitchell stated he will not be attending the Board of Abatement meeting tomorrow night. He also asked about the discussion on Ambulance billing. Given the content it might be nice to shorten the Budget meeting or keep the agenda super light.

Justin Bolduc noted that given the tech setup between Budget Meeting and Selectboard meetings, the Assistant Town Manager Elaine Wang could use a few additional minutes for IT prep time. Rogers stated he will allow some additional time – perhaps start the meeting at 8:05 p.m. instead of 8:00 p.m.

Paul White:

- He noted that during the two meetings this evening every half minute or so the audio goes out for a brief second or two. This only happens with those speaking in the Selectboard meeting room. Elaine Wang will check into this.
- Rep. LaClair is working on the bill for the Charter changes. It should be ready soon.

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- He heard the Census reporting may be significantly delayed and this could impact our reapportionment.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - None**

**ADJOURN**

*On a motion by Jack Mitchell, seconded by Norma Malone, the Selectboard voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:24 p.m.*

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Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

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Selectboard Chair

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Barre Town Selectboard