

# **Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting**

## **Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016**

Minutes for January 27, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2015-2016 fiscal year budget was held January 27, 2015 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:36 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Jeff Blow (by telephone), Rob LaClair, Tom White, Rolland Tessier, JP Isabelle, Chris Day, Paul Malone, and Scott Hutchins. Those absent included: W. John "Jack Mitchell" and Jaime Fewer.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Assistant Town Manager Andrew Dorsett, and Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Town Manager Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

### **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.

### **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 Members were asked to verify their telephone numbers, email address, and to designate those items not to be published on the website.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. Be sure to let us know what you like.

### **CITIZEN BUDGET TOUR**

The citizen budget tour has been scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 2015, 8:00 a.m. through 1:00 p.m. Coffee will be provided at 7:30 a.m. The tour route will include visiting the various buildings throughout the town. Dress warm and come early to enjoy the "food." The public is welcome. This year Management is asking each Board and Committee member to attend and invite a guest.

### **MEETING TIME & PROCESS**

This Committee will meet Tuesday evenings, 6:30 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 particular fund is to be discussed. Sometimes the Budget Committee will need hold an extra meeting or there will be a double meeting should they fall behind in their schedule or if there is a topic which needs more 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.).

The consensus of those present is to tentatively schedule double meetings for March 10<sup>th</sup> and/or March 17<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Hutchins stated he will be on vacation February 20<sup>th</sup> - March 3<sup>rd</sup>. He may be able to attend the March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting if there are no flight delays.

### **5-YEAR PLANS**

Speaking as Selectboard Chair, Jeff Blow informed the committee that the Town has several 5-Year Plans (roads, paved and gravel, equipment, and building). To create a 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

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 27, 2015 continued:**

is used by the Management to assist with the preparation of the proposed budget. Please be aware these plans impact many fund budgets.

Mr. Blow noted that the Budget Committee of 10 (which just happens to include the 5 Selectboard members) is a committee of residents. The budget it adopts is the one presented to voters. Last year there was much confusion and big delays when that year's committee decided to amend the some of the Plans. He has learned from personal experience what a big impact changes to current plans can have on future budgets - especially with roads. Therefore, he would like to encourage this year's Budget Committee members to take great weight in the 5-Year Plans and to avoid the temptation to adjust.

### **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](http://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 Paul Malone, seconded by Tom White, a nomination for Rolland Tessier was made for Chair. With no other candidates put forth nominations ceased and the Committee voted unanimously appointed Rolland Tessier as Chair. Mitchell and Fewer were not present for the vote.*

*On a motion by Paul Malone, seconded by Rob LaClair, a nomination was made for Tom White as Vice-Chair. With no other candidates put forth nominations ceased and the Committee voted unanimously to appoint Tom White as Vice-Chair. Mitchell and Fewer were not present for the vote.*

### **BUDGET PROCESS**

The Manager distributed a budget flow chart detailing the lengthy process (beginning to end).

The proposed FY 15-16 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 the proposed budgets by fund. The final General Fund (including Highway) Budget will be presented to the voters on Town Meeting Day, May 12, 2015.

### **BUDGET PRACTICES**

Barre Town's budget practice is to not inflate line items by percentages. They 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 group discussed will need to decide whether or not 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 - Mike Stevens; Fire Department - Chris Violette; Ambulance Service - Dave Jennings; Emergency Management - Jack Mitchell; Cemetery & Recreation - Tim Brick; Public Works (Equipment, Sewer, Water and most of the Highway) - Richard Tetreault; and Engineering (Municipal Building, Highway, Sewer, and Water) - Harry Hinrichsen. Should the Committee desire to have a department head present they will attend the meeting when their

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 27, 2015 continued:**

department budget is being reviewed. Department Heads will receive a copy of the tentative meeting schedule so they are aware of when their department budget(s) are being reviewed.

During the budget review and discussion process each member should make notations of changes they would like to see and/or items which require a more in depth discussion. Once all fund budgets have reviewed a list of those items which have notations will be given to the Manager to prepare a final discussion list. The Budget Committee, by fund type, will then review, discuss, and determine from those items on the list what action, if any, is necessary (leave it in, add to, take it out, amend, etc.).

Should you be unable to attend a meeting or will be late, contact the Town Manager 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 will be another resource available to you. All meeting minutes are posted on the website ([www.barretown.org](http://www.barretown.org)). From the homepage, look under the Boards/Commission button, and click on Budget Committee.

### **BUDGET BOOK CONTENTS**

The budget notebooks were distributed. Each fund type (tabbed section) in the budget book is setup in the same manner. The first page is a summary of revenues and expenses for the current fiscal year and the proposed FY 2015-2016. The second page (green) will detail "What's In, What's Not & Significant Changes" for the fund. The third page (yellow) reflects the proposed revenue. The remaining pages (white) are the proposed expenditures. On the revenue and expense pages note the headings of the seven columns. Column 6 (Manager's proposed budget) contains the information which is being reviewed. For your information the current fiscal year is 2014-2015 or July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. The proposed budget this committee will review is fiscal year 2015-2016, (July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016).

### **CHART OF ACCOUNTS**

The general ledger chart of account numbers for the Town is represented in a twelve digit numeric format, "XXX-XXX-XXX-000." The first set of three numbers (XXX-xxx-xxx-000), represent the fund type. The second set of three numbers (xxx-XXX-xxx-000), represent the department and the last three numbers (xxx-xxx-XXX-000), represent the line item/object. The Chart of Accounts is located in the front of the budget book. These numbers are consistent throughout the various funds and departments.

#### Fund Types are:

|                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 011 = General       | 400 = Equipment     |
| 012 = Highway       | 500 = Sewer         |
| 050 = Building Fund | 600 = Water         |
| 200 = Cemetery      | 700 = Ambulance/EMS |

Departments refer to departments within the Town, such as Police, Fire, Town Manager's Office, Assessor's Office, Town Clerk's Office, etc.

Line item/objects are types of revenues (property taxes, dog licenses, water receipts) or expenses (wages, supplies, insurance, purchases, etc.).

### **APPENDIX REVIEW**

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

- 5-Year Equipment Fund Plan
- 5-Year Paved Road Plan
- 5-Year Gravel Road Plan
- 5-Year Building Plan
- Debt Service Chart

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 27, 2015 continued:**

- Tax Stabilization Contracts
- Housing Loans.

The 5-Year Plans were approved by the Selectboard earlier this fiscal year to assist with the preparation of the FY 2015-2016 proposed budget. The other appendices are used as aides to assist the Manager with budgeting as well.

The Committee reviewed the Debt Service Chart, Tax Stabilization Contracts, Housing Loans, and new this year the Reappraisal Fund appendix. The remaining plans will be presented to this committee when discussing the appropriate fund budget.

**REVENUE SOURCE TABLE**

| <b>Fund</b>         | <b>Revenue Source</b>                     |
|---------------------|---|
| General and Highway | Property taxes                            |
| Sewer               | User fee                                  |
| Water               | 550+/- Barre Town customers - fee for use |
| Cemetery            | Property taxes and fee for service        |
| Ambulance           | Fee for service and town subsidy          |
| Equipment           | Rent/charges from all town funds          |
| Building            | Transfer from all other departments       |

**BUILDING FUND REVIEW**

Each Fund which owns building(s) contributes money to the Building Fund to prepare for the inevitable construction/maintenance/repair work. Capital improvement projects include larger items such as roofs, overhead doors, heating systems, etc. The Manager noted that last fiscal year began the phased-in increases to the Building Fund. These are the first such increases since the fund's inception (12 years ago). The goal is to reach \$58,000 per year.

The proposed 15-16 budget will see a 7.84% increase which partly due to the phased-in increase and finishing the second half of the DPW garage roof project. As noted above revenues for the Building Fund come from transfers from all other departments.

For the benefit of the new members they were taken through the line item expenses. Format items such as description notes were cited. Expense discussion included lighting replacement (using Efficiency Vermont grants) and the Town's Efficiency Vermont energy audit done several years ago.

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

Budgets for Sewer Capital Improvement, Water Fund, and Cemetery Fund are in the budget notebooks. Review them for next week. Reminder: If you have questions on anything discussed during this meeting or on what you review that cannot wait until the next meeting be sure to contact the Town Manager.

**NEXT MEETING**

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

Aldrich Public Library will be making their annual request for funding during the next meeting. A power point presentation will be made so the beginning of the meeting will take place in the Selectboard meeting room.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 27, 2015 continued:

RECESS

The meeting recessed at 8:03 p.m.

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*Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer*

***Barre Town Budget Committee***

x \_\_\_\_\_  
*Committee Chair*

x \_\_\_\_\_

x \_\_\_\_\_