

# Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting

## Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016

Minutes for March 10, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2015-2016 fiscal year budget was held March 10, 2015 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, and Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Chair Rolland Tessier, Jeff Blow, Rob LaClair Tom White W, John "Jack" Mitchell (arrived at 6:42 p.m.), Chris Day, Jaimes Fewer (arrived at 6:34 p.m.), Paul Malone, Scott Hutchins, and JP Isabelle.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Assistant Town Manager Andrew Dorsett, and Times Argus Reporter Dave Delcore (arrived at 7:15 p.m.).

### CALL TO ORDER

Tessier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### MINUTES

*On a motion by White, seconded by Day, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of March 3, 2015. Mitchell and Fewer were not present for the vote.*

### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Rogers distributed information regarding the price of diesel and gasoline. There was discussion on locking in a price versus pre-buy; concern over the "fuel additives" (doing it ourselves versus buying premixed); and contacting other Towns to see what they do.

An article and a fact sheet on road salt effectiveness were provided for the members. The sheet detailed a comparison of calcium chloride versus rock salt when applied at various temperatures. If the salt has calcium chloride in it then the salt will perform a little better.

Points of discussion included: the Town's practice of applying approximately 500 lbs. of salt per travel mile; salt use at intersections; parking lot salting practices; blending with sand produces other maintenance headaches in the spring (road clean-up and drains clogging); and whether or not the Selectboard should set standards for road salt usage.

*On a motion by Paul Malone, seconded by JP Isabelle, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to support the Town Manager's proposed salt budget of 2400 tons.*

During the motion discussion it was noted that should the Town need more than the 2400 tons during the year it will be ordered.

### GENERAL FUND

The Manager began this fund by noting there is a 2% increase (\$66,545) in spending over the current fiscal year. However, the current year budget was not balanced as some of the reserve was used to lower the tax rate. In order to make up that reserve a 1.84¢ tax rate increase would be needed.

Revenues: The majority of revenue received is through property tax. Increases were noted for the collection of current year/prior years delinquencies, and payment in lieu of taxes (such as Barre Housing, and Washington County Mental Health), rent for 22 Wilson Street (old So. Barre Fire District building behind Hannaford's Market) and use of recreation field lights were noted. Some revenues are falling such as recording of legal documents (influenced by the economy).

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 10, 2015 continued:**

Expenses for Departments 411 - 412: A quick overview of some significant changes for the Municipal Office (Selectboard, Auditing, Town Manager, Elections, Town Clerk, Data Processing, Planning/Zoning, Assessor, and Municipal Building) budgets include:

- An increase to the outside auditing contract and outside bookkeeping, accounting services which replaces an employee bookkeeper.
- An increase of \$6,946 for a part-time accounts payable clerk (10 hours per week).
- A decrease in Election wages (\$2,295) as there is no Primary or General Elections and \$1,550 in supplies (no ballot machine programming).
- A decrease of \$2,645 in the amount of heating oil used in the municipal building and due to a sharp decrease in the price per gallon.
- An increase of \$1,260 for municipal building repairs (includes \$960 for adding electrical outlets and computer network ports).
- An increase of \$2,500 to install an automatic transfer switch on the municipal building's emergency power system.

### **RECESS/RECONVENE**

*The meeting recessed at 7:57 p.m. for a brief Selectboard meeting and reconvened at 8:30 p.m.*

Other points of conversation on the General Fund Expenses were the new phone system (an increase in the phone charge for 3 years for purchase of phones); costs for posting the Town code on the website; Assessor Office purchase of software and reference books; broadcasting fees for the weekly Selectboard meetings; and a 50% grant match for ergonomic furniture in the Managers office.

Significant changes in Expenses for Departments 441 - 498 (just a few are Solid Waste, Health Officer, Animal Control, Culture, Recreation, Development Transportation, Benefits) were reviewed. Highlights are:

- Increase in solid waste contracted services for bulk trash roll-off containers;
- Wilson Street septic system work expenses;
- Increased recreation fence repairs funds;
- Insurance decreases;
- An increase in the country tax;
- Increase for the Trow Hill playground equipment.

The Board consensus is to have the Recreation Board provide this committee with a copy of the power point presentation made to the Selectboard and to come and speak with committee for about 15 minutes at the next meeting.

### **HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

Next week the Committee will continue the review of the General Fund Budget (Police, Fire, and Emergency Management). If you have questions prior to the meeting feel free to call (479-9331) or email ([crogers@barretown.org](mailto:crogers@barretown.org)) the Town Manager. Be sure to get your discussion items to the Town Manager as soon as possible.

Reminder: 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)).

### **NEXT MEETING**

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 10, 2015 continued:**

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville. This will be a double meeting.

**RECESS**

*On a motion by White, seconded by Malone, the Budget Committee recessed the meeting at 9:38 p.m.*

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*Deborah Lefebvre, Assistant Town Clerk*

***Barre Town Budget Committee***

X \_\_\_\_\_  
*Committee Chair*

x \_\_\_\_\_

x \_\_\_\_\_