

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting

Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 - 2016

Minutes for March 17, 2015

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2015-2016 fiscal year budget was held March 17, 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 (arrived at 6:59 p.m.), Tom White, Chris Day, Jaimes Fewer, Paul Malone, Scott Hutchins, and JP Isabelle. Absent members include: W. John "Jack" Mitchell.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Assistant Town Manager Andrew Dorsett, Tracy Wright, Doug Farnham, Dave Rouleau, Shaun Corbitt, and Times Argus Reporter Dave Delcore.

CALL TO ORDER

Tessier called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

MINUTES

On a motion by Malone, seconded by Fewer, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of March 10, 2015. Mitchell and LaClair were not present for the vote.

RECREATION BOARD PRESENTATION

Assistant Manager Dorsett did a brief overview of a power point given to the Selectboard earlier this year. The bottom line is the staffing is such that only basic needs (mowing & trimming, trash and minor maintenance items) are being met. Routine repairs and maintenance have been neglected and the Town is now seeing the consequence. A priority of the list of neglected items is fence repairs. Many are in disrepair, are installed incorrectly and do not meet safety requirements. There are additional funds in the current FY budget for fencing repairs but not nearly enough.

A major goal of the Recreation Board is to come up with a 5-Year Plan for repair/maintenance/replacement items. This will be ready to be put into place for the FY 16-17 budget talks. Rec Board Chair Farnham stated, at minimum, he would like the budget to remain as presented. This would allow the hiring of the new Cemetery Sexton/Recreation Supervisor. There was also discussion of how to free up some of the staff time - perhaps the cleaning person (who is handy) would be available for some items.

When asked how much more money the Recreation Board would like to see in this budget Recreation Board member Tracy Wright stated \$16,000. (The amount to do all the fencing projects the Board would like to see completed in FY 15-16.

GENERAL FUND

The Committee picked up the review with the Emergency Services. Some of the Manager's points of interest were:

- The Police Department has a full complement of officers.
- The overtime line item was level funded & not increased. The point of hiring a new officer last year.
- Equipment contracts for the Taser evidence and finger print service.
- Purchase of a Taser, cartridges (needed for annual training), and the 50% local match (VLCT PACIF Public Safety Grant) for the purchase of 3 body cameras.
- Training requirements and personal protection gear (vest covers - 4).

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 17, 2015 continued:

- Purchase of new K-9 cage for new vehicle.

Fire Department:

- Wage increase for the captains and Lieutenant.
- Hydro testing of the large cascade bottle for SCBA air including rescue truck bottles (every 5 years).
- Building Maintenance (security cameras for stations (installed by members), repairing East Barre station concrete floor and side of building (missing bricks), and replace flooring in entry and hallway.

With regards to fire revenue it was noted that many homeowners house insurance could be billed for Fire Department services. The Manger understood this could only happen if "all" recipient of Fire Department services were billed for some type "surcharge." More research needs to be completed.

Emergency Services:

- Load testing of 5 generators (VT inspection & certification). There was some question as to why all 5 had to be tested. It was understood why the sewer (pump stations), water (distribution pumps), DPW (fuel tank), and Municipal Building (Emergency Operation Center) because they pertain to public safety and would be used in an emergency situation. More research is needed.
- The need for a generator on a trailer needs additional discussion with the Department Head and was not funded.

The next Department was Sanitation. Things are pretty much status quo. Lawn waste site operation needs (including wood chipping) illegal dumping cleanup costs, and the Central Vermont Solid Waste District dues were noted.

RECESS/RECONVENE

On a motion by Isabelle, seconded by White, the Budget Committee recessed at 8:02 p.m. for a brief Selectboard meeting. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Isabelle, seconded by White, the Budget Committee reconvened at 8:28 p.m. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

GENERAL FUND REVIEW CONTINUED:

Animal Control topics included a change in expenses due to Williamstown hiring their own ACO officer, use of town vehicle, reduction in mileage due to lower use of personal vehicle, kennel fees, and the purchase of equipment/supplies (replace catch pole and purchase universal chip scanner).

Recreation Department comments and notes:

- Staff wages to include DPW which may help with some tasks such as preparing for the winter softball tournament.
- Supplies to include an increase in the wood chip allowance due to the Websterville Playground renovation
- The 22 Wilson street project supplies and equipment charges.
- A year-round port-a-let at the 44 Brook Street Town Forrest parking area.
- The Trow Hill playground equipment and handicap accessible route.

Development includes payments to Central VT Economic Development Corp., Barre Area Development (shared with Barre City), Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission, and Green Mountain Transit Agency; and the annual fee to cover the Wilson Industrial Park travel signs.

Debt Service:

- The incubator building bond payment (reimbursed by Barre Area Development).

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 17, 2015 continued:

- The third of four payments for the Town Forrest (loan from Barre Area Development).

Town Insurances & Benefits: Policies cover liability (general, public officials liability/bonding, Police/Fire, employee benefits), building and contents, and a commercial blanket bond. Benefits paid by the Town include workman's com and unemployment insurance, retirement (employer share is 5.50%), and benefit insurances (health, dental, vision, disability & life) catamount assessment, social security, and health club reimbursements.

Other Sundry items paid by the Town include the Vermont League of Cities of Towns service fee, Williamstown Taxes (land owned on Route 14 in South Barre), and Washington County taxes.

CHANGES TO PRESENTED BUDGET BY THE MANAGER

In the General Fund Line item 011-413-540 is decreasing by \$400 while the Highway Fund 012-431-940 is increasing \$413. A stormwater permit fee was not included in the list. There are also several changes to the Equipment Fund:

1. 400-473-110 (wages) reduce by \$500 (wage calculated at 15% instead of 10%).
2. 400-473-284 adds \$1200 (monitors were budgeted by other departments in their regular budget instead of with equipment).
3. 400-473-831, health insurance, will see an increase. At this time is unknown whether the employee will be taking a 2 person or family plan.
4. 400-473-832, insurance buyout, will see a reduction of \$1,000 due to the employee noted in #3 using our insurance.

Diesel fuel blend: Rogers stated he will have quotes for next week but feels it is safe to assume the quote will be for much less than the \$2.95 a gallon in the proposed budget.

At this time it the tax rates would be an increase of 1.84¢ for the general fund and an increase of 1.32¢ for the Highway Fund.

There was discussion regarding the wood chipper (everyday use) which was requested by the DPW but not funded by the Manager. The Committee appreciated the memo received from the DPW Superintendent regarding it's proposed use.

On a motion by Day, seconded by Malone, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to follow the Manager's proposed budget request and support not purchasing a wood chipper in the FY 15-16 budget and to advise the DPW Superintendent that this type of item should be incorporated into the 5-Year Equipment Plan. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Sewer Vactor: More information is needed: 1) What fund will pay for the equipment? 2) What is the impact to the tax rate(s)? and 3) If we sell the one we have should we buy a good used or new one?

Cemetery - taking the headstone project out of the budget: The request was to remove the item so as not to increase the request from taxpayers. Cemetery appearances, the number of old stones, and the great price being given were the focus of discussion.

On a motion by Fewer, seconded by Malone, the Budget Committee voted unanimously to support the Manager's budget and keep the project funding (200-459-470) as is.

Sewer GPS monitoring: The \$7,500 for this project (locating each manhole by GPS and mapping) is not in the budget.

The rolling jack (400-475-282) is not in the proposed budget.

The Manager will have a list (by Fund) for the Committee of items to discuss and the tax rate implications.

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

The goal is to complete the review of all budgets at the next meeting. Chris Day noted he will not be able to attend next Tuesday night's meeting. If you have questions prior to the meeting feel free to call (479-9331) or email (crogers@barretown.org) the Town Manager.

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).

NEXT MEETING

The Budget Committee meeting will reconvene on Tuesday, March 24, 2015, 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville. If the budget is not wrapped up during this session there will be an addition meeting on March 25, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

RECESS

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Fewer, the Budget Committee recessed the meeting at 9:32 p.m. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Barre Town Budget Committee

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Committee Chair

x _____

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