

Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting

Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2016 - 2017

Meeting Agenda for March 22, 2016

1. Call to order 6:30 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Consider approving March 15, 2016 meeting minutes
4. Questions about material covered so far?
5. Consider approving Building, ambulance, Cemetery, Equipment, Sewer Capital Improvement and Sewer Funds.
6. Consider determining amount of General and Highway Fund budgets to be included on Town Meeting ballot.
7. Comments, suggestions about budget committee process
8. Adjourn

Minutes for March 22, 2016

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2016-2017 fiscal year budget was held March 22, 2016 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Rob LaClair (arrived at 6:42 p.m.), Jeff Blow, Paul White, Bob Nelson, Rolland Tessier, Joanne Cyr, Tom White, Val Vallerand, and William Wolfe. Those absent included: W. John "Jack" Mitchell.

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Town Clerk-Treasurer Donna J. Kelty, Manager's Project Assistant Elaine Wang, EMS Director Chris Lamonda (arrived at 7:45 p.m.), Nancy Pope, and Rob Spring.

Chair Tom White called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

APPROVE AGENDA - *On a motion by Rolland Tessier, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee approved the agenda as presented. Mitchell and LaClair were not present for the vote.*

APPROVE MEETING MINUTES - *On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Rob Nelson, the Budget Committee approved the meeting minutes of March 15, 2016. Mitchell and LaClair were not present for the vote.*

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

The Committee discussed the criteria for determining when a not-for-profit is a ballot question and when it becomes a line item in the budget(s). Prior Selectboard(s) believed that services from entities such as GMTA and the Aldrich Library are much needed and in many cases owned by the Town/City and therefore should be placed into the budget as a line item. Many members noted that if one is on the ballot they should all be. Every voter should have the right to vote on "all" requests not just those chosen by this 10 member committee.

The process for a not-for-profit to petition to be on the ballot, their obligation if the voters approve their funding (reporting), and how in subsequent years change their dollar request (by petition or by Selectboard action) were noted.

Nelson inquired on the guardrail replacement for Quarry Hill Road (012-432-660). Rogers noted the guardrail is approximately 25 years old. The Town normally purchases used guardrail to keep costs down. The budgeted funds of \$8,270 are only for the upper section of the east side of the road. With the number of times it has been hit and the rust there are concerns over the structural integrity. The lower section will be replaced during Barre City's Quarry Street reconstruction.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:

TAX RATE & GRAND LIST INFORMATION

Rogers noted that before any changes it appears as though there would be a 2.85¢ tax rate increase for the General & Highway Funds. Currently 1¢ on the tax rate raises \$62,150.

BUDGET REVIEW OF THE DISCUSSION LIST

The Manager presented the Budget Committee with 2 lists. The first one is just for the Ambulance Fund and contains suggested budget changes to the revenue and expenditures. The second page lists the "Board" items which require a more in depth discussion.

Road Salt (012-433-390): With a mild winter there are funds left in the current fiscal year budget for the purchase of road salt.

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Wolfe, the Budget Committee voted to recommend to the Selectboard that they take action to authorize spending the unused salt money in the current fiscal year (2015-2016) to fill the salt shed as much as possible and to reduce the Town Manager's proposed Highway Budget road salt line item by \$15,000. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

BUILDING FUND

There were no changes to this budget.

On a motion by LaClair, seconded by Nelson, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Building Fund budget as presented in the amount of \$50,500. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

CEMETERY FUND

Tom White had requested that with the Budget being tight the line item for the partial funding for the Maplewood Cemetery fence project be cut in half (a decrease of \$2,500). Discussion focused on what to do if the Town does not receive a grant and the increased cost (due to sandblasting) of breaking the project into two phases.

On a motion by Tom White, seconded by Val Vallerand, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Manager's proposed Fiscal year 2016-2017 Cemetery Fund budget as presented in the amount of \$75,585. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

SEWER CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT

On a motion by Robert Nelson, seconded by Rolland Tessier, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Sewer Capital Improvement Fund budget as presented in the amount of \$18,125.00. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

WATER FUND

The item for discussion was the new electric line to the Millstone water tank, chlorine booster station. The Manager did not include half the project amount (\$10,763; labor of \$1,620 and work of \$9,143).

Committee discussion provided facts that the line is not contained within conduit and this is for the water system - public safety issue.

On a motion by Joanne Cyr, seconded by Paul White, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Water Fund budget in the amount of \$366,018 [the Manager's proposed budget plus the re-wiring project of the Millstone Water Tank in the amount of \$10,763.00 (labor account 600-447-110 increase of \$1,620 and contracted work account 600-447-660 in the amount of \$9,143.00). Mitchell was not present for the vote.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:
ALDRICH LIBRARY DISCUSSION**

The current fiscal year budget is \$175,000, of which \$120,000 was included as a line item in the budget and voters approving an addition \$55,000 through a separate ballot article. The Manager's proposed budgeted line item is for \$125,000.

Library representatives Nancy Pope and Rob Spring were present.

Blow stated he is disappointed the Library is asking for an additional \$30,000 increase on top of the \$175,000 which was approved for the current year. (The Library had requested an appropriation of \$205,000 for the fiscal year 2016-2017.) Since the dollar amount is so great he would like to have the full requested amount placed as a separate article on the ballot. This would give complete transparency and allow the voters to weigh-in.

During the discussion it was noted that Barre City voters approved a \$197,000 appropriation for the next fiscal year.

The Manager noted that last year's ballot question for the Library's additional \$55,000 clearly informed the voters that this amount was in addition to the \$120,000 which was already on the budget.

Ms. Pope read an excerpt from last year's Budget Committee minutes of March 24, 2015 which noted the Committee's discussion which stated "that if the separate article passes it will give a clear indication the voters are willing to support the Library even given the large increase this year." Ms. Pope's interpretation of the conversation is that the once the voters approved the line item plus separate ballot article that amount would become the new baseline. LaClair stated that was his recollection as well.

A motion was made by Blow, seconded by Tessier to remove the Fiscal Year 2016-2017 General Fund budget line item for the Aldrich Library and to place a request amount (to be determine) on the ballot as a separate article. The motion failed with Blow voting yes. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Members again raised concerns for the Library financing if the full amount was to be on a separate article ballot. After discussion the consensus is to have a hybrid request (something in the budget and a separate amount as a ballot question).

RECESS/RECONVENE MEETING

On a motion by Rolland Tessier, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Budget Committee voted to recess at 7:58 p.m. to allow the Selectboard to hold a brief meeting. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

On a motion by William Wolfe, and seconded by Blow, the Committee voted to reconvene at 8:30 p.m.

ALDRICH LIBRARY DISCUSSION CONTINUED

A motion was made by LaClair, seconded by Cyr, to approve a Fiscal Year 2016 2017 General Fund line item for the Aldrich Library in the amount of \$175,000 and to place a separate article on the ballot for \$30,000. The motion failed with LaClair voting yes. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Wolfe, seconded by Vallerand, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Aldrich Public Library line item of \$125,000 and to place an article on a separate article in the amount of \$55,000 (total appropriation if approved would be \$180,000). The motion passed with White and LaClair voting no. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:
AMBULANCE FUND**

EMS Director Christopher Lamonda was present. The list, distributed earlier of the "Suggested Changes" was reviewed in detail.

Revenues: There were 3 suggested changes. 1) The Director has recommended eliminating two types of charges (one of Basic Life Support and one for Advanced Life Support). Many agencies have one rate. Using the higher rate, which is in the mid-range when compared to other agencies our size/volume), is the preferable one. This would increase estimated revenues \$25,000. 2) Increase the mileage rate from \$13.50 to \$15.50 per mile. The estimated revenue increase would be \$14,400. 3) Increase the private insurances and self-pay budget estimates by \$30,000. Rogers noted that he, the EMS Director, and Treasurer reviewed prior year revenues and trends for the current the year and feel very comfortable in the request. If approved the total revenue increase would be \$69,400.

Expenses: The suggestions included 11 different items be reduced/increased resulting in spending cuts of \$14,115.

The Selectboard could use the new revenues/cuts to perhaps reduce the per capita rate for contracted towns so they do not have such sticker shock - phasing in the big per capita rate increase.

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Wolfe, the Budget Committee voted to approve the Ambulance Fund proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 list of Suggested Revenue and Expense changes as presented. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Other Board items: Stretchers (700-424-281.102.103) - to begin the purchase of eventual mandated replacement stretchers. The options to consider are the stretcher type (non-motorized - \$6,000, refurbished motorized - \$9,000 or new motorized - \$14,000) and loading system (power load - \$21,000 or required lock system - \$4,000).

Discussion centered on the number to purchase, timeline for mandated cot conversion, age of existing stretchers, and financing options. The proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 budget has \$8,000 for stretchers.

On a motion by Wolfe, seconded by Tessier, the Budget Committee voted to amend the Town Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Ambulance budget and to purchase 2 stretchers (refurbished motorized) with the lock system for \$26,000 which will be financed. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

The committee noted that the EMS Director is currently using his personal laptop computer for Town business and that the amount for a desk seems extremely high.

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Wolfe, the Budget Committee voted to amend the Town Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Ambulance budget to reduce line item 700-424-480, Furniture and Fixtures by \$500 for the purchase of desk/chair and to increase line 700-424-284 by \$1,000 for the purchase of a new desktop computer (net budget increase of \$500.00). Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Not in the budget is the purchase of 6 Narcotics mini safes (\$600 each). EMS Director Lamonda noted that with Paramedic level service comes the responsibility of securing narcotics. Currently they are housed in a zippered bag. The boxes would be used in the ambulances (5) and one at the EMS station.

On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Rolland Tessier, the Budget Committee voted to amend the Town Manager's proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Ambulance budget and to increase the line item 700-424-283, Small Equipment Purchases to include the purchase of 6 narcotics mini safes at \$600 each (total increase of \$3,600.00). Mitchell was not present for the vote.

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:

On a motion by Paul White, seconded by Bob Nelson, the Budget Committee voted to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Ambulance Fund budget in the amount of \$2,042,455 (which is the amended amount). Mitchell was not present for the vote.

ALDRICH LIBRARY VOTE RECONSIDERATION REQUEST

Nancy Pope returned to the meeting to express her disappointment that the base amount for the Library's funding was not \$175,000. She is very confused as to why this discussion is happening again when it appeared it was made very clear during last year's budget meetings.

She feels the "double" appropriation is very confusing to the voters and is asking the Committee to reconsider their action earlier this meeting.

There was no motion for reconsideration. Blow stated he does agree that the minutes are clear as to the combined fiscal year 2015-2016 approved amount (special article and line item) becoming the new baseline amount for the proposed 2016-2017 budget.

EQUIPMENT FUND

There were a couple of small items which were not included in the budget that the Manager would like incorporated (400-474-450 increase of \$200 to purchase a gate for the new storage area, and \$110 to clean the granite signs). The total increase would be \$310.00.

On a motion by Wolfe, seconded by Blow, the Budget Committee voted to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Equipment Fund Budget in the amount of \$1,403,140 (which includes the additional \$310 requested by the Manager). Mitchell was not present for the vote.

GENERAL FUND

There were several items to review - one was the decrease of line item 011-423-240 of \$800 for a radio purchase as this has already been done. The Aldrich Library item has also been resolved.

One item which would be a new account is the paving of the school driveway and sections of the parking lot. During discussion the Committee was presented with information breaking up the areas of the parking lot. The paving area in question was divided into 4 parts. They are:

- A) West driveway entrance (section from Websterville road to the beginning of the parking lot) would be shimmed and have a 2" overlay at a cost of \$7,360.
- B) Travel Lane to Recreation Field gate (section from the end of section A up to the entrance where the tennis courts are) would require stripping and removing 3" of pavement; then repave with 4" of hot mix asphalt for a cost of \$11,600.
- C) Parking Lot lane on the south side (travel lane along the back of the parking lot from the area near the gated area in section B over to the wood chip plant) which would require a shim and overlay with 2" of hot mix asphalt for a cost of \$6,000.
- D) Parking lot lane on the east side (runs along the grass side of the wood chip plant) would require stripping and removing 3" of pavement and repave with 4" of hot mix asphalt at a cost of \$9,200.

During discussion it was noted that the parking lot is primarily used by the School as well as sections C & D. Their big delivery trucks use the travel lanes of C & D. Therefore, since the condition is a result of school business they should take care of those sections. Sections A & D lead directly to the recreation fields and the Town should take care of these travel lanes.

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Cyr, the Budget Committee voted to add \$19,000 to the General Fund FY 2016-2017 Recreation Fund line item 011-462-650 for the road work associated with Sections A & B of the Barre Town Middle & Elementary School parking lot as

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:

outlined in the Town Engineers memo dated March 22, 2016, to be done in conjunction with the Websterville Road paving; this work is to be considered the Town's contribution to the remaining parking area used by the School. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

011-462-680 - to add \$14,000 to repair the softball field backstop. Discussion noted this figure seemed extremely high. Alternate ways to repair were discussed.

On a motion by Nelson, seconded by William Wolfe, the Budget Committee voted to add \$6,000 to the General Fund FY 2016-2017 Recreation Fund line item 011-462-680 to repair the softball field backstop. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Barre Partnership is asking for \$23,000 from Barre Town. Topics included "the Greater Barre Area" seems to be focused primarily in downtown Barre, the request was last minute, and this organization needs to do more to businesses in Barre Town. The Heritage Festival is also requesting their donation amount be increased to \$4,000.

On a motion by Blow, seconded by Wolfe, the Budget Committee voted to add \$1,000 to the General Fund FY 2016-2017 line item 011-463-953-954 for the Barre Partnership; and to increase the ballot amount for the Heritage Festival to \$4,000. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Wolfe, seconded by Tessier, the Budget Committee voted to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2016 - 2017 General Fund Budget in the amount of \$3,502,356. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

Highway Fund

There were three items on the list. Road salt was resolved earlier. The other two requests are to increase the budget (012-436-970) for trees/shrubs to be planted in association with the Bridge Street sidewalk project and eliminate \$1000 (012-437-870) for class 3 coats (they have already been purchased).

On a motion by Wolfe, seconded by Vallerand, the Budget Committee voted to add \$100 to the proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Highway Fund budget by increasing line item 012-436-970 by \$900 and decreasing line item 012-437-870 by \$1000.00. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

On a motion by Nelson, seconded by Tessier, the Budget Committee voted to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2016-2017 Highway Fund Budget in the amount of \$2,747,800. Mitchell was not present for the vote.

WRAP UP

Blow thanked the citizens who volunteered and hoped it was a good experience. It was noted that in a couple of weeks the Committee will be taping a video presentation on this budget. The Town Manager will contact members with the dates to see if they are interested in participating.

ADJOURN

On a motion by Rolland Tessier, seconded by Tom White, the meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Donna J. Kelty, Town Clerk-Treasurer

Barre Town Budget Committee

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Committee Chair

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BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF March 22, 2016 continued:

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