

# Barre Town Budget Committee Meeting

## Proposed Budget for Fiscal Year 2017 - 2018

### AGENDA

1. Call to order.....6:30 p.m.
2. Consider approving agenda
3. Introductions
4. Organization, scheduling and other details
5. Information about budget process
6. Review of appendices
7. Adjourn 7:50 p.m.

### Minutes for January 31, 2017

The duly warned meeting of the Barre Town Budget Review Committee for the proposed 2017-2018 fiscal year budget was held January 31, 2017 at the Barre Town Municipal Building, Emergency Operation Center, Lower Websterville at 6:30 p.m.

The following members were in attendance: Rob LaClair, Tom White, Rolland Tessier, W. John "Jack" Mitchell, Bob Nelson, Norma Malone, Justin Bolduc, John Hameline and Gerry Parrot. (Those absent included: Paul White.)

Also in attendance were: Town Manager Carl Rogers, Asst. Town Manager Elaine Wang, Asst. Town Clerk-Treasurer Deborah Lefebvre and Kathy Parrot.

### CALL TO ORDER

Town Manager Rogers called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### APPROVE AGENDA

*On a motion by Bob Nelson, seconded by Rolland Tessier the agenda was approved as presented. Paul White was not present for the vote.*

### OPEN MEETING LAW

The Manager informed the Committee these proceedings are subject to the open meeting law. This means in order to take official action there must be a quorum of 6. While it is okay to email the Manager with questions he strongly discourages conversations between members via email. If 6 or more get involved in a conversation, even through links, it is a legal meeting and must be warned. Under the open meeting law all proceedings are to have an agenda. He will prepare one which will include some standard items such as approving/amending the agenda, approval of meeting minutes, allowing time for questions and answers. However, it will be flexible to accommodate the unforeseen discussions.

During discussion it was noted that consensus is not an official action....motions are.

### 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 Members were asked to verify their telephone numbers, email address, and to designate those items not to be published on the website.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

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 31, 2017 continued:**

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.

### **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 to hold an extra meeting or there will be a double session should they fall behind in their schedule or if there is a topic which needs in depth 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.).

One of the items at the next meeting will be to select the double meeting dates. The Manager also reminded the new members that if they cannot make a meeting or will be late to please send him an email or call so time is not wasted waiting for a member.

### **CITIZEN BUDGET TOUR**

The Citizen Budget Tour has been scheduled for Saturday, February 25, 2017, 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.

### **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 Bob Nelson, seconded by Gerry Parrot, a nomination for Tom White was made for Chair. With no other candidates put forth, nominations ceased and the Committee voted to appoint Tom White as Chair. Paul White was not present for the vote.*

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

### **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. The budgets (General Fund and Highway Fund) approved by this Committee will be the ones presented to the voters. In the event the budgets would fail the Committee would reconvene to make changes for the next vote.

### **BUDGET PROCESS**

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 31, 2017 continued:**

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

The proposed FY 17-18 expense budgets are 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 in May 2017.

### **BUDGET PRACTICES**

Barre Town's budget practice is to not inflate line items by percentages. Department Heads 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 Committee discussed 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 - Chris Lamonda; Emergency Management - Jack Mitchell; Cemetery & Recreation - Dwight Coffrin; Public Works (Equipment, Sewer, Water and most of the Highway) - Richard Tetreault; and Engineering (Municipal Building, Highway, Sewer, and Water) - Harry Hinrichsen. The consensus was to have department heads attend the meeting when their 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.

Other groups sometimes request to make a presentation to the budget committee and sometimes the committee will request an appearance by a group that is seeking funding. Some of the groups requesting time before the committee are the Aldrich Library, Barre Area Development and Barre Partnership. The consensus was to limit presentations to 10 minutes and then allow time for questions.

During the budget review and discussion process each member should make a note of changes they would like to see and/or items which require a more in depth discussion. Once all fund budgets have been 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.). It was noted that in the past the chalk boards in the meeting room have been utilized to post items which need additional work/discussion so that they don't get overlooked.

The Manager again noted that should you be unable to attend a meeting or will be late, contact him 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 2017-2018. 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

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 31, 2017 continued:**

proposed budget) contains the information which is being reviewed. For your information the current fiscal year is 2016-2017 or July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017. The proposed budget this committee will review is fiscal year 2017-2018, (July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018).

**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
- Reappraisal Fund
- Debt Service Chart
- Tax Stabilization Contracts
- Housing Loans
- Recreation Maintenance (new this year)
- Employees' Pay Department Splits (changes this year).

The 5-Year Plans were approved by the Selectboard earlier this fiscal year to assist with the preparation of the FY 2017-2018 proposed budget. The other appendices are used as aides to assist the Manager with budgeting as well.

**5-YEAR PLANS**

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

The Committee reviewed many of the appendices.

**REVENUE SOURCE TABLE**

| Fund                | Revenue Source |
|---------------------|----------------|
| General and Highway | Property taxes |
| Sewer               | User fee       |

**BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING OF January 31, 2017 continued:**

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 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       |

**HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT**

Budgets for Building Fund, Cemetery Fund, Sewer Capital Improvement, and Equipment 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 7, 2017, 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Operation Center, Municipal Building in Lower Websterville.

**RECESS**

The meeting recessed at 8:00 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Deborah Lefebvre, Assistant Town Clerk-  
 Treasurer*

***Barre Town Budget Committee***

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

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