

For Immediate Release

March 28, 2022

**Barton Village Trustees Vote to Recommend Sale of Barton Electric Department to Vermont Electric Cooperative**

Information Meeting and Public Hearing to be held on April 16 and May 1

CONTACT:

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Barton, VT —

On Monday night the Barton Village Trustee's voted unanimously to recommend the sale of Barton Electric Department (BED) to Vermont Electric Cooperative (VEC). The vote followed a three-year process of developing a long-term plan for Barton Village and Barton Electric, including almost three years of contracting with VEC for services, following the departure of Barton's manager and line workers in April 2019. The decision is the result of a thorough process that included a Request for Proposal, "Sale of Assets of Barton Electric Department" issued by the Village Trustees on September 27, 2021 and delivered to Vermont's distribution utilities, including all municipal electric utilities.

VEC's proposal was selected after careful consideration of purchase price, proven ability to maintain high quality electric service, comparable rates and financial impacts, impacts to future Barton Village operations, and the transition of current Barton electric department employees. The Trustees are confident that moving in this direction will provide a clear and responsible path forward to resolve the difficult and complicated history of Barton Village owning and operating an electric utility, especially given the increasing complexity and cost of providing service. The Trustees believe that proceeding with VEC, a locally owned not-for-profit cooperative utility which serves a majority of communities in the Northeast Kingdom, is the right direction to provide a seamless transition. This transition will also allow Barton Village to exit the utility business with minimum effect to current customers. The proceeds of the sale will resolve lingering long-term debt issues, support environmental cleanup of historically underfunded properties, and bring back to the Village the proceeds from 100 years of development work outside of the Village.

The Trustee's will be holding two public informational meetings to discuss the details of the proposed sale and to answer questions. All customers of Barton Electric are invited to the informational meetings.

**The first informational meeting and public hearing will be on Saturday April 16<sup>th</sup> at 3PM.**

**A second meeting will be on Sunday May 1<sup>st</sup> at 3PM.**

**Both meetings will be held in the Barton Village Memorial Theater.**

The registered voters of Barton Village will vote on the proposed sale by Australian ballot on May 10, 2022. The polls will be open that day from 10 am until 7 pm at the Memorial Hall located downstairs of the Theater.

*[Posting requirements will begin soon and will be available in the newspaper, at our regular posting locations in the Village and on the Village Website.]*