

Barton Village, Inc.
Regular Trustees Meeting

Monday, April 24th, 2023

6:00 pm

Barton Village Memorial Hall

Attendance:

Gina Lyon-Chair; Marilyn Prue, Ellis Merchant, Crystal Currier, Ben Cudd, Tim Dagessee, David Bilideau, Judith Carpenter, Andy Sicard, Susan Cisale & Joseph Gresser of The Chronicle.

Meeting minutes taken by Jacqueline Laurion-Clerk

Agenda

A: Call to Order: Gina Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:02pm

B: Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions - Crystal asked to move item O under OTHER ITEMS to the top of Action Items. Green Up Day.

C: Privilege of the Floor: Judith Carpenter- Concerned about the village sidewalks being in disrepair along with the entrances to the memorial buildings Hall, American Legion & Office also needing attention. She would like to meet with the Barton Chamber of Commerce to raise awareness of attending Village meetings in hopes to see more involvement from folks in the community. She also expressed concern about the water quality. Ellis Merchant advised that it meets State standards. Also, over the past 14 months a lot of upgrades have been made to the water treatment plant assisting in the water quality improvement. Lucas DiMauri, Barton's Chief Water Treatment Manager will be at a trustee meeting later in May and we welcome her & all Village residents to attend to speak with Lucas directly about their water quality concerns.

Susan Cisale co-owner of C & L Upholstery Services located in the newly acquired former Barton Firehouse on Main Street wanted to discuss the tax credits form that she had submitted to the State. Her tax credit request was denied on the first attempt, but when she spoke to the state, they pointed out areas she can improve upon and she still had time to resubmit for a second review. She came to the board meeting looking for assistance on the form along with a letter of support from the trustees regarding the new business in the Village. Susan pointed out that this year the building is 130 yrs old. She explained the renovations that they are undertaking to keep the history of the building alive. She also laid out the long-term ideas for the building exterior and interior. Gina stated she would be happy to set up a time to visit the business and review the paperwork that she would like assistance with.

1: Minutes from 4/10 board meeting– Marilyn approved the minutes and Ellis seconded

2: Green UP Day - Tim Dagessee spoke about hosting an open house at the WWTP May 6th 10-2pm. He would like to highlight the areas that have had improvements and show the areas that need attention. A motion was made by Ellis to allow Tim to set up an open house and seconded by Marilyn. Notices will go out to the community via the Village Website, social media and flyers.

4: Wastewater RFQ-Bid Selection – Tim spoke on the 3 bids that the village received. Aldrich & Elliott, New England Consulting Engineers & AES Northeast. Discussions took place around each firm that submitted very detailed RFQ packets. The process starts with the Village choosing an engineering firm.

Tim will then work with the State and review all three bids that were submitted. The second part will be the engineers finding the grants / funding along with a deep dive into the wastewater treatment facility for upgrades, changes and building repair and or replacement cost. This is the process to start to identify the time frame and cost of project. Marilyn advised that the Village of Orleans has used Aldrich & Elliott many times and has been very pleased with their work. The Trustees in the end made a motion by Marilyn to choose Aldrich & Elliott and Ellis 2nd the motion.

5: New Hires – Temporary / Seasonal – A search went out to fill a GIS (electric department) temporary position. In addition, Andy Sicard is still in search of two seasonal positions to assist him over the summer with various Village projects. The search was not successful and only resulted in one application. While a renewed search will go out again, the trustees voted to offer the candidate temporary employment splitting their time between the GIS position and helping Andy Sicard as needed. This position will be paid \$18.00 per hour.

6: Tax Properties - Purchase Authorization- The delinquent tax properties will go up for auction on May 24th, 2023. A motion was made by Gina to authorize Shelia Martin to purchase, on behalf of the Village, any of the properties up for tax sale on May 24th and not otherwise sold to other parties. The motion was approved.

7: VPPSA Director/Alternate - Patty Richards and Chris Recchia, consultants hired by Barton Village in 2022 are currently appointed as the VPPSA Director and VPPSA alternate

Denis Fortin, Barton's Hydro Operator, has indicated interest in the VPPSA Director position.

The meetings are once a month on the first Wednesday of the month. John Morley of the Village of Orleans has offered to be the Alternate for the Village of Barton if or when Denis Fortin can't attend the monthly meetings since John is currently on the Board for Orleans Village. A motion was made by Ellis to approve Denis Fortin as VPPSA Director seconded by Marilyn. A motion was then made by Ellis to approve John Morley to the role of Alternate, seconded by Marilyn. Denis will be notified, and the current director & Alternate Patty Richards and Chris Recchia will also be notified of this change.

8: Business Manager- At the Board of Trustees meeting held on April 10, 2023, the Board approved the job description and corresponding advertisement for the position of "Village Manager". It was subsequently brought to the Board's attention that this type of position is unique in that it is part of Vermont statute, Title 24, Chapter 37 and requires a vote of the Village voters to approve such a position (if not already approved). Since it is unknown whether the Village voters have approved the Management structure of Government, it was determined that the job description be restricted to a Business Manager Position. Gina made a motion to approve the job description which creates the position of Business Manager and approves the corresponding position advertisement. The motion also dissolves the Board's prior approval of the "Village Manager" position as approved on April 10th, 2023.

Crystal gave the trustees a ballpark assessment of how much it will cost the Village to hire for this role. This is just an estimate and not hard fast figures. With benefits such as Retirement, Health, Dental Social Security, Medicare, Workers Comp and Unemployment costs the position would come in around \$121,607.56 annually. Currently it is estimated that the Village could pay VPPSA up to \$160,055.00 for the contracted administrative services in place now, including the Business Managers duties. It is

proposed that once a business manager is in place the contract with VPPSA could be reduced to an estimated \$106,055.00 since their role would be much less than it is with the Village currently. In the end it would be an increase cost to the Village of \$67,632.56 annually with the hire of a business manager and the decreased assistance of VPPSA.

9) VPPSA Management Services Contract - At the Board of Trustees meeting held on April 10, 2023, the Board approved the updated Management Services Contract with VPPSA. That contract referenced the new Village Manager position which was subsequently eliminated. The contract has been updated to reflect the reference the Business Managers position and updated to reflect the new position title. A strike-lined version and a clean version of the contract was presented. Gina motioned to approve the updated contract removing the wording of Village Manager to be replaced with Business Manager. Ellis seconded the motion.

10) Highway Department: Andy Sicard presented to the board his selections for the 2023 paving projects. The streets being considered are Redfield and Forty. Some research on how wide the streets are for Redfield & Forty is still under review. Redfield and Forty could come in at \$94,872.00. The other option would be Park Street and that price would come in at around \$175,700. Park Street is wider and longer, and more road prepping would have to take place.

Ellis asked if paving funds could be used for ditch & culvert repair. Andy was not sure if it could be used for things other than paving.

Gina asked about West Street being considered for 2023. Andy stated that the work on West Street would entail not only stripping down to base but culverts, catch basins and immense drainage / ditches. It was stated that there are about 5 roads in need of immediate repair but only a few can be done each year. In addition, if Andy does not receive the temporary summer help, as he typically has in the past this will play a significant role in the streets that he has to prepare prior to the arrival of the paving company.

Andy also spoke about the Village Ball Field. The Village was approached by the little league to make improvements to the field. That approval was given but it seems that the pitching mound that was built was removed without notice or consideration of cost to the little league. Andy will reach out to the soft ball league to replace the pitching mound for the little league. Gina expressed concern over scheduling of practice and games not being respected by the Softball league. Respect needs to be given to the little league teams as the ball field was donated for the use of children vs adult use.

There is a renewed interest in having a more structured scheduling process for the leagues to follow regarding practice and games. Notices will go out to all parties interested in using the Village ball fields and Gina offered to draft the notice that will go out to the Leagues. We will also post to the Village Website and social media pages.

Andy closed out his time with the board to discuss the Salt/Sand Shed Project. This much needed Salt & Sand shed project was started under the former trustee board in 2021 into 2022. A USDA grant was awarded to pay for the bulk of the project. While the funds have not been sent to the Village at this time delays with procuring a concrete bid in late 2022 pushed this project into 2023. Crystal contacted Nate Sicard who was the original engineer of the project. At the time Nate Sicard was a Village Trustee and had offered to do the engineering of the project at no cost to the Village. With Nate no longer

being a Village Trustee, Crystal stated that Nate indicated he would assist in finishing the project if the Village entered into a contract with his engineering firm and his services would then be based on an hourly rate.

The process is a tricky wire to navigate without the engineer who originally entered the USDA grant proposal and Crystal will reach out to Diane Drowns from USDA for further guidance on how to move forward. The Trustees will discuss this in future meetings after Crystal hears from Ms. Drowns.

11: Financial Review: This item was tabled for a future meeting

12: Rate Case for Electric: The Village, VPPSA staff, Patty Richards, Jillian Jurczyk [UFS] and Eli Emerson [Village attorney] are all involved with the Electric rate case.

As additional background, Barton Electric's last rate case was in 2018 at 16.17% and the one prior to that was in 2010 at 8.94% – two rate cases in 13 years.

The Public Utility Commission will hold a public hearing on May 11th at 7pm to receive input concerning the rate case and corresponding tariff filing of Barton Village Inc. Electric Department requesting an overall rate increase of 18.27% effective on service rendered on or after April 1st 2023. A notice will go out to all electric customers in the April 28th billing cycle. Information will also be posted to the Village website, and social media.

It is recommended that the board should designate the individuals to take the lead in the meeting and represent the Village. Those individuals will be:

Rate Case Summary: Jillian Jurczyk

Tariff: Steve Farman

Legal: Eli Emerson

VPPSA: Ken Nolan

The trustees unanimously voted to have these listed members represent Barton Village.

13: Management/Staff Reports; Upcoming Items: Mail/Sorter/Letter Inserter; the mailing machine has been programmed and the office staff trained to use it. Now on deck for replacement is the Mailing/Postage machine. The current machine will soon be noncompliant with the US POSTAL SERVICE requirements. Over the next few months consideration will have to be made for a replacement. Crystal will bring options for the trustees to consider by December of 2023.

High Street Site updates: Work being done by VHB Contract.

- Site Investigation provided by VHB 01/26/2022
- Supplemental Investigation Work Plan provided by VHB 07/12/2022
- Testing scheduled for May 2023 will report back to village in late summer 2023
- Contract balance - \$75k (not expended)

Other Business

Village Office hours on Fridays. Currently the office is open to the public 7:30am to 4pm Monday through Thursday. On Fridays it is open to the public until 12:30pm. While the office staff is still in the office until 4PM, there has been contact made with the Trustees regarding keeping the office open to the public the same timeframe on Fridays that it is open during the rest of the week. The Barton Town office is also open on Fridays from 7:30am to 12:30pm. This discussion was tabled for further review in future meetings.

14: Executive Session – Gina motioned to go into Executive session at 8:46pm: IBEW Contract Discussion. The Board came out of Executive session at 9:45pm. Ellis made a motion to authorize Crystal Currier to continue negotiations with the IBEW rep as discussed. Gina 2nd the motion.

Meeting adjourned at 9:48pm

Date of Next Meeting May 8th 6pm.

Submitted by Regina (Gina) Lyon, Board Chair

Attested by Shelia Martin, Village Clerk

