

**Barton Village, Inc.**  
**Regular Trustees Meeting**

Monday, November 13, 2023

6:00pm

Barton Village Memorial Hall

Attendance: Gina Lyon (Chair) Marilyn Prue (Trustee), Ellis Merchant (Trustee), Vera LaPorte (Business Manager), Jacqueline Laurion (Clerk), Meghan Wayland from NEKO and David Billado, Sue Penharlow & Joan Vincent

**Agenda**

- A. Call to Order – Gina Lyon called the meeting to order at 6pm
- B. Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions – No changes
- C. Privilege of the Floor – No activity.

**ACTION ITEMS:**

- D. **Minutes from Regular Board of Trustees Meeting October 23, 2023** – Ellis made a motion to accept the minutes as presented and Marilyn Prue seconded. All approved.
- E. **2023 Vermont Transco Subscription Agreement - To read more on this item please see agenda posted on the Village website.**

Vermont Transco, LLC (“Transco”), Vermont’s Transmission company often issues an equity call when it needs to raise funds for capital projects.

Transco’s goal is to maintain a specific debt to equity ratio to maximize the return received by ISO-NE (Transco receives most of its revenue from ISO-NE).

Per Vt Transco’s Operating Agreement, Transco only issues equity to the Vermont Distribution utilities.

Barton’s share of this equity call is a total of 8,017 member units, valued at \$80,170.

The average rate of return paid by Transco on these purchases is 12.51%.

It is advantageous for distribution utilities to

purchase the member units that are offered to them as it maintains the utility’s load share of Transco investments and reduces the overall cost of transmission to the utility.

In an effort to assist VPPSA members with these purchases, Transco’s operating agreement was amended to allow VPPSA members to “assign” the units that are offered to the utility, to VPPSA. VPPSA then purchases the units for the benefit of the utility, receives the distribution (return from Transco), pays any related debt service and returns any remaining return to the distribution utility via a credit on the utility's power supply settlement invoice. Assigning the units to VPPSA, allows the utility to avoid the administrative burden of making the purchase directly and yet the utility continues to receive all the benefit of the Transco ownership.

**A motion was made by Marilyn Prue to assign the Vt Transco units as offered to Barton Village per the Subscription Agreement, to VPPSA, including the units offered under the transmission**

**cost share in the amount of \$80,170 and any units that may be offered as unsubscribed. Motion was seconded by Ellis Merchant. All approved.**

- F. **USDA Community Facilities Grant Application - Authorized Representative** - The USDA grant application for the permanent salt/sand shed project is due in December and requires the name and signature of an authorized representative. This authorization will be submitted with the application and a copy must be kept on file at the Village office.

A motion was made by Gina Lyon to authorize Vera LaPorte (Business Manager) as representative for the USDA Community Facilities Grant application. Motion was seconded by Marilyn Prue. All approved.

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

- G. **NEKO Activities Update and Building Use Request** - Meghan Wayland was representing NEKO and spoke about the continued use of the Memorial Building Hall. A FEMA representative would be here on Tuesday and Thursday to assist Orleans County citizens who are still in need of FEMA assistance. They are here to assist with paperwork and outreach to the community. This would be approximately for 2–3-week presence. In addition, Meghan spoke about using the storage closet that is being used now can change over to a household item nonfood shelf. Meetings have been taking place all over Orleans County regarding locations for a more permanent Food Pantry. Currently there are 3 food pantries in Barton. St. Paul School, Barton Meal Site (Tuesday / Thursdays) & formally Barton United Church. Gina spoke on behalf of the burdens that the Village currently has ongoing and wants to have a better understanding of the needs that will impact the Village and a greater conversation will have to take place from a few organizations that are part of the overall objectives. The contract for use of space was given to Meghan to review and sign.
- H. **FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Property Buyout** - Barton Village has been approached by the State of Vermont on behalf of a Village resident wishing to participate in FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. As of the 11/13/2023 Trustee meeting the homeowner has not reached out to the Village to initiate a conversation regarding the program. Both the Town and Village have to agree to this program for it to move forward. This is a choice and not a mandate if the Town or Village wants to agree to the buy out program.

The purpose of this program is to buy flood-prone properties and demolish the structures on them to create “green space” that can mitigate floodwaters in future flooding events. The properties will be purchased at full market value, ultimately paid for by FEMA’s

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (75%) and VT State's Flood Resilient Communities Fund (25%)

If the Village agrees to participate in the buyout program, the Village must apply for a buyout grant with the State and use the grant funds to hire an appraiser, conduct a title search, develop closing documents, purchase the property, and contract for all demolition work. The Village will then own and maintain the property as open green space.

Things to consider:

- Will need to develop or be in the process of developing a FEMA-approved Local Hazard Mitigation Plan prior to grant application
- Loss of tax revenue and electric/water/sewer fees
- Usage and maintenance of green space (cannot build permanent structures but garden/footpath/etc. are possibilities)
- Program process can take up to two years
- Grant application deadline is July 2024

- I. **Wastewater Operations Update** - As the Board is aware, there was a meeting on 10/30/2023 to discuss the progress of the preliminary engineering report (PER) for the WWTF infrastructure upgrade project.

The meeting was attended by Vera LaPorte, Jeremiah Borsoi, Mike Mainer (Aldrich & Elliott), John Merrifield (VT) and Lynette Claudon (VT). The purpose of the meeting was primarily to review the existing conditions of the WWTF, fact-check operating data, and consider the preliminary design criteria and alternatives.

This meeting is the first of several (30% complete), with the second to be held in late December/early January (60%), and the third to be held with the Trustees in early 2024 (90%) to present recommendations.

The WWTF is currently operating satisfactorily, and all testing/reporting is conducted on schedule.

- J. **Trucks Update** - DPW Foreman Andy Sicard is currently following lines of inquiry regarding two trucks that could potentially fit the Village's needs.

- K. **Salt/Sand Shed Update** - The temporary salt/sand shed is complete. The USDA application for the permanent salt/sand shed will be complete pending the representative authorization and due in December.

VHB has given the Village permission to retrieve the salt stored at the old site on High Street. DPW Foreman Andy Sicard will move it to the temporary shed the week of

November 13, 2023.

- L. **Flood Updates-** As the Board is aware the State was scheduled to perform vactoring and jetting of the storm drains and sewer lines at various locations around the Village the week of October 23, 2023.

The work was successful, and these lines are now clear of flood debris and flowing properly. It did, however, reveal that the sewer line on Glover Road is in a very bad state and is in need of repair (most likely due to the flooding) and could be responsible for the additional hydraulic loading at the WWTF.

It has been added to the FEMA Disaster Inventory and we are currently awaiting an estimate from AES Northeast to provide FEMA with a ballpark figure.

FEMA has already filed on the Village's behalf for several completed projects and funds should be made available soon.

- M. **Management/Staff Report - SEE ONGOING REPORT / LIST ON THE VILLAGE WEBSITE.** Updates to note: Interviews for the DPW job posting have taken place and a job offer will be sent out to the chosen candidate. At the previous Trustee meeting there was concern of the Villages liability if someone gets hurt at the ball field. Recently kids were playing on the roof of the dugout with no regard to the dangers if they were to fall off the roof. The Trustees had thought signage stating "use at your own risk" would indemnify them from being liable if anyone got hurt, and it turns out that signage would not.

**OTHER ITEMS:**

- N. Other Business- None

**EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:**

Executive Session - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a) (1)(E)

Executive Session - Personnel: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3)

Gina made a motion to go into executive session at 7:25PM and Marilyn 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion – all approved for the purpose of discussing potential litigation as allowed under as under 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E) and to further discuss personnel matters.

The Trustees came out of Executive Session at 8:45pm with no decisions taking place.

- O. Adjourn – 8:45PM

**Upcoming Meetings:**

**Regular Board Meeting: November 27, 2023**

**Regular Board Meeting: December 11, 2023**