

Barton Village, Inc.
Regular Trustees Meeting

Monday, December 11, 2023

Executive Session 6:00pm

Open Session 7:00pm

Barton Village Memorial Hall

Attendance:

Gina Lyon (Chair) Marilyn Prue (Trustee) Vera LaPorte (Village Business Manager) Meghan Weyland of Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) Patsy Tompkins from Barton Area Senior Services (BASSI), Joe Gresser of The Barton Chronicle, Chris Skowron & Shelia Malone (Barton Village Residents)

Agenda

- A. **Call to Order**-Gina called meeting to order at 6am

EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

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

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

Gina Lyon made a motion to enter executive session at 6:01 pm for the purpose of discussing potential litigation as allowed under 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E) and to further discuss personnel as allowed under 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3). Marilyn Prue seconded. All approved.

Came out of Executive Session at 6:56pm with no action taken.

- D. **Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions** – No Changes and approved as presented.
- E. **Privilege of the Floor** – Chris Skowron wanted to advise that the Village about the snow removal process around their home is sending snow & rock chips into the windows and siding of their home. They live on the corner of Main and School Street and until this year they have not experienced any issues with how the snow removal was done. Vera LaPorte will speak with the Village DPW workers to make adjustments to their process.

ACTION ITEMS:

- F. **Minutes from Regular Board of Trustees Meeting November 27, 2023** - Motion to approve as presented. Gina made a motion to approve and seconded by Marilyn. All approved.
- G. **Minutes from Joint Board Meeting w/Barton Village, Orleans, and Town of Barton 11/29/2023**- Marilyn Prue made a Motion to approve the minutes as presented and Gina Lyon seconded the motion. All approved.
- H. **Bills and Warrants** - reviewed and signed by Marilyn Prue Motion to approve Bills & Warrants by Gina Lyon and seconded by Marilyn Prue. All approved.

- I. **Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) Update and Grant Application** -Meghan Weyland from Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) provided the Board with an update on the organization's activities and collaborations within the Barton area.

She presented the Board with information regarding a grant opportunity through the Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships at UVM to support and expand these activities.

Main goals:

- To continue the cooperative use of the Barton Memorial Building as an essential community hub and meal site;
- To move people and food by creating a transportation route that connects them to meal sites, food pantries, activities, groceries, clinics, and pharmacies 4 days a week.
- To improve the mental/physical health and social isolation of Barton's aging population (30% are 60+) by connecting people to one another through food;
- To improve local nutrition and food access.

NEKO intends to apply for the maximum grant award of \$300,000 and would like a letter of support from the Board of Trustees to bolster their application. More information on the grant can be found at <https://www.uvm.edu/ruralpartnerships/grants>.

A motion was made by Gina Lyon to endorse NEKO's grant application through the Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships with a letter of support. Marilyn Prue Seconded the motion. A letter of support from the Village will need to be submitted by the end of January. NEKO will advise the Village when the letter is needed. All Approved.

- J. **Barton Area Senior Services, Inc. (BASSI) Update and BMB Hall Lease Agreement:** Patsy opened her meeting time with a message of thanks to the Village for how good the Village looks with holiday decorations and new American flags.

Patsy Tompkins is from the Barton Area Senior Services, Inc. (BASSI) provided the Board with an update on the organization's activities within the Barton area. She is considering making a meal site in Barton as well as in Glover as it was pre-covid. Senior programs will start up again in the Barton Memorial Hall.

A new lease agreement for usage of the Barton Memorial Building Hall and kitchen is being requested of the Village Trustees.

The last lease on file is from 2017 and was for a duration of 5 years. BASSI is looking for a long-term lease to be written. Every year anniversary, the monthly fee increased. The last fee was \$250.00 per month.

The Trustees reviewed the costs of electric, recycling & trash removal to determine a reasonable monthly rent. They offered to start out with a rental fee of \$250.00 and that was agreed upon with Patsy and the Trustees. The lease will be reviewed annually.

Vera LaPorte will send a new lease to Patsy Tompkins.

Gina Lyon made a motion to approve a new lease with BASSI long term of 5 years and Marilyn seconded the motion. All approved.

K. FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for Property Buyout-

As the Board is aware, the State of Vermont has approached Barton Village on behalf of a Village resident wishing to participate in FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant 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%).

At the Regular Trustees Meeting on 11/13/2023, the Board discussed the impact of participating in this program, chiefly the Village, as the grant sponsor, shouldering the burden of the work and expense required for the process, as well as loss of tax and utility revenues.

Since this discussion, however, the State has implemented a program through Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) that would remove much of the administrative and financial burden from participating municipalities by acting as a sub-applicant for acquisition and demolition projects under FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program.

The Village's responsibilities would be mostly restricted to coordinating with the homeowner and VEM, attending project meetings/closings, and providing reports to VEM as requested (see included Memorandum of Agreement from VEM).

The Village would maintain and utilize the property as open green space in perpetuity, and would be required to submit documentation to VEM every three years to that effect.

With all this being stated it was also recognized that the Village cannot move forward on this buyout program until the LHMP Local Hazard Mitigation Plan is updated and signed. The one we have on file expired in March of 2023. This is a multi-jurisdictional plan that encompasses Barton Village, Orleans Village, and the Town of Barton.

L. Property Lien/Lien Discharge -

Seasonal property 500 Lake Street in Barton has consumed an unusually high amount of electricity for Q3 (\$3,395.02) and is on track with similar usage for Q4. The meter has been tested and proven to be working properly, but the customer refuses to pay.

The customer has been offered assistance in finding a qualified electrician as well a payment plan for the delinquent amount, but has yet to reply. It may be prudent to file a lien on the property to protect the utility's interest.

On 12/13/2022 a lien was placed on 1255 Schoolhouse Road in Brownington for unpaid electric services of \$4,974.47. The property has recently been sold and Barton Village has been paid in full. The new owner has requested a lien discharge.

Motion to approve filing a lien on 500 Lake Street in Barton, as well as filing a lien discharge for 1255 Schoolhouse Road in Brownington was made by Marilyn Prue and seconded by Gina Lyon. All approved.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

M. Wastewater Operations Update

On 12/07/2023 the pump station at Pageant Park suffered a failure when both the main and backup pumps became clogged with "flushable" sanitary wipes. Both pumps are nearing the end of their natural five-year lifespan and will possibly need replacing in CY 2024. Phil Laramie of Laramie Water Resources will provide the Village with a quote for this replacement. In the meantime, a flyer will be included with future water/sewer invoices urging users to dispose of these sanitary wipes properly.

The Business Manager is in the process of rewriting the Sewer Ordinance for the Village. See agenda for full draft. Located on the Barton Village Website. www.bartonvt.com

- N. **Salt/Sand Shed Update | Truck Update | Flood Update** – Nothing new to report on these topics.
- O. **Management/Staff Report** – New DPW hire has started, and he is a welcome addition to the road crew.

OTHER ITEMS:

- P. **Other Business** – None to report
- Q. **Adjourn** – Gina made a motion to Adjourn at 8:10pm seconded by Marilyn Prue

Upcoming Meetings:

Regular Board Meeting: December 18, 2023 (Earlier date due to regular date falling on 12/25/2023)

Regular Board Meeting: January 8, 2024