

Barton Village, Inc.
Regular Trustees Meeting

Monday, March 25, 2024

6:00pm

Barton Village Memorial Hall

Attendance: Gina Lyon (Chair), Marilyn Prue, Ellis Merchant, Vera LaPorte (Village Business Manager). Dave Billido; Mark Bean, Andy Sicard, Lucas DiMauro (Water Treatment Manager) Meghan Wayland (NEKO), Barton Chronicle- Matt Wilson, Stephanie Bickford

Full Agenda and backup content available at www.bartonvt.com/agenda-minutes/

Agenda

- A. **Call to Order:** Gina Lyon called the meeting to order at 6pm
- B. **Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions:** Addition of the 3/18/2024 Special Board meeting minuets and KBS Auditor proposal under Action Items; School light under Discussion Items.
- C. **Privilege of the Floor:** Mark Bean wanted to discuss the latest water bill that he received. The bill is in regard to a water pipe leak that took place in the trailer park. Added to the regular bill were charges for the door-to-door notification work that was required by the State to notify the park residents as the Village had to issue a stop order on drinking the water. Mr. Bean placed a small amount of oil into the curb stop in hopes of closing the water line for repair. He states that he never tried to close the curb stop. Andy Sicard also indicated that he never attempted to close the curb stop. Due to the oil that was used it triggered action from the Village Water Manager to reach out to the State for guidance. The Village followed the steps the State had advised them on ensuring the impacted residents in the area did not drink the water until it was tested for contamination. Mr. Bean still objected to the additional fees being charged and indicated that he was contacted by the Town Attorney asking questions about speaking with his personal attorney. Turns out no attorney called Mr. Bean but the Water Treatment manager Lucas DiMauro did contact him. Mr. Bean acknowledged his mistake in his understanding of who had called him. Mr. Bean states that with his conversation with the State he was told that the Village advised the State that up to 2 gallons of oil was used. That is in direct contrast with the emails the Village has to the State on this situation. There is no indication of the amount of oil used on the curb stop in the communications. The Village employees including 2 Trustees and Village Business Manager did a door-to-door notification to the park homeowners as required by the State of VT. This was done to notify residents to stop drinking the water until testing came back, and it was also done after the tests came back that the testing passed with no contaminates present in the water.

ACTION ITEMS:

- D. **Minutes from Regular Board of Trustees Meeting February 26, 2024:** Gina made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Marilyn Prue seconded. Motion carried.

- E. **Minutes from the Special Board of Trustees on March 18th, 2024.** Gina made a motion to approve as presented. Marilyn Prue seconded. Motion carried.
- F. **Bills and Warrants:** Gina made a motion to approve after review.
- G. **2024 Highway Budget:** The Highway Budget did not pass at the annual Village meeting. Marilyn Prue and Crystal Currier have reworked this budget and have made the following changes:

Add: Grant funding from Town of Barton	\$5,000
Reduce: Grant funding from USDA	(\$65,000)
Add: Interest expense for Salt/Sand Shed financing	\$5,514
Reduce: Tax collector fees	(\$1,150)
Reduce: Truck expenses	(\$2,000)
Reduce: Summer Paving	(\$5,000)
Add: Financing for Salt/Sand Shed (revenue in)	\$142,000
Adjusted: Truck Capital to actual cost	(\$4,493)
Adjusted: Salt/Sand Shed to project cost	(\$2,000)
Remove: Computer Software Project cost	(\$6,600)
Add: Debt Service for Salt/Sand Shed (Yr 1), Assumes 10 yr, 6%	\$9,467
Add: Paving reserve	\$17,000
Reduce: Skid Steer/Snowblower reserve	(\$3,850)
Reduce: Backhoe reserve	(\$5,000)
Reduce: Municipal Garage reserve	(\$7,000)
Reduced truck reserve utilized	(\$4,493)
Add: Utilized reserves from paving to pay Passumpsic debt service	\$30,755
Add: Utilized matching grant fund	\$5,000

Results in Highway taxes collected of \$358,180 or 4.9% increase over CY2023 actual.

Summary of all taxes as voted:

Fund/Dept	Taxes Voted	Tax per \$100K
Village	\$72,578	\$6.40
Highway (proposed)	\$358,180	\$39.33
Water	\$68,804	\$ 0.00
Wastewater	\$65,540	\$19.74
Total Tax per \$100K		\$65.47

Gina Lyon made a motion to accept the revised Highway Budget as presented; resulting in taxes collected of \$358,180.00. Marilyn Prue seconded the motion. The motion carried.

H. Financial Reports for Period Ending February 29, 2024:

Highlights:

Village:

Cash - \$186,845

Net Profit (loss) to date: (\$15,393)

- Little to no revenue to date
- Office Salaries – on budget at 15% of annual
- Insurance paid through Q1

Highway:

Cash on Hand: \$25,719

Net Profit (loss) to date: (\$55,947)

- Little to no revenue to date
- Office Salaries – on budget at 16% of annual
- DPW Winter Labor – 69% of total but only occurs in winter months

Electric:

Cash on Hand: \$174,562

Significant amount of Customer advances on hand due to NEK/Comcast Make-Ready work/Customer Jobs [\$429k]

LTD to total Assets Ratio: 45.3% [going down slowly but this is great]

Net Profit: \$213,712, Net Loss after adjustments (\$48,924)

- Revenues slightly under-budget but not unexpected
- Several invoices pending: VPPSA Power Settlement and Distribution Operations, for Jan/Feb
- Office Salaries on budget at 17% of annual

- Expenses (after adjustments) – 30% under budget

Water:

Cash on Hand: \$50,223

LTD to total Assets Ratio: 22.8%

Net Profit (loss) to date: (\$15,463)

- Tax Revenue: none to date
- Expenses overall – 48.6% underbudget
 - Labor – overbudget by approx. 60% or \$6K
 - Outside Services – overbudget [Fred’s Energy repairs]

Wastewater:

Cash on Hand (\$165,555)

LTD to total Assets Ratio: 12.9%

Net Profit (loss) to date: (\$25,218.50)

- Tax Revenue: none to date
- Expenses overall 40% underbudget
 - Labor on budget at 17% of annual
 - Training, Fuel, Lift station, scada: overbudget

The Village Business Manager indicated that the Village was going to go back to disconnect notices for delinquent Water & Sewer bills. Since this action has not been taken for about 8 years the Village has some details to work out with how the process would roll out and be handled.

Gina Lyon made a motion to approve the Financial Reports for Period Ending February 29, 2024. Marilyn Prue seconded, and the motion carried.

The Village sent out 3 requests for proposals on auditing the 2023 Village annual financials. KBS came back as the only interested party. Gina motioned to accept the offer from KBS and Marilyn seconded. The motion carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- I. **NEKO Activities Update:** Meghan Wayland of Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) indicated that they wished to add Wednesday hall use to their current Tuesday, Thursday office space use. They wish to pay rent and ask the Trustees what they feel is fair. With discussion the Trustees decided to have Meghan and Vera meet to come up with an agreed upon rent. In addition, Meghan proposed the purchase of a digital projector using funds from NEKO to show films in the Memorial Theater. NEKO will do research on this effort with Andy Sicard. In addition, NEKO applied for a grant to assist with public transportation and won a grant for \$53,000. They are working with RCT to map out a loop from Barton Village to Derby. Another grant was won of \$50,000 to assist BASSI and other food initiatives taking place in the Village of Barton. The presence of NEKO has only strengthened the community of Barton and both NEKO & the Trustees have mutual respect.

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP): The Town of Barton (including Barton Village and Orleans Village) has been awarded a subgrant under the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) by Vermont Emergency Management (VEM) for the purpose of updating the town's Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). More information will be made available as it presents itself to the Village Trustees.

Salt/Sand Shed Update: As the Board is aware, the USDA grant awarded for the construction of the new salt/sand shed falls significantly short of the amount required. In the search for additional funding, it was discovered that the Town of Barton has what is called a UDAG Fund possibly available for miscellaneous grants and loans.

- J. **Wastewater Operations Update | Flood Update:** NONE
- K. **Management/Staff Report:** Of note; Current Wastewater User Fees – Rate increase of 28.2% (\$17.07 increase based on usage of 4,000 gallons) to begin with April 2024 bills.

Current Water User Fees – Rate increase of 8.8% (\$4.29 increase based on usage of 4,000 gallons) to begin with April 2024 bills.

- L. School zone flashing signs for the 2-way approach of Barton Graded School; the cost ranges from 3k per sign and up based on different options on the signs available. More research will be needed to determine the best location for each sign. Installation is expected to be late Spring.

OTHER ITEMS:

Other Business: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

- M. The board entered into Executive Session at 7:48pm under- Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E) Gina Lyon made the motion to enter into Executive Session and Marilyn Prue seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- N. The Board came out of Executive Session at 9pm with no action taken
- O. Adjourn-9:01pm

Upcoming Meetings:

SPECIAL Board Meeting: April 29, 2024 to warn for 2nd annual Village Meeting at 4:15pm

Regular board Meeting: April 8, 2024

Regular board Meeting: April 22, 2024