

Barton Village, Inc.
Regular Trustees Meeting

Monday, June 24, 2024

5:00pm

Barton Village Memorial Hall

Attendance: Gina Lyon (Chair), Marilyn Prue (Trustee), Ellis Merchant (Trustee), Vera LaPorte
(Business Manager), Jacqueline Laurion (Clerk), Dave Billado

Agenda

NOTICE: Due to scheduling constraints, the Barton Village Board of Trustees is expected to immediately enter Executive Session at 5:00pm for Item M - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E). The rest of the Regular Trustees Meeting Agenda will continue at 6:00pm.

- A. **Call to Order** – Gina Lyon called to order at 5:00pm. Marilyn Prue seconded the motion, motion carried.

- B. **Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions** – Gina Lyon made a motion to move agenda item **M – Executive Session - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E)** to the beginning of the meeting, ahead of Action Items. Marilyn Prue seconded. All approved. The motion carried.

- C. **Privilege of the Floor** – None.

- M. **Executive Session - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E)** – Gina Lyon made a motion to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E). Ellis Merchant seconded. All approved and the motion carried. The Trustees came out Executive Session at 5:55pm with no action taken.

ACTION ITEMS:

- D. **Minutes from Regular Board of Trustees Meeting June 10, 2024** – Gina Lyon made a motion to approve the 6/10/2024 meeting minutes. Ellis Merchant seconded. The motion carried.

- E. **Bills and Warrants** – Gina Lyon made a motion to approve the Bills and Warrants. Marilyn Prue seconded. The motion carried.

- F. **Vermont Department of Taxes - Child Care Contribution** – In 2023, Act 76 (H.217) (<https://legislature.vermont.gov/bill/status/2024/H.217>), relating to childcare and early education, was enacted into State law. Act 76 of 2023 creates the Child Care Contribution (CCC) under 32 V.S.A. Chapter 246 to fund investments in Vermont’s childcare system. Beginning July 1, 2024, Vermont employers will begin making contributions composed of a 0.44% payroll tax on wages to the Vermont Department of Taxes for deposit into the Child Care Contribution Special Fund. Employees are not required to file or pay the CCC, but employers may choose to deduct and withhold up to one-quarter of the contribution from employee wages (i.e., not more than

0.11% of any employee's wages). The contribution amount works out to be \$44 per \$10,000 in wages paid if the Village were to pay the full .44%. After discussion, Gina Lyon made a motion to approve paying the full Child Care Contribution tax of .44% beginning July 1, 2024 with the option of future review pending any State of Vermont changes. Ellis Merchant seconded. Motion carried.

- G. **Financial Reports for Period Ending 05/31/2024** – Full agenda with additional details can be found at <https://bartonvt.com/agenda-minutes/>

Financial reporting highlights:

Village:

- Cash on hand - \$220,916
- Due to/from other funds - (\$61,766)
- Net Profit (Loss) to date - (\$31,598)
 - Revenues - minimal to date
 - Pageant Park meeting budget
 - Expenses - 14.4% underbudget overall
 - Outside services – repairs at BMB

Highway:

- Cash on hand - (\$12,704)
- Net Profit (loss) to date - (\$142,335)
 - Revenues - minimal to date
 - Expenses - 24.8% underbudget overall

Electric:

- Cash on Hand - \$4,055
- Customer advances on hand due to NEK/Comcast Make-Ready work - [\$111k]
- LTD to total assets ratio - 46%
- Net Profit - \$454,190 (unadjusted)
- Estimate Net Profit (Loss) as Adjusted - \$186,086
- Revenues
 - Sales - slightly underbudget
 - Customer jobs - overbudget, includes Comcast/NEK (may be adjusted per 2023 audit)
 - Expenses - 11.7% underbudget overall (unadjusted); 6.2% overbudget overall (adjusted)
 - Labor for outages – overbudget

Water:

- Cash on hand - \$25,056
- LTD to total assets ratio - 22.8%
- Net Profit (loss) to date - (\$35,911)

Revenues

- Water sales under budget [rate increase not implemented]
- Expenses overall - 34.6% underbudget
- Labor - overbudget by approx. 73% or \$17K
- Outside services - repairs at facility

Wastewater:

Cash on hand - \$45,358

LTD to total assets ratio - 18.8%

Net Profit (loss) to date - (\$29,375)

Revenues

- Wastewater sales under budget [rate increase not implemented until April]
- Expenses overall 30.6% or \$83K under budget
- Training costs overbudget
- Lift station equipment over budget (need to verify charges)
- Computer expense – new PC

Gina Lyon made a motion to accept the Financial Reports for Period Ending 05/31/2024 as presented. Marilyn Prue seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- H. **BASSI/NEKO Lease Agreements** – As the Board is aware, Barton Area Senior Services, Inc. (BASSI) has decided to temporarily reduce their use of the Barton Memorial Building Hall to one day of meal service per week (Tuesdays) and has requested a rent reduction commensurate to the reduction in use.

BASSI currently pays \$250 per month for two days per week, the Village would lower that to \$125 monthly for one day per week.

Northeast Kingdom Organizing (NEKO) has offered to temporarily organize meal service on BASSI's behalf for the second day (Thursdays) and has requested use of the Hall for an additional day (Wednesdays) for administrative work, workshops, and other activities for the Barton area community. If the same valuation is applied, NEKO's suggested rent would be \$250.00 per month.

Gina Lyon made a motion to approve the lease agreements with BASSI and NEKO as presented. Ellis Merchant seconded. Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- I. **ATV Ordinance for Village (TABLED FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION)** – At the Special Board of Trustees Meeting on 04/01/2024 (joint meeting with the Town), members of the Borderline Ridge Riders (BLRR) expressed interest in opening more of the Village's roads to ATV travel. The Village's ATV Ordinance currently restricts ATV access to the following roads from 7am-9pm beginning the second Saturday in May and ending October 1:
1. Roaring Brook Road

2. Part of Glover Road from Roaring Brook Road Bridge, north to 290 Glover Road
3. Main Street from Northern Village Line southerly to Duck Pond Road
4. Church Street from Elm Street to Main Street
5. Elm Street in its entirety
6. Eastern Avenue in its entirety
7. Pageant Park Road in its entirety

J. **Department Operations Updates** – Vera LaPorte updated the Board with department activities.

Electric Department

- After-hours on-call answering service – Business Manager Vera LaPorte will be moving forward with Specialty Answering Service once the details of the changeover are hammered out.
- OCFA tariff rider – Steve Farman with VPPSA was on vacation from 06/06/2024 through 06/14/2024. Not much movement while he catches up.
- Hydro facility bond vote – The hydro facility bond vote is scheduled for 08/28/2024. Mail-in ballots will be available at the Town Clerk's Office and the polls will be open on 08/28/2024 from 10am to 7pm at the BMB Hall. Advertising will begin in the Chronicle on 07/31/2024 and the informational meeting will be warned for 08/26/2024.
- News about whether the Village will be awarded any grant funds for the hydro facility project should be received by 06/28/2024.

Wastewater Department

- Water/sewer overtime reconnection fee – Overtime reconnection fee has been updated to reflect the statutory amount of \$37.50.
- Wastewater facility upgrade project – Mike Mainer with Aldritch & Elliott is currently drafting the 90% completion report of the project based on the Board's directive and a pre-design scope that will need approval by the State. He will present the Board with both when completed (most likely late summer).
- Chief Wastewater Operator Nate Therrien is covering water facility operations while Chief Water Operator Lucas DiMauro is on vacation. In addition to his class 2 wastewater license he holds a class 3 water license.
- Another flyer urging wastewater system users to not flush rags/wipes will be included in the next water/sewer billing (see Highway Department).
- The wastewater treatment facility continues to operate well and all reporting deadlines are being met.

Water Department

- Water/sewer overtime reconnection fee – See Wastewater Department.
- Chief Wastewater Operator Nate Therrien is covering water facility operations while Chief Water Operator Lucas DiMauro is on vacation. In addition to his class 2 wastewater license he holds a class 3 water license.
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Highway Department

- Paving – DPW Foreman Andy Sicard and DPW Utility Worker Garrett Heath continue to spot-pave potholes and other road damage as it is identified around the Village.
- Water leak – The water leak on Main Street near Davis Court has been repaired. During the repair, however, it was discovered that an enormous plug of rags/wipes had caused a blockage in the adjacent sewer line. The blockage was cleared and the line was replaced. Another flyer urging wastewater system users to not flush rags/wipes will be included in the next water/sewer billing.

Village Department

- State Budget Adjustment Act (Act No. 78 – H.839) – Vera LaPorte has applied for an advance on the \$80,000 in “flood recovery money” through FEMA/VT.
- School crossing signs – Vera LaPorte and John Morley have identified the best location for the flashing lights/signs (near the library and Barton United Church). Next up is ordering the appropriate equipment and scheduling the work.
- The Board of Trustees tour of Village facilities will be warned for 06/26/2024 at 9am, beginning at the hydro plant.
- Vera LaPorte, Billing Clerks Emily Marlow and Julie Nelson, and Crystal Currier from VPPSA attended an online presentation on municipal billing software called El Dorado. The software the Village currently uses (NEMRC) has been especially difficult to use for net metering and El Dorado is a potential replacement.

- K. **Management/Staff Report** – See ongoing list of items in the Board packet at <https://bartonvt.com/agenda-minutes/>

OTHER ITEMS:

- L. **Other Business** – 4th of July Village float discussion. A special meeting will be warned for the 4th of July Parade so that all the Trustees can participate. All are welcome to join.

Discussions continue regarding the Village salt/sand shed.

A review of job descriptions for a part-time Village finance office position was discussed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:

- M. Gina Lyon made a motion to move agenda item **M – Executive Session - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E)** to the beginning of the meeting, ahead of Action Items. Marilyn Prue seconded. All approved. The motion carried.
- N. **Executive Session** - Personnel: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3) – None.
- O. **Adjourn** – Gina Lyon made a motion to adjourn at 7:28pm. Ellis Merchant seconded. Motion carried.

Upcoming Meetings:

Special Board Meeting: July 4, 2024

Regular Board Meeting: July 8, 2024

Regular Board Meeting: July 22, 2024

Regina Lyon, Board of Trustees Chair