

Barton Village, Inc.
Regular Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, August 12, 2025
6 pm

Barton Village Memorial Building – Back Office: Meeting to be moved downstairs in the event of an access issue for any attendee or participant. To request a meeting to be moved downstairs before the scheduled date and time, please call the office at 802-525-4747, Monday through Friday, 7:30 am – 4:00 pm. **

Attendance: Gina Lyon (Chair, Business Manager), Marilyn Prue (Trustee), Ellis Merchant (Trustee), Jacqueline Laurion (Clerk), Ed Barber (Newport Daily Express)

Agenda

- A. **Call to Order:** Gina Lyon called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.
- B. **Changes to the Agenda/Additions or Deletions:** Gina Lyon added Action Item I.
- C. **Privilege of the Floor:** None.

ACTION ITEMS:

- D. **Minutes from the Regular Board of Trustees Meeting July 22, 2025:** Ellis Merchant made a motion to approve the minutes from the July 22nd Trustee meeting. Marilyn Prue seconded. The Motion carried.
- E. **Bills and Warrants:** Bills and warrants were reviewed. Marilyn Prue made a motion to accept and approve the review of Bills and Warrants. Ellis Merchant seconded. Motion carried.
- F. **Financial Reports for Period ending June 2025:** Gina Lyon pointed out a data entry error on Page 11 (Mgt Services) of \$5,753.27. After speaking with Shelia Martin, it was not easily identified. Shelia will research more on this line item. Marilyn Prue made a motion to approve the financials for June, with more research on the line item in question on page 11, and moving the funds noted to the correct location in the report. Ellis Merchant seconded. The Motion carried.
- G. **VT Trappers Association Waiver Request:** 51st Annual VT Trappers & Sportsmen Rendezvous is scheduled for 9/20 and 9/21, 2025 at the fairgrounds: Waiver was requested to allow discharge of firearms. A letter of approval has been drawn up to be sent back to them, stating in part:

The Board recognized that this is an event that the Trappers Association has been holding annually and is granting the request based on the following information:

Discharge of muzzleloaders and .22 caliber handguns/rifles only.
Shooting shall be limited to the hours of 8:45 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. on Saturday.
Shooting shall be limited to the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. on Sunday.
A range Safety Officer shall be present to oversee the shooting event.

Ellis Merchant made a motion to approve the waiver, and Marilyn Prue seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- H. **Water Sewer General Obligation Bond Letters:** A letter will be sent to property owners within the Village that for one reason or another do not utilize the water/sewer utilities. In part, it

states:

This notification is to inform you that general obligation bonds for water and sewer services are taxable for all property owners, regardless of whether the services are currently being used.

For one reason or another, you do not utilize the system, but the Village has researched and learned that all taxpayers, regardless of use or not, are responsible for these as the taxes contribute to the overall well-being and functionality of the Village, which indirectly benefits all property owners. These taxes ensure the continued existence, maintenance, and potential future expansion of crucial infrastructure for the community.

The amount for which you are responsible will be reflected in your 2025 tax bill, which will include the updated tax rate.

Marilyn Prue made a motion to have a letter sent out to impacted taxpayers for the Water Sewer bond. Ellis Merchant seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- I. **Utility Accounts with credits and small balances:** Shelia Martin reviewed the current billing for electricity and water/sewer services and noted that several accounts have small outstanding balances or credits. Based on this review, the following actions were proposed:

- **Accounts with Balances Under \$10.00:** Any outstanding balances of less than \$10.00 will be written off and not pursued for collection.
- **Accounts with Credits:** Individuals with credits on their accounts will be contacted to advise them of the credit. These individuals may then contact the office to either:
 - Receive the credit via check, or
 - Have the credit applied to their current active utility account.
- **Accounts Owning More Than \$10.00:** Contact to these individuals requesting payment will be attempted. Efforts will be made to collect the outstanding amounts.

Marilyn Prue made a motion to write off all utility account balances under \$10.00 and to pursue payment collection for accounts with balances over \$10.00. The motion was seconded by Gina Lyon. Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

- J. **Not Attributable Power Outage Responses:** If a power outage occurs and you do not have power, but it is due to something other than Barton Electric, the Barton Village tariff currently **states** an incredibly low fee associated with this kind of situation.

8. Customer calls where issue is not attributable to Company.

In instances where the Company responds to a “no power” or other call from a customer, and the issue is attributable to circumstances on the customer side of the meter and not to the Company, the customer shall pay a charge of \$50.00 during business hours and \$90.00 after business hours (to the extent Company personnel are available after business hours).

The current tariff is outdated and requires revision. Gina Lyon will work with VPPSA to begin discussions to see about having the tariff updated to reflect appropriate rates.

- K. **Barton Town Plan Update:** Lenny Zenonos would like to meet with the Village Trustees to update the board on the Town plan and welcomes input from the Village Trustees on the project. He plans to attend the next meeting.
- L. **FEMA Update: Reimbursements:** The Village has received two outstanding reimbursement checks from FEMA for projects related to the July 2024 flooding, which caused damage to culverts and storm drain basins in the Village. A few projects remain outstanding. Gina Lyon will complete the necessary summary sheets and submit them to FEMA to initiate the next round of funding for the Village.
- M. **Department Operations Updates:**

Hydro Plant:

The project is progressing well. On August 12, Gina Lyon met with Polly Allen and later with the State Historical Preservation team via a TEAMS meeting. It was discovered that the reducer that attaches from the penstock to the building was overlooked in the original project design. A new reducer has since been ordered. Some of the building's bricks will need to be removed while this is being replaced and worked on. The Historical Preservation team has requested that the original bricks be reinstalled after the modification if possible. Further updates on this aspect will follow. Additionally, the old head gate has been removed in preparation for the installation of the new one, which is expected to arrive in approximately two weeks. Sandblasting & sealing work is ongoing both inside and outside the penstock.

Department of Public Works (DPW):

Paving around the sewer manhole in front of St. Paul's School was completed on August 12th, along with repairs to several other sewer and catch basin manhole covers throughout the Village. Progress continues with the salt/sand shed. The Hoop Barn has been ordered and is expected to arrive in the coming weeks. Paving work will continue throughout the Village in the next few weeks. The Village's International plow truck requires repairs, and a replacement may need to be considered in the future.

Water Treatment Plant:

Gina Lyon and Lucas met with consultant Jeff Hoffer to initiate the project of blending well water with surface water. Jeff will assist with the necessary application process. The State must also be involved, and an engineer will need to be hired to support the project. A site visit with the State of Vermont, the engineer, and Jeff Hoffer is going to be planned to determine the next steps. Additionally, a beaver dam had blocked water flow into May Pond. After the removal of the dam, the water level rose by approximately twenty inches. Staff will continue to monitor May Pond for any future blockages.

Wastewater Treatment Plant:

No new updates currently. Continue to work with A&E to answer USDA questions regarding the pending upgrade project.

Electric Department:

Notices have been sent out regarding the upcoming rate increase as well as the SmartHours Program for electric vehicle owners. The electric rate case with the Public

Utility Commission (PUC) is progressing, with a public hearing scheduled for September 23, 2025. The Village is requesting a 5.61% rate increase. DCU's for the AMI project have been ordered.

Office:

No new updates currently.

- N. **Memphremagog Watershed Project:** The project is gaining momentum, and the bidding process has been completed. Construction may be delayed until the spring of 2026, due to the requirement for excavation work along state roads.
- O. **Other Business:** Ellis Merchant asked about the Village Junk Yard Ordinance. There is one person in the Village who will be issued a Citation ticket by Renee Falconer, Ordinance Enforcer. The certified letters that have been sent and received by the property owner have not been addressed at this time.
- P. **EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS:**
- Executive Session - Legal Action: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(1)(E) – if needed. - **None**
Executive Session - Personnel: 1 V.S.A. § 313 (a)(3) – if needed. – **None**
- Q. **Adjourn:** Gina Lyon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 pm. Ellis Merchant seconded. Motion Carried.

Upcoming Meetings:

Regular Board Meeting: 08/26/2025
Regular Board Meeting: 09/09/2025

Regina L. Lyon, Board Chair