

**MINUTES
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
TOWN OF BARNET, VERMONT
MARCH 4, 2014**

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. at the Barnet Elementary School gymnasium by Moderator Dennis McLam.

Susan Persson, a member of the Harvey's Lake Beach Committee, spoke regarding the resignations of long-time Beach Committee members Robert and Kathleen Zita. Ms. Persson announced that she would present to Mr. and Mrs. Zita, who were not present, a lifetime pass to Harvey's Lake Beach in recognition of their dedicated service on the Beach Committee. Ms. Persson also indicated that the Selectboard will be appointing at least two new members to the Beach Committee; she also described the duties associated with the position and solicited interested volunteers.

ARTICLE 1. To elect a Moderator.

- Moderator stated that one-year term of Dennis McLam is expiring.
- Dennis McLam nominated by Marvin Bailey
- Mona Marceau moved that nominations cease. Seconded.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Dennis McLam.

ARTICLE 2. To elect all other Town Officers as required by law and additional Town Officers as approved by the voters.

Selectman

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Theodore Faris is expiring.
- Theodore Faris nominated by Marvin Bailey.
- Dylan Ford nominated by William Biddle.
- Dylan Ford spoke, citing in support of her candidacy her experience as Assistant Librarian and as President of the Barnet Historical Society. Ms. Ford stated that she believes in the future of Barnet, and believes that we should use what we appreciate about our past to shape our future.
- Theodore Faris spoke, indicating that he has enjoyed serving as Selectman for the past twelve years, and would be happy to continue serving if elected. Mr. Faris spoke about the record he keeps of concerns and comments received from residents, indicating that he takes seriously the obligation to represent townspeople in the execution of the office of Selectman.
- A paper ballot vote was had, as required by state statute for the office of Selectman. Paper ballots were distributed and votes were placed.
- While paper ballots were being tabulated by the Board of Civil Authority, announcements were made:
 - Sherry Tolle spoke regarding the Good Neighbor Fund, which raises funds through collection of redeemable bottles and cans at the Recycling Center and appropriates these funds for charitable causes in Barnet.

- Dylan Ford, President of the Barnet Historical Society (BHS), announced that funds remaining from the 250th anniversary celebrations have been used to establish a “Celebrate Barnet” fund, which will be used to hold several events each year celebrating Barnet’s heritage. The first such event will be a sliding party to be held at the Everts’ “Too Little Farm” on March 8, 2014.
- Moderator announced that the paper ballot vote was inconclusive. Neither candidate was elected by the required fifty percent of the votes plus one vote.
- Moderator announced that a second vote would be required. Paper ballots were distributed and votes were placed.
- The Board of Civil Authority tabulated the results.
- The Moderator announced the tabulated results of the paper ballot vote: Dylan Ford elected (total votes: 124; votes required to elect: 63; Dylan Ford: 65 votes; Theodore Faris: 59 votes).

Lister

- Moderator stated that the three-year term originally held by Ronald Morse is expiring. Sarah Cook was appointed to replace Mr. Morse, who resigned in October 2013.
- Sarah Cook nominated by John Cook.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Sarah Cook.

Auditor

- Moderator stated that the three-year term of Robert Roos is expiring.
- Robert Roos nominated by Mona Marceau.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Robert Roos.

Collector of Delinquent Tax

- Moderator stated that one-year term of Lisa Bowden is expiring.
- Lisa Bowden nominated by Mark Gilleland.
- Mona Marceau moved that nominations cease. Seconded by David Warden.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Lisa Bowden.

First Constable

- Moderator stated that this office is vacant, having one year remaining of a two-year term. Michael Bergeron, elected in March 2013, resigned and no replacement was appointed.
- Steve Mosher nominated by David Stevenson.
- David Stevenson nominated by Mona Marceau.
 - David Stevenson declined the nomination, as he presently holds the office of Second Constable.

- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Steve Mosher.

Grand Juror

- Moderator stated that this office is vacant, with a one-year term expiring. Michael Bergeron, elected in March 2013, resigned and no replacement was appointed.
- David Willis nominated by Theodore Faris.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for David Willis.

Town Agent

- Moderator stated that one-year term of Jay Abramson is expiring.
- Jay Abramson nominated by Mona Marceau.
- Mona Marceau moved that nominations cease. Seconded by Sarah Cook.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Jay Abramson.

Trustee of Public Funds

- Moderator stated that three-year term of Merle Fitzgerald is expiring.
- Merle Fitzgerald nominated by David Warden.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Merle Fitzgerald.

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that five-year term of Sheri Colby-Schenck is expiring.
- Sheri Colby-Schenck nominated by Sarah Walls.
- Mona Marceau moved that nominations cease. Seconded.
- Moderator instructed Town Clerk to cast one ballot for Sheri Colby-Schenck.

Library Trustee

- Moderator stated that this office is vacant, having three years remaining of a five-year term. Mary Mallon, who held this office, resigned and no replacement was appointed.
- Jane Casavant nominated by Sherry Tolle. Ms. Tolle also stated her appreciation to Ms. Mallon for her service to the library.
- Heather Counter nominated by Sarah Walls.
- Hearing no further nominations, Moderator announced that nominations would cease.
- Heather Counter spoke, indicating that she and her family are enthusiastic patrons of the library, and she would be honored to serve the Town in this capacity.
- Jane Casavant was not present at this meeting.
- Heather Counter was elected by a show-of-hands vote.

ARTICLE 3. To consider and act upon the report of the Town Auditors.

- John Cook moved to accept the report of the Town Auditors as it appears on page thirty-nine of the Town Report. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 4. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) to the American Red Cross of Vermont & the New Hampshire Upper Valley Region?

- Marvin Bailey moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 5. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to Area Agency on Aging for Northeastern Vermont?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 6. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to the Barnet Historical Society to be used for maintaining the Goodwillie House?

- David Warden moved the article as warned. Seconded by William Biddle.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 7. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$2,300.00) to Caledonia Home Health Care?

- Marvin Bailey moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 8. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Fifty Dollars (\$17,050.00) to CALEX Ambulance Service?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Marvin Bailey.
- Celina Wright, CALEX President, spoke, indicating she would be willing to answer any questions voters may have regarding this request.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Catamount Arts?

- Alan Boye moved the article as warned. Seconded by Marvin Bailey.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 10. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$1,700.00) to Fairbanks Museum and Planetarium?

- Alan Boye moved the article as warned. Seconded Mona Marceau.
- Robert Farlice-Rubio, a Fairbanks Museum employee, spoke indicating that the passage of this appropriation entitles Barnet residents to free admission to the

museum.

- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 11. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) to Kingdom Animal Shelter?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 12. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to the Lake Harvey Association to be used for a boat monitoring/wash program dedicated to the prevention of milfoil and other invasive species at Harvey's Lake?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Joyce Evans.
- David Curtin, Vice President of the Lake Harvey Association, spoke about the dangers of milfoil and other invasive species, indicating that the program has been successful so far in preventing their development at Harvey's Lake.
- Theodore Faris spoke, indicating that the Town continues to pursue the implementation of a redesign of the gate at the Harvey's Lake Dam. Bid requests have been sent to local companies capable of manufacturing the parts necessary for the project.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 13. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars (\$1,775.00) to Northeast Kingdom Human Services, Inc.?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Joyce Evans.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Dollars (\$300.00) to Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, Inc.?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Dennis Kauppila.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to Northeast Kingdom Youth Services?

- Dennis Kauppila moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Frances Flanagan spoke in support of this appropriation, also stating that the program needs more mentor volunteers.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of One Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$1,100.00) to Rural Community Transportation?

- Alan Boye moved the article as warned. Seconded by Dennis Kauppila.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 17. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Dollars (\$400.00) to Umbrella Inc.?

- Alan Boye moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 18. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$280.00) to the Vermont Center for Independent Living?

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded by Joyce Evans.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 19. Shall the Town of Barnet appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) to the West Barnet Senior Meal Site?

- John Cook moved the article as warned. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Carol Robinson moved to amend Mr. Cook's motion by increasing the appropriation to \$3,000. Seconded by Dorothy Robinson.
- The amendment to the motion was passed by voice vote.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20. To see what arrangements the Town and Town School District will vote for the collection of its taxes and by what lawful official for the ensuing year.

- Lisa Bowden moved that taxes become due and payable in hand to the Town Treasurer during business hours on or before October 18, 2014, with said taxes to be actually received by said Treasurer on or before the due date without regard to postmark; and thereafter said taxes shall be payable to the Collector of Delinquent Tax with interest at the rate of 1% per month or fraction thereof, for the first three months, and thereafter at the rate of 1 ½ % per month or fraction thereof, plus the collector's fee as provided by law. Seconded by Mona Marceau.
- Jay Sprout moved to amend Ms. Bowden's motion by adding the words "of 8%" to the final phrase, causing the entire amended motion to be: "Taxes shall become due and payable in hand to the Town Treasurer during business hours on or before October 18, 2014, with said taxes to be actually received by said Treasurer on or before the due date without regard to postmark; and thereafter said taxes shall be payable to the Collector of Delinquent Tax with interest at the rate of 1% per month or fraction thereof, for the first three months, and thereafter at the rate of 1 ½ % per month or fraction thereof, plus the collector's fee of 8% as provided by law. Seconded.
- Jay Sprout also commented that the penalty is excessive, and that there should be a grace period, but at minimum the vote should make clear the penalty percentage.
- Moderator commented that tax bills are generally mailed in July, and that taxpayers have ample time and warning with regard to the due date and penalty.
- The amendment to the motion was passed by voice vote.
- Celina Wright asked about the meaning of the phrase "without regard to postmark."
 - Moderator indicated that this signifies that postmarks will not be considered when determining timely payment: payments must be received in hand by the

Treasurer by the due date.

- Lisa Bowden spoke regarding the collection policy, indicating that she would be opposed to a grace period or the acceptance of postmarks.
- Mona Marceau moved to call the question.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21. To see what sum of money the Town will vote to raise to defray the expenses and liabilities of the Town for the current year.

- Jeremy Roberts moved to raise the sum of \$631,635 for the Selectmen's budget and \$529,650 for the Highway budget, for a total of \$1,161,285. Seconded by Dennis Kauppila.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22. Shall the Town vote to exempt from taxation the property owned by Lakeview Grange #359 located in West Barnet Village, for a period not to exceed 5 years, pursuant to 32 VSA Section 3840?

- Marvin Bailey moved the article as warned. Seconded.
- Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 23. Shall the Town vote to advise the Vermont State Legislature as follows:

Whereas the establishment of a Public Bank in Vermont will help towns reduce the local tax burden by offering low cost bonds for public works and a depository for their accounts with competitive interest,

Whereas a Public Bank that makes loans and investments in Vermont's people and our economy will help create jobs, income, and economic security for all Vermonters,

We call on the State Legislature to create a Public Bank for Vermont that enhances the work of the Vermont Economic Development Authority, the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation, the Vermont Housing Finance Agency, the Municipal Bond Bank, and Vermont chartered community banks and credit unions by accepting deposits from the state and municipal governments and making loan programs available for students, homeowners, municipalities and enterprises to make Vermont economically stable, self-reliant, and successful.

- Mona Marceau moved the article as warned. Seconded.
- Kenneth Tyda spoke in opposition to the motion, indicating that he does not believe that the government should be involved in the banking business.
- Grace Gershuny spoke: Ms. Gershuny petitioned this article, and has collected a lot of information regarding this matter. The State government would not be directly involved in banking in the proposed public bank, according the current Vermont Senate bill. Instead, the public bank would allow local banks to leverage State funds to make loans to local municipalities and businesses. Vermont Economic Development Authority (VEDA) and other State entities are already lenders using State funds. The Public Bank would be a charter bank run by financial managers who are currently running VEDA and other State entities. This system would allow

interest earned on loans to return to State coffers, rather to a foreign financial institution as it currently does. North Dakota has had a successful public bank for many years.

- Gregory Jackmauh spoke in opposition to the motion, concurring with Mr. Tyda and suggesting that there are many local banks with which the State could establish loans and deposits.
- Sheri Colby-Schenck spoke, indicating a concern regarding insurance on deposits held at a public bank, and indicating that several state public banks have failed.
- Grace Gershuny spoke: The Federal Deposit Insurance Company insures up to \$250,000. As deposits in the public bank would always be in excess of this amount, insurance is not relevant to the topic at hand. The public bank would also increase transparency, since all banking activity would be public record. A study commissioned to forecast results from the introduction of a public bank in Vermont predicted that 250 jobs would be created in Vermont.
- Theodore De Macedo Soares spoke in support of the motion: It makes no sense for our state government to place public funds on deposit with a private entity that will profit from taxpayer dollars by lending funds to the State and to others.
- Marvin Baily moved for a division of the assembly. Six other voters ratified this motion.
- Paper ballots were distributed and votes were placed.
- The Board of Civil Authority tabulated the results.
- The Moderator announced the tabulated results of the paper ballot vote: The motion was defeated (total votes: 98; those in favor: 45; those opposed: 53).

ARTICLE 24. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

- Moderator suggested that the Town should thank Theodore Faris for his many years of good service to the Town.
 - A standing ovation was given.
- Theodore Faris spoke, thanking the voters, and stating that it has been a pleasure to serve the Town.
- Theodore Faris moved to adjourn. Seconded.
 - Passed by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Dennis McLam, Moderator

Jeremy Roberts, Selectman

Attest: Benjamin Heisholt, Town Clerk