



TOWN OF BARRINGTON

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Office of the Town Administrator

Town Administrator Report November 30, 2020 Select Board Meeting

RSA 91-A Emergency Provisions

- As Chair of the Barrington Select Board, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the [Governor's Emergency Order #12](#) pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.
- Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:
 - Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means:
 - We are utilizing Microsoft Teams for this electronic meeting. All members of the Select Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting.
 - **Phone Participation**
 - Dial [+1 603-664-0240](tel:+16036640240) and enter Conference ID: 676 749 973#
 - **Video Participation** (audio and video recording will be taking place)
 - Click link: bit.ly/BarrSB
 - Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:
 - We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Microsoft Teams (Phone or Video). Instructions have also been provided on the website of the Town of Barrington at: www.barrington.nh.gov
 - Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:
 - If anybody has a problem, please call (603) 664-0146 or email at: administration@barrington.nh.gov
 - Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting:
 - In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.
- Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.
- Let us start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance. When each member states their presence, please also state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

Remote Meeting Participation

- Teams Video Conference: bit.ly/BarrSB
- Call: [+1 603-664-0240](tel:+16036640240) (one-click link)
 - Conference ID: 676 749 973#



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1. Agenda

- a. See attached, [Agenda 2020-11-30](#)

2. Appointments

- a. Hilde Ahee – Recreation Commission Full Member – **Vote**
 - i. See attached, [Hilde Ahee Recreation Commission Appointment 201123](#)
 - ii. Term to expire March 2023
- b. Budget Presentation – Recreation – Discussion
 - i. Presented by Jessica Tennis, Recreation Director
 - ii. Electronic Budget Binder: www.barrington.nh.gov/2021budget
 1. [Recreation – Section 20](#)
 - iii. See attached, [Advisory Budget Committee Minutes 201124](#)
 - iv. Advisory Budget Committee Review and Comment
 1. The Advisory Budget Committee is asked to review and comment on the budget as presented.
 - v. Select Board Review and Comment
 1. The Select Board is asked to review and comment on the budget as presented.

3. Review of Minutes – **Vote**

- a. See attached, [Minutes 2020-11-16](#)
- b. Review of Previously Sealed Non-Public Minutes for Release – Discussion
 - i. The Select Board and staff are committed to an open and transparent operation of Town government. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Select Board has been meeting virtually which has prevented the traditional practice of reviewing previously sealed non-public meeting minutes to consider them being unsealed. The Select Board intends to continue meeting virtually for the foreseeable future. The Select Board will work with staff to implement a procedure for in-person review of non-public meeting minutes in preparation for future vote on unsealing the minutes.

4. Old Business

- a. Projected 2021 Revenue – Discussion
 - i. Staff have been closely monitoring the local financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic since March. Early concerns of dramatic revenue shortfalls or significant pandemic-related expenditures have not been realized. Locally collected revenues have remained on track, property tax delinquency is at a five-year low, and Federal/State grants have helped offset increased expenditures and increase the 2020 budget surplus.
 - ii. As we plan for 2021, revenue estimation is an important aspect of budget development and understanding how requests for appropriation will impact



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the property tax rate. I remain confident that most of our locally collected revenue will continue to remain stable into 2021. I have prepared the attached 2021 Revenue Estimation Workbook to show preliminary revenue estimates.

- iii. See attached, [2021 Revenue Estimation Workbook 201119](#)
- iv. The net reduction in estimated revenue from 2020 to 2021 is just over \$167,000 (a 4.6% reduction). The major reductions come from three categories; first, State sources of revenue (Meals and Rooms Tax, Highway Block Grant and Municipal Aid) are expected to decrease and have been budgeted accordingly; second, interest rates of dropped which reduces our interest on investments revenue source; finally, our reduced property tax delinquency rate and reduced interest rates will contribute to less revenue from interest and penalties on delinquent taxes. These expected revenue losses are partially offset by expected increases based on the Select Board updates to the fee schedule for the Building Department and the Transfer Station.
- v. These revenue estimates will be refined after the close of 2020 and may be adjusted in early January. Any adjustments which would materially affect the tax rate will be brought to the Board's attention.

b. 2021 Wage Increases – **Vote**

i. Cost of Living Increase

1. The 2019 Compensation Study explained that using cost of living adjustments to keep the pay plan current was an important maintenance step of the approved Compensation Study. The report recommended utilizing a combination of the Consumer Price Index and the cost of living increases provided by other NH communities as the basis for determining the value of an annual cost of living adjustment.
2. Through October, the 12-month Northeast Consumer Price Index is 1.1%. The Social Security Administration cost of living increase starting in January of 2021 is 1.3%. In a recent survey of NH communities 11 of the 13 communities are including a cost of living increase at an average of 1.28%.
3. A 1% cost of living increase would add \$21,483 to the 2021 operating budget.

ii. Step Increase

1. The Pay Plan established with the 2019 Compensation Study provides 13 steps within each grade for employees to progress through following qualifying performance evaluations. The increase between steps satisfies the goal of a 35% calculated range spread.



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2. In the same survey referenced above, all 13 communities include a step increase which ranges from 2% to 4.5% with a 2.7% average.
 3. A step increase is already included in the 2021 operating budget and represents \$58,590.
 - iii. The Advisory Budget Committee reviewed the presented information and considerations of total budget and tax rate impact. The Advisory Budget Committee unanimously recommends that the Select Board support a 1% cost of living increase and a step increase for eligible employees.
 - iv. The Select Board is asked to consider finalizing cost of living increases and step allowances for the 2021 operating budget.
- c. Updated Budget Review and Projected Tax Rate Impact – Discussion
- i. At the initial 2021 budget presentation on September 28, 2020, the Board was presented a \$7,271,058 budget (\$29,789 less than 2020). Over the past couple months, the Advisory Budget Committee, Select Board, and Department Heads have presented, discussed, and adjusted the budget from what was originally presented. Currently the budget request is \$7,267,566 (\$33,281 less than 2020).
 - ii. See attached, [2021 Budget Summary by Function 201123](#)
 - iii. The revenue estimate and proposed budget are the two biggest factors when estimating the impact of the operating budget on the 2021 property tax rate. For the first time, I have prepared an Operating Budget Tax Rate Impact table which demonstrates the various components of the tax rate calculation and how the projections for 2021 would impact the tax rate.
 - iv. See attached, [2021 Operating Budget Tax Rate Impact 201123](#)
 - v. The attached table demonstrates that the proposed budget is \$33,281 less than the current budget, all warrant articles are funded from fund balance, the proposed war service credit adjustment would add \$19,500 to the amount needing to be raised by taxes, overlay would be reduced by \$122,407, revenue is estimated to be \$167,097 less than 2020, the Town would need to raise \$30,909 more in property taxes, the added assessed value would add \$9,000,000 to the total assessed value and the tax rate impact would be \$0.
 - vi. I believe that net budget or revenue changes of +/- \$100,000 could be absorbed while maintaining a level municipal tax rate. I also believe that presenting a municipal operating budget that will keep the tax rate level is an important way to maintain support from the community during times of financial hardship.
- d. 2021 Warrant Articles and Unassigned Fund Balance Impact – Discussion
- i. Throughout the budget process, many reoccurring and a few new warrant articles have been presented, discussed, and adjusted. The majority of the



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- appropriation warrant articles are proposed to be funded from unassigned fund balance.
- ii. See attached, [Summary of Warrant Articles from Fund Balance 201123](#)
 - iii. As currently proposed, there are eleven warrant articles requesting to use a total of \$558,500 from unassigned fund balance.
 - iv. For the first time, I have prepared a Warrant Article Impact on Unassigned Fund Balance table which demonstrates the various components of unassigned fund balance and how the estimated end of year additions and proposed warrant articles would impact the Town's unassigned fund balance position.
 - v. See attached, [2021 Warrant Article Impact on Unassigned Fund Balance 201123](#)
 - vi. The attached table demonstrates that the current unassigned fund balance position is \$3,894,056 which represents 12.3% of the regular general fund operating expenditures and is \$62,306 less than the targeted midpoint of 12.5%. Current estimates show a \$600,000 budget surplus from 2020 (largely grant funds and large one-time expenditures which weren't necessary) and \$100,000 in excess revenue; combined, this will add \$700,000 to the unassigned fund balance, bringing the 2021 starting balance to \$4,594,056. The current warrant articles propose to use \$558,500 from unassigned fund balance which would bring the 2021 ending balance to \$4,035,556 which represents 12.2% of the estimated regular general fund operating expenditures and is \$108,481 less than the targeted midpoint of 12.5%.
 - vii. Maintaining 12.5% in unassigned fund balance is a critically important practice to help ensure financial stability. There are many communities across the State experiencing higher-than-normal property tax delinquency rates which creates a cash-flow shortage, forcing those communities to borrow tax anticipation notes in order to pay their bills. Three-tenths of a percent off from the targeted midpoint (12.2% vs. 12.5%) is not significant, but I would caution away from utilizing much more fund balance in 2021.
 - viii. A full listing of the warrant articles and proposed language can be found in the attachment below. Details highlighted in yellow have yet to be finalized.
 1. See attached, [2021 Warrant Article Requests 201123](#)
 - ix. The Advisory Budget Committee reviewed the current requested warrant articles and fund balance utilization at the 11/24 meeting ([Minutes](#)). The group had the following recommendations:
 1. The Select Board should commit to spending an additional \$100,000 on paving projects in 2021 with funding to come from the Transportation Fee Capital Reserve (current balance: \$347,000).



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2. The Select Board should include an article on the warrant to add ‘fire services’ to the Ambulance Services Revolving Fund. This added purpose would allow for an additional funding source to save towards Fire and Ambulance equipment replacement needs. Under the current plan, there would be a \$600,000 funding deficit in 2032. Once ‘fire services’ is added, the Advisory Budget Committee will develop a five-year proposal which transfers more funds into the Revolving Fund, eliminates the Capital Reserve contributions, and shifts ambulance service costs to the operating budget.
 3. The Select Board should adjust the Library Capital Reserve. While the Advisory Budget Committee did not have a specific suggestion with unanimous support, the majority felt that \$75,000 was too much money and the purpose should be narrowed to design only. The group also discussed placing the article on the tax rate opposed to utilizing unassigned fund balance.
- e. Sale of Map 102-0062 Per RSA 41:14-a – **Vote**
- i. See attached, [102-0062 RSA 41-14-a Notice with Map and Property Card](#)
 - ii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Conservation Commission Recommendation 201015](#)
 - iii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Planning Board Recommendation 201020](#)
 - iv. On September 28th, the Select Board reversed the involuntary lot merger of Map 102, Lot 62 which reestablished three lots. The divided lots will be sold to the abutters on either side of the property.
 - v. The Select Board is asked to consider selling one third of Map 102-0062 (the subplot has yet to be assigned) to Robert Tibbetts (a direct abutter) for \$1,271 which is one third of the total amount owed. The new owner must merge this property with their own.
 - vi. The Select Board is asked to consider selling two thirds of Map 102-0062 (the subplot has yet to be assigned) to Diana Piwowarczyk (a direct abutter) for \$2,541 which is two thirds of the total amount owed. The new owner must merge these properties with their own.
- f. Sale of Map 112-0049 Per RSA 41:14-a – **Vote**
- i. See attached, [112-0049 RSA 41-14-a Notice with Map and Property Card](#)
 - ii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Conservation Commission Recommendation 201015](#)
 - iii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Planning Board Recommendation 201020](#)
 - iv. At this time, no direct abutter is interested in purchasing this property. The Town is aware of two abutting properties which may be under new ownership in the near future and the potential new owners have expressed interest in adding this lot to the property they may purchase. By finalizing



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the RSA 41:14-a process now, the Select Board will have the future authority to sell this lot without a separate statutory process. This lot will not be sold without future action by the Select Board.

- v. The Select Board is asked to consider selling Map 112-0049 to a direct abutter for less than the full amount owed.

- g. Sale of Map 126-0018 Per RSA 41:14-a – **Vote**
 - i. See attached, [126-0018 RSA 41-14-a Notice with Map and Property Card](#)
 - ii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Conservation Commission Recommendation 201015](#)
 - iii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Planning Board Recommendation 201020](#)
 - iv. The Select Board is asked to consider selling Map 126-0018 to Nicholas Mitropoulos (a direct abutter) for \$31,540 which represents the full amount of taxes, interest, and penalties owed to the Town. The new owner must merge this property with their own.

- h. Sale of Map 273-0034 Per RSA 41:14-a – **Vote**
 - i. See attached, [273-0034 RSA 41-14-a Notice with Map and Property Card](#)
 - ii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Conservation Commission Recommendation 201015](#)
 - iii. See attached, [RSA 41-14-a Planning Board Recommendation 201020](#)
 - iv. The Select Board is asked to consider selling Map 273-0034 to Christopher & Heather Albin (a direct abutter) for \$50 which is less than the total amount owed. The new owner must merge this property with their own.

- i. Recreation Interest in Map 234, Lot 1.6 – Discussion
 - i. At the October 19th meeting, the Select Board discussed a request to consider selling Map 234, Lot 1.6. The Select Board asked that the abutters and the Recreation Commission be consulted prior to further Board discussion or action.
 - ii. At the 11/16 meeting, the Recreation Commission discussed the lot and any current or future plans. Currently, they do not have any planned use of the lot, but they would like to request more time to evaluate how the lot could be incorporated into their strategic plan.

- j. NHDES Clean Diesel Grant – **Vote**
 - i. Through much hard work and determination by the Road Agent, the Town has been selected by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Service as a candidate for the Clean Diesel Grant Program. The goal of this program is to replace equipment with pre-emissions diesel engines with new equipment that have clean diesel engines. The program covers 25% or up to \$40,000 of the cost. The requirements of the grant program include



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permanently destroying the pre-emissions diesel engine and extensive reporting over a five-year period.

- ii. See attached, [NHDES Clean Diesel Grant Agreement](#)
- iii. See attached, [NHDES Clean Diesel Grant Agreement Exhibits A Through C](#)
- iv. See attached, [NHDES Clean Diesel Grant Certificate of Authority](#)
- v. If awarded, this grant would offset up to \$40,000 of the cost for the six-wheeled dump truck purchased earlier this year and currently being fitted with equipment. The 2003 International would be decommissioned.
- vi. The Select Board is asked to consider accepting this grant and authorizing the Town Administrator to sign all accompanying documents. Please note that this grant is not finalized until it is approved by Governor and Council.

k. Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement – **Vote**

- i. Following the Select Board's update to the Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement, the Conservation Commission began reviewing the updated document. The Chair of the Conservation Commission, Ken Grossman, and Select Board member, Dan Ayer, worked with the Commission to align the goals of the Conservation Commission and Select Board. To that end, they have proposed a few changes to further articulate the working relationship between the two groups.
- ii. See attached, [Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement 200914](#)
- iii. See attached, [Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement Redlined Draft 201123](#)
- iv. See attached, [Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement Clean Draft 201123](#)
- v. The Select Board is asked to consider ratifying the updated Conservation Commission Memorandum of Agreement.

5. New Business

a. Auction Power of Attorney – **Vote**

- i. The auctioneer selected for the land sale auction on December 12th is also an attorney and will handle all closing activities as part of the agreement. In order to do so, he must be designated as Power of Attorney for the stated purpose.
- ii. See attached, [Power of Attorney – Barrington to Sager 201118](#)
- iii. The Select Board is asked to constitute and appoint Richard D. Sager as the Town's true and lawful attorney-in-fact for it and in its name and its behalf with special power to execute and acknowledge all deeds and instruments which may be necessary or convenient to transfer and convey the real estate owned by the Town of Barrington being auctioned on December 12, 2020.



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- b. Welfare and Town Clerk Position Adjustments – **Vote**
- i. The Welfare Caseworker, David Balian, has accepted the Welfare Director position in the City of Dover. David will be missed, but we are glad that he is moving into a position where he can positively impact more individuals on a daily basis.
 - ii. While evaluating the vacancy, an opportunity arose to increase the availability and efficiency of the Welfare position while supporting the adjusted succession management plan for the Town Clerk’s Office. This adjustment would result in a 10% FTE reduction and a small budget savings.
 - iii. I would propose assigning the welfare responsibilities to a current Town Clerk’s Office employee with previous welfare casework experience. This employee would remain full-time in a new position, Town Clerk Assistant and Welfare Caseworker.
 1. See attached [Town Clerk Assistant and Welfare Caseworker Job Description 201119](#)
 - iv. The Deputy Town Clerk position would revert to part-time with expanded hours to cover the time dedicated to welfare by the Town Clerk Assistant and Welfare Caseworker.
 1. See attached, [Deputy Town Clerk Job Description 201119](#)
 - v. The succession management plan for the Town Clerk’s Office still calls for the two full-time and two-part time positions to be reverted back to three full-time positions. There is no timeline on that next step, but this adjustment does not change that plan.
 - vi. If approved, this transition would take place on 12/1/2020.
 - vii. The Select Board is asked to consider approving the new Town Clerk Assistant and Welfare Caseworker Job Description and the updated Deputy Town Clerk Job Description.
- c. Body Worn Camera Policy Review – **Vote**
- i. The 2020 Operating Budget, as approved by voters, included an appropriation to secure body worn cameras for the Police Department. Earlier this year, the Town selected Axon, through a competitive process, as the body worn camera vendor. The equipment has arrived in Barrington and Police Department leadership is finalizing the implementation timeline. As part of that process, the Body Worn Camera Policy must be finalized.
 - ii. See attached, [Barrington Police Department Body Worn Camera Policy 201117](#)
 - iii. As described during various stages of the process to acquire body worn cameras, State statutes regarding body worn cameras read much like a policy and leaves few questions unanswered. Although the policy is consistent with RSA 105-D, we submitted the attached policy for



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- independent legal review out of an abundance of caution. Town counsel is comfortable with the policy as presented.
- iv. The Select Board is asked to consider approving the Body Worn Camera Policy.
- d. Barrington Oaks Community Development Block Grant 2021 – Discussion
- i. In 2020, Barrington sponsored a Community Development Block Grant for the Lee Oaks park for water and sewer improvements. The Barrington Oaks park has approached the Town requesting sponsorship in 2021 for water and sewer improvements.
 - ii. The Select Board is asked to discuss if they would consider sponsoring Barrington Oaks in 2021 for a Community Development Block Grant.
- e. Reverse Involuntary Lot Merger – Map 126, Lot 12 – **Vote**
- i. State statute continues to require municipalities to authorize the reversal of involuntary lot mergers at the property owner’s request.
 - ii. See attached, Reverse Involuntary Lot Merger – [Map 126 – Lot 12 – Jillette Road – 201123](#)
 - iii. Staff has reviewed the request and confirmed that the lots were involuntarily merged.
 - iv. The Select Board is asked to consider authorizing the reversal of the involuntary lot merger on Map 126, Lot 12.
- f. Mortgage Search Company – Sanders Search LLC – **Vote**
- i. The Town contracts for mortgage search services related to the tax lien and tax deed process. The company used for the past few years raised their prices dramatically for 2021. As a result, the Tax Collector solicited quotes from other qualified vendors.
 - ii. As a result of that process, the Tax Collector has selected Sanders Search LLC of Newmarket, NH.
 1. See attached, [Sanders Search LLC Contractor Agreement 201124](#)
 - iii. The value of this contract does not require Select Board action (less than \$10,000), but the contract requires a \$700 down payment (of sorts) and we felt that the unique nature of this provision warranted Board review.
 - iv. The Select Board is asked to consider signing the Sanders Search LLC Contract with a \$700 down payment.
- g. Fire and Rescue All-Terrain Vehicle Warrant Article – Discussion
- i. Barrington is fortunate to have an ever-growing number of trails and recreational opportunities. In recent years, the amount has grown dramatically with SELT’s Stonehouse Forest and the expansion of the Town’s Goodwill property. The Fire Chief has regularly advised the Board



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and community about the increased demand these recreational spaces put on his department. He has explained that the increasing calls for service will eventually require additional equipment for his department to meet the needs of the community.

- ii. Just this past week, the Fire Department spent two days deep in the woods of Stonehouse Forest fighting a multiple-acre brush fire with mutual aid from Strafford, Rochester and Lee. This marks the third time this year that Barrington has relied on Strafford's all-terrain vehicle in a fire or rescue operation. The growing calls for service include fire, injured hikers, and lost hikers.
- iii. The Fire Chief would like the Select Board to consider presenting voters with a warrant article (on the tax rate) to fund the cost to purchase and outfit an all-terrain vehicle. The expected cost would be \$40,000 with a 20-year useful life. The warrant article is projected to add 3.5 cents/1,000 to the tax rate or \$10.50 to the tax bill on a \$300,000 property.

6. November Work Anniversaries

- a. Jonathan Janelle • Firefighter • 22 Years
- b. Erin Paradis • Transfer Station Administrator and Highway Support Assistant • 12 Years
- c. Richard Smith • Firefighter • 8 Years
- d. David Balian • Welfare Caseworker • 8 Years
- e. Terrence Glazier • Transfer Station Attendant • 1 Year

7. Barrington Veterans – Thank You for Your Service!

- a. Erik Baker
- b. Tyler Currier
- c. Scott Young
- d. Sam Surawski
- e. Michael Bayer
- f. Sean Guile
- g. Donald Millette
- h. Jake Roger
- i. Richard Smith
- j. Chris Wareing
- k. Lilah Cherum
- l. Cole Poth
- m. Bob Brown

8. 2020 Select Board Goals

- a. See attached, [2020 Select Board Goals](#)
- b. See attached, [2020 Select Board Goal and Budget Mid-Year Analysis – 200727](#)



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9. Upcoming Meetings/Events

- a. December 7, 2020 – Select Board Meeting – Advisory Budget Committee Presentation and Select Board Budget Deliberation
- b. December 14, 2020 – Select Board Meeting – Budget Finalization and Preparation for Public Hearing
- c. January 4, 2021 – Select Board Meeting – Budget and Warrant Article Public Hearing