



March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Residents and Neighbors,

Despite having to cancel our first meeting due to the March 13<sup>th</sup> snowstorm, I have enjoyed my first month as Mayor. Working with Council, we are already addressing the following items:

- Prior to the election, we passed the Council Email Policy that I wrote and proposed. This will allow greater transparency of Council by having a consistent email address in working with the public, and public emails will be maintained by the City. Councilors received their new accounts and have begun using them.
- Council reviewed the Onboarding Process that I created with City Staff members. This documentation outlines Councilor interaction with staff, either through the City Manager or copying him on correspondence, so that he is aware of situations.
- Councilors contact information is now listed on the City website. We will also be working to get business cards to hand out to residents, so they can remain in touch with us on issues to be addressed.
- Councilors reviewed and signed an acknowledgment of pertinent policies such as the Email Policy, Social Media Policy and Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Council discussed and set our Ground Rules. We are the representatives of our City and need to hold ourselves accountable for our actions and our behavior.

To help accomplish City goals, I have started meeting with several organizations and individuals in our area. To name a few:

- We need to reach out to residents to fill vacancies on all committees to start helping the City meet its goals.
- Our Planning Commission has been busy with the re-write of the Unified Development Ordinance.
- The Barre Area Development Corporation is working with the Imagination Company on marketing within Barre City and Barre Town.
- Part of our success will be in partnering with our neighbors. I have spoken to Mayor Watson in Montpelier and other municipal officials, Governor Scott and members of his staff, and Congressman Welch on different issues related to the City. Councilor Boutin and I reached out to select board members in Barre Town to invite them to march with us in parades and how to best address the services that we fund together.
- I was invited to participate with SHS Seniors vs. Staff Basketball Game as well as speak with Mr. Miller's Civics class. We need to ensure a strong relation with the youth in our community.
- The City Manager invited me to a Department Head meeting with City Leadership. This was to help relay the information that the Council works through the manager, but also to ask them to help us to find more efficient ways to operate the City, let us know the tools they need to complete their tasks, and to work with Council to help promote communications through press releases.

- And we held a farewell gathering for former Mayor Thom Lauzon and presented him with a Key to the City. I want to thank him again for his service to our City.

As part of another goal to help remediate blighted buildings, Council reviewed the 2013 Tax Stabilization Policy and approved a tax stabilization agreement for the Reynolds House. Although there was some discussion of lease or sale of the South-End Municipal Parking Lot, there was no action taken and the lot currently stays under City ownership and management.

Since Town Meeting Day, Council has seen a few new challenges for us to address:

- Karen Nelson from the Department of Health presented on the 3-4-50 Health Initiative. The City is at the Silver Level, but steps can be taken to become the first Municipality in the State to achieve the Gold standard.
- Council needs to warn and appoint a member from the City of Barre to the Central Vermont Internet Board by the end of April. We need to note the vacancy and accept letters for appointment, and an alternate, for the position.
- Councilors were informed that the Unified Development Ordinance was a complete re-write, so all Councilors will need to be aware of the changes that are being proposed. A public hearing is scheduled for March 22nd and further action will come from the Planning Commission. Eventually, Council will need to hold Public Hearings and act on the Ordinance changes.
- There was a Cobblestone Request, which will be used to help fund the Scouting Monument project.

City Council approved several items including the following:

- The Stray Animal Holding Agreement
- Contract Award for Waste Water Treatment Facility Biosolids Disposal
- Purchase of Replacement Chemical Storage Tanks at Water Treatment Plant
- Approve CV Regional Planning Commission Program Management Agreement for Pouliot Ave.
- Accepted the American Gift Fund Pool Refurbishment Enhancement Grant

And lastly, there are several new and returning initiatives being discussed:

- I met with Jason Moulton, who will be bringing back the Green Mountain Comic Expo. He has several different events that he would like to try in the City of Barre including Comic-Con in September and Horror Fest in October.
- Regarding Spaulding High School and the "Button up Barre" idea presented by Principal Waterhouse, I reached out to the Barre Area Senior Center to see if there is interest or a way to have people sign up for assistance.
- And I visited exhibits at both the Vermont Granite Museum and the Vermont History Center. Both organizations have exciting plans and changes for 2018.

Lucas J. Herring  
Mayor, City of Barre