



July 3rd, 2018

Residents and Neighbors,

Just like in June, the first meeting in July was cancelled, but there were still many accomplishments over the past month.

The City Manager introduced the new Fire Chief to the community. The City had operated with one person functioning as both the Fire and Police Chief. This separated the roles for the current Chief, Tim Bombardier, to act only of Chief of Police, and the hiring of Douglas Brent to fill the role as Chief of the Fire Department. I want to thank Chief Bombardier for performing these duties over the past several years.

Pearl Street Pedestrian Walkway was originally discussed by this Council back in April, but Michael Hellein of the Planning Commission attended to offer a different prospective. There was discussion on postponing the project or reallocating funding to another project, which these funds were a part of the voter approved budget. Council affirmed to continue to move forward with the project and City Manager Steve Mackenzie will move forward with the RFP as was previously decided.

As part of the Onboarding process noted in March, Councilors started hearing from the City Department Heads, touring different City facilities, and receiving an overview of their departmental functions:

- Overview of the Recreation Department from the Assistant Director of Buildings and Community Services Stephanie Quaranta.

I was also able to take some time to attend Forums in our community:

- VLCT Economic Development Forum. There was great discussion on ways to gain Vermont Arts Council Grants for possible Main Street Banner Painting; resources to test bulb-outs and pocket parks with non-permanent structures, improve community and neighborhood engagement with flowers in the downtown, neighborhood potlucks, and smaller neighborhood projects.
- ACCD Opportunity Zone Forum in Montpelier. There were still many questions to answer with this Federal program, which I will be looking to convene a follow up in the City of Barre.
- Walking Audit. For the first meeting of this group I met with Karen Nelson, Joan Marie Misek and Megan Rigoni at the Department of Health, Allegra Williams from Local Motion, Michael Hellein of the Planning Commission, and Steve Mackenzie, Bill Ahearn and Stephanie Quaranta from the City. The efforts of this group are to review how walkable and mobile our residents can be within the City. Director Bill Ahearn provided a virtual tour of some of the areas he as flagged as needing the most work and the group walked different segments stemming out from City Hall.
- Mayor's Coalition Meeting in Burlington. I met with fellow Vermont Mayors to discuss issues that affect all our communities. Since we were in Burlington, we were also invited to stay for a Chittenden County Opioid Alliance meeting. Mayor Watson and I will be looking to attend a meeting with the Washington County group.

- Congressman Welch's Discussion on Opioids. Our local THRIVE group played host in the Downstreet Building to discuss issues within our area and listen to stories of those in recovery on what is and is not happening. The discussion noted that issues are drug issues, and not just with opioids.

City Council approved several items including the following:

- Approval of Brusa Trust Funding Request for Highgate Summer Shakespeare Program
- DOC Grant Amendment
- Authorize Purchase of Water Treatment Facility Filter Media
- Council Approval of Loan Application for WWTF Improvements
- Council Approval of Loan Application for Water Distribution System Asset Mgmt. Plan
- Approval of FY19 Tax Anticipation Note Paperwork
- Authorization to Execute FY18 Audit Engagement letter with Sullivan & Powers
- Authorize Manager to Execute 2018 VYCC Services Agreement
- Approval of the No Smoking Area for the Barre Heritage Festival
- Ratification of Executed Letter of Intent re: Barre-Montpelier Rail Corridor Study
- Discussion on Tax Billing, Setting Municipal Tax Rate, Adjusting Due Dates

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

- Barre Asset Naming Policy, which was a follow up from the April discussion with the naming of Cornerstone Field
- We discussed the need of a Bond for improvements at the Waste Water Treatment Facility to be in conjunction with August Primary.
- Council received a Scouting Monument Committee update from Stephen Restelli, which the intent is to have the monument ready for the November Scouting and Veterans Day parade in Barre City
- I am looking forward to another great Barre Heritage Festival this year. Please make sure to mark your calendars for July 25th through 28th for this year's event!

Lucas J. Herring
Mayor, City of Barre