



May 29th, 2019:

Residents and Neighbors,

It's been a wet May, and many have asked when Spring is going to be here. A lot has happened between rain drops, though. The Vermont Bicycle Shop and Forget-Me-Not Flowers and Gifts both had ribbon cuttings in their new locations, while the Reynolds House opened its doors for business. The Vermont Granite Museum has opened for the season and the City Manager solidified that the pool will open again for one last season prior to renovations. If you watched the Food Network, you may have seen Stefano Coppola from Morse Block Deli competing on "Guy's Grocery Games" showing off his skills as a chef. And Katarina Lisaius from Senator Sanders office visited to see areas where the City is growing as well as took inventory of areas needing a little more support.

We had a successful Greenup Day and residents took advantage of the Yard Waste Disposal and Curbside yard waste pick up programs offered by the City. City staff prepared the cemeteries and parks for Memorial Day. I want to express my thanks to staff and volunteers who put up the Flags up on Main Street, at headstones, and other areas throughout the City. The City of Barre will be holding its Memorial Day ceremony on May 30th at City Hall Park, with the parade kicking off at 10:30 a.m.

Council continued to receive presentations from organizations in the City and our neighbors:

- Richard Swenson presented on behalf of Relay for Life, a program through the American Cancer Society, as they will holding their event at Spaulding High School in June.
- Council received an update on current legislative items from Senator Perchlik and Representatives Walz and Anthony. The session isn't over, but they focused on key issues regarding the City of Barre they were trying to finalize prior to the session ending.
- Scott McLaughlin and Patricia Meriam presented information about the Vermont Granite Museum last year, as well as some of the new items that we could expect this year. As part of their Opening Day Extravaganza, the Schein family donated the "Repose" sculpture, crafted by Giuliano Cecchinelli, to be placed on a new path on the museum's grounds.
- As part of the Barre Partnership update, Council was introduced to their new Executive Director Tracie Lewis. Plans are in place for the Concerts in the Park series again this Summer and work is now underway for the Farmers Market and Barre Heritage Festival.
- Ruth Ruttenberg and Carolyn Shapiro presented on behalf of the Old Labor Hall and upcoming events. They have hired a baker to operate and offer workshops at the Rise Up Bakery.
- Jolinda LaClair was unable to attend the discussion on progress of the Governor's Opioid Coordination Council, but Eileen Peltier was able to pinch-hit. She spoke about the need for recovery centers and housing to address issues, not only with Opioids, but to address usage and prevention of substance abuse disorders.

City Council approved several items including the following:

- After several meetings to discuss, Council approved both the First and Second reading of the Miscellaneous Ordinance. The Ordinance was updated to reflect changes in law and ensure that provisions were compliant with other ordinances within the City.
- Council approved an allocation from the Brusa Trust Allocation for the Highgate Kids Summer Program.
- City Clerk Carol Dawes provided and updated Municipal Fees Schedule, which Council discussed and adopted. There are additional items on the fee schedule that were discussed, but action is to take place at a later time.
- Council received an unsolicited proposal to purchase a land parcel next to the Orange Reservoir. On recommendation by staff and the Manager, Council declined the offer.
- Council Authorized DuBois & King to design the Metro-Way segment of the multi-purpose path, and to also create a feasibility study for a segment that would potentially connect the Smith Street Segment with Enterprise Alley through the River Street area.
- As part of the reconciliation of the Big Dig, Council approved several Finance and Management Agreements amending the original agreement to complete the billing for what the City owes the Vermont Agency of Transportation. Approval of the Big Dig Agreements also supported the closing of the FY18 Audit, which Fred Duplessis presented to Council. Mr. Duplessis also noted that, because of the hiring and work of Financial Director Dawn Monahan, that the FY19 Audit should have less deficiencies and be reported on sooner than it has been in several years.
- After several meetings, Council approved both the First and Second reading of the Vacant Building Ordinance. City Staff had been working on this effort for about four years, which this work will allow greater enforcement of buildings that are not being maintained.
- Council approved the Certification of Local Government Approval for the Sexual Assault Crisis Team, which will allow that organization to apply for grant funding.
- Upon recommendation of the Manager, the Keith and Pearl Street Bids were accepted by Council so that work can begin in the street and parking lot areas.

Council has made a couple of additional appointments as we lead up to reappointments in June. The City has begun its recruitment process for current committees, commissions, and boards, as well as discuss if there is a need for any additional bodies of the City needed:

- Approval to merge and rename the Routes & Trails Advisory Group with the Charles Semprebon Memorial Bike Path Committee, which is now the Paths, Routes and Trails Committee.
- Appointment of Giuliano Cecchinelli and Mark Martin to the Paths, Routes and Trails Committee.
- Appointment of Greg Kelly as the City Representative & Lucas Herring as the Alternate to CVFiber Communications District.

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

- May 30th is Water Filtration Day. There is an Open House from 8am to 2pm at the Barre Water Filtration Facility at 164 Reservoir Road in Orange.
- On June 1st, City residents will again be able to pick up free trees through the Arbor Day Foundation for planting at their residence.

- City Councilors cancelled their June 4th meeting and instead will be holding Ward meetings. The intent is to have Councilors converse directly with members in their Wards about issues that are affecting them and be able to bring that information back to City Council.
- As part of the Paths, Routes and Trails Committee on May 8th, there was discussion on clearing the old rail bed as part of an extension to the current bike path.
- Council noted Public Service Recognition Week, Mental Health Month, Thank-a-Teacher Day, and National Correctional Officer Week, all of which occurred in May.
- There was discussion on Chapter 18, Regulations of Solid Waste Disposal, which will be coming before council to allow for composting within the City of Barre.
- Councilor now have their City email accounts listed along with VT Alerts to receive emergency notifications. Staff are starting to use SharePoint and other online tools to help collaborate as a collaboration tool, to make sure that Councilors and staff remain efficient.
- Neighborhood Watch Signs have been delivered to the City and staff will start to place them in areas where the groups have formed.
- The I-89 Ledge Removal Project at exit 6 will have an impact on our downtown. While Exit 6 is closed to northbound traffic, some of the traffic will be routed through Exit 7 and down Route 62 during the months of June and July.

Lucas J. Herring
Mayor, City of Barre