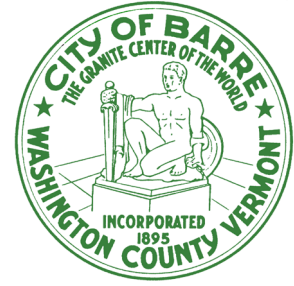


June 30th, 2021



Residents and Neighbors,

It is the end of the Fiscal Year for the City. Although we still need to go through an annual audit the financial projections, including adjustments during COVID, are favorable for ending the year with a surplus. This is also before the City receives ARPA funds through the Federal Government, which Council will prepare for those financial conversations as more is learned on how those funds can be used.

The City Pool reopened with a ribbon cutting ceremony held on Sunday, June 27th. Many residents gathered for a photo before plunging into the pool. With the current heat wave across the country, the pool has been an added relief for keeping cool. Temporary fencing will remain up around the pool until the grass has rooted, but the facility is open with similar hours prior to the pandemic. City Hall reopening also officially occurred on June 21st.

On June 10th, Council held a Special Meeting with Department Heads to go over priorities. The list of accomplishments in FY21 were mentioned and items being proposed for FY22 were reviewed. There was not enough time to discuss Department Head items, so these items will be deferred to individual Department Head presentations over the next several months.

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn reviewed the bidding process and recommended the contract be awarded to low bidder Extreme Excavating. This bid covers the Perry Street and Camp Street areas that the DPW crew are currently working on, which paving is expected to be completed by the end of July.

Planning Commission Chair David Sichel requested input for items to be reviewed by the Commission. Councilors listed Unified Development Ordinance changes regarding housing demolition, signage in downtown businesses, responsible parties in the Municipal Plan Implementation Table, and prioritization or both Neighborhood Development Areas and Community Rating System.

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

- Sandy Rouse provided an overview of the relationship between Central Vermont Home, Health and Hospice with the Barre City Emergency Medical Services Department. This collaboration allowed for increased service to those needing medical care at home through the pandemic while decreasing calls for services, and costs, for the City. The overall effort resulted in a Community Service Award for Deputy Chief Joseph Aldsworth.
- As part of the Vacant Building Ordinance Update, Fire Marshall Robert Howarth noted the decrease in total number of vacant buildings from 154 in 2017 to 26 in 2021. He noted that either naming an appeal committee or having the Council hear appeals may be a change to support the process and addressed questions with tax sale properties and dealing with accumulations of garbage and rodents on abandoned properties.
- Council received a Legislative Update from Barre City Representatives and Washington County Senators. This session focused primarily on the pandemic with resident and business assistance, growing a clean economy, housing rehabilitation, and changes to the per pupil weighting system for education.

- Scott McLaughlin from the Vermont Granite Museum gave an overview of operations from the last time he visited Council nearly 18 months ago. The Museum recently received to restore old film of the granite industry in Barre.
- Council heard presentations from Linda Couture of the Recreation Committee and Alexander Raeburn of the Public Art Committee.

Council completed its annual appointment process to different bodies of the City. New appointments included the following:

- Heather Milne Ritchie to the Cemetery Committee
- Hannah Morgan to the Community Garden Committee
- Dawn Magnus to the Community Garden Committee
- Janette Shaffer to the Cow Pasture Committee
- Michael Hellein to the Development Review Board
- Jim McWilliam to the Planning Commission
- Alexander Raeburn to the Police Advisory Committee
- Nancy Wolfe to the Recreation Committee
- Janelle Starr to the Recreation Committee

Other items approved by Council include the following:

- Approved FY22 City Council Priorities
- Approved the City Fee Schedule
- Approved changes to Chapter 17 Traffic Ordinances
- Approved changes to the Rules of Procedure Policy
- Approved Alertus Security Hardware and Software for City Hall
- Approved Bola Wrap Restraint Devices
- Approved the Annual Supply Bid Awards
- Approved Selection of the Citywide Re-Appraisal Contract
- Approved Execution of FY22 Fuel Oil and Propane Contracts
- Approved change of initial Property Tax due date to September 15th, 2021
- Approved creation of the Manager's Search Committee
- Re-established the Organics Diversion Committee as a Task Force

Upcoming items include the following:

- Approval of FY22 Municipal Property Tax Rate
- Approve Assignment of East Montpelier Parcel Sale Proceeds
- Announcement of Tire Disposal Day
- ARPA Funding Allocation Discussion
- Discussion on Council Ground Rules
- Update from Central Vermont Solid Waste District
- Council is seeking nominations for the Athena Leadership and Young Professional Awards

Be safe and be well,

Lucas J. Herring
Mayor, City of Barre