



August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020:

Residents and Neighbors,

Summer is slowly slipping away, as can be seen with the recent drop in temperatures on the thermometers. I have spoken to many people that have had “stay-cations” or otherwise found fun things to do while social distancing in the area. Before we know it, kids will be using a hybrid of online and in person coursework for going back to school.

Council started off the month by setting the FY21 budget, but it took another week to set the tax rate as the summary sheet had errors that needed correction and verification. The result was an amount to be raised by taxes that was the same as on Town Meeting Day in March, but the overall tax increase was reduced to 2.99%.

Council also finalized interviews and made appointments to the three newest committees. Seven people were appointed to the Diversity Committee where the City Manager will be the staff liaison, 5 members were appointed to the Civilian Oversight and Advisory Board, and the Public Art Committee now has 4 members. The Diversity Committee held its first meeting in August, while the other two are scheduled to hold their inaugural meetings in September. Two others were appointed to the Cow Pasture committee in August.

Executive Director Rick DeAngelis spoke to concerns at the Good Samaritan Haven, which mostly stemmed from limited operations due to Covid. A request was made to the City to allow an exception to the current Development Review Board (DRB) permit to provide daytime support to individuals and keep them in a safe environment, not being exposed to the general public. The process to request a change from the DRB would not be able to be held until October, with restrictions to be lifted for daytime use on November 1<sup>st</sup>, which council decided to allow the Mayor to enact an emergency order for daytime operations to occur.

Council discussed a Mission and Vision statement to use for the City of Barre. The language was sent to Department Heads for review and is intended to be the starting point for the City’s Strategic Plan. This information will also be communicated to Boards, Commissions and Committees to ensure the work they are doing tie back to the overall direction and goals for the City.

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

- DPW Director Bill Ahearn provided an overview of the Digester Boiler installation, which has alleviated the odor in the north end of the City.
- Mayor Herring reviewed the Council Priorities as well as the Ground Rules.
- Caroline Earle and Karl Rinker from the Barre Rotary presented an Art Splash Fundraiser based on creation of large fiberglass cars, cats, and dogs.
- Gabe Lajeunesse from Edward Jones spoke to changes that can be made in the current City of Barre Investment Policy. The intent is to invest in environmentally friendly and socially just portfolios that have historical returns similar to what the City of Barre is currently receiving.

- Planning Director Janet Shatney provided an overview of changing the Food Vending Policy into an Ordinance on Peddling. Given the number of revisions and scope change, the document will be reworked and brought back before Council at a later date.
- City Manager Steve McKenzie discussed the warnings needed for committees, which may not need to include the full agenda in the paper due to the documentation being listed on the City website and Facebook page.
- BCS Assistant Director Stephanie Quaranta provided an overview of the different sections of the Multipurpose Path being considered as part of this year's grant application process and discussed other options for making Barre City a more walkable community.
- DPW Director Bill Ahearn provided an overview of a three-year program to repair manhole covers and street drains.

City Council approved several items including the following:

- Approval of WWTF Loader Purchase Authorization
- Nomination of Alexis Dexter for the Athena Leadership Award
- Approval of FY21 Water/Sewer Rate Resolution 2020-09
- Approval of Change Order Request for the City Pool
- Approval of City Hall Repairs Bid from Vermont Mechanical
- Approval of City Hall Boiler & Heating System Upgrade Contract
- Annual Report Dedication to Arthur Ristau and Memoriam to Tim "Squid" Copeland
- Approval of Resolution 2020-10 for Women's Suffrage

Upcoming items in September include the following:

- Council will review fees for use of Electric Vehicle charging stations
- First Public Hearing on the Draft 2020 Municipal Plan is on September 8th
- Council will consider the sale for the Valliere Ave parcel and property in East Montpelier
- The Manager is to create the RFP for a Citywide Reassessment
- The City is requesting an extension of one year through our legislators for submission of the TIF Bond
- The City Manager is to present the signed Administrative Policies
- Council will review the Grants Management and Procurement Policies
- From the creation of the Mission and Vision statements for the City, council will request reports and statements from each committee.
- Council will look to award the Alumni Hall Boiler, Heating System Upgrade and Bathroom Refurbishment Contracts

Be well,

Lucas J. Herring  
Mayor, City of Barre