



September 30th, 2020:

Residents and Neighbors,

Leaves are at or near peak, and school is back in session. The month has been very dry, placing a watch on the water level at the Dix Reservoir, and the recent rain will help replenish levels. The leaves falling will need to be cleared from streets to allow for drainage and the City is offering the Yard Waste Disposal program to support residents but will not be able to provide curb side pickup this year.

City Manager Steve Mackenzie has noted several projects that started in September. The heating system in Alumni Hall is being replaced and chairs in the Auditorium are being replaced by those donated from the Barre Opera House. Water Main flushing is also underway. The Pool restoration project should have a report in the near future.

The City has applied for a VTRANS Grant Application for Granite Street Segment of the Multipurpose Path. The City has also received a grant for Digital Land Records and a favorable update on the status of the FY20 budget.

Council held the first and second hearing for the 2020 Municipal Plan. The plan had minimal changes but has become compliant with state requirements for municipal plans and for accessing grants. Council held discussion on Chapter 3 Animal and Fowl revisions, mainly around dogs being allowed at parks and at the cemeteries. There was also discussion on Chapter 11 Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions changes, concerning mainly changes in times that parks are open and enforcement of noise-enhancing vehicle exhaust systems.

Council is also entertaining sales of smaller land parcels, which will start with a parcel on Valliere Avenue, but also the sale of a larger parcel of land in East Montpelier. These sales will decrease the number of unused lots by the City and also increase revenues by placing taxable properties back on the Grand List.

Councilors approved the City's Mission and Vision statement. The communication back to Boards, Commissions and Committees to tie work back to the overall direction and goals for the City has been on hold while Council decides changes to the Social Media Policy and if committees are able to use Facebook and other tools for outreach. Council also approved appointment of Marichel Vaught to the Barre City A.D.A. Committee.

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

- Bob Stark from the U.S. Census provide information on self-reporting, which was down to about 60% this year, but that enumerators have been hired to gather the additional information to complete the data collection. This effort has increased data collection to over 99%.
- Public Works Director Bill Ahearn provided information on an Unaccepted Street Policy but noted it has been more difficult to solidify due to the research needed on right of ways, land user, and access to certain parcels for development.

- City Manager Steve Mackenzie and Public Works Director Bill Ahearn have released a planning RFP for the Department of Public Works Campus. This campus houses a number of buildings, equipment and tools that have been in need of redesign for many years.
- City Clerk Carol Dawes discussion the process for Town Meeting Day request for funding. Clerk Dawes will be working with Councilor Hemmerick for changes to the Funding Request policy.
- Electronic vehicle charging stations will be reviewed by the parking committee along with Park Mobile implementation. There may be a way to save costs and increase revenues by including the locations of the charging stations with the Park Mobile App.

Upcoming items in October include the following:

- City Hall will be open on a part-time basis beginning October 6th, although the City Council meeting will be cancelled for that night.
- The City's Public Safety Forum will be held at the Elks Lodge #1535 and via Zoom on October 7th at 6pm.
- 1st Reading Ordinance Changes #2020-04: Chapter 3. Animals and Fowl.
- 1st Reading Ordinance Changes #2020-05: Chapter 11. Offenses and Misc. Provisions.
- Legislative Update (Rep. Anthony and Rep. Walz)
- Citywide Reassessment RFP (Manager)
- Presentations by the Green Mountain Council, Barre Partnership, Barre Area Development Update, Aldrich Library and Quarterly Budget Update by Financial Director Dawn Monahan
- Discussion on the TIF Bond
- Removal of Housing Board of Review

Be well,

Lucas J. Herring
Mayor, City of Barre