

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held January 16, 2018**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Thomas Lauzon at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors Sue Higby and Jeffrey Tuper-Giles; from Ward II, Councilors Brandon Batham and Michael Boutin; and from Ward III, Councilors Lucas Herring and John LePage (arrived 7:04 PM). Also present were City Manager Steve Mackenzie and City Clerk/Treasurer Carolyn Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Mayor Lauzon said he was going to rearrange the order of the agenda items to accommodate those in attendance.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

Council approved the following consent agenda items on motion of Councilor Herring, seconded by Councilor Tuper-Giles. **Motion carried.**

- Minutes of the following meetings:
  - Regular meeting on January 9, 2018
- City Warrants as presented:
  - Approval of Week 2018-03:
    - Accounts Payable: \$449,038.48
    - Payroll (gross): \$115,144.59
- 2018 Licenses & Permits – NONE

**The City Clerk/Treasurer Report** – Clerk Dawes reported on the following:

- 2018 dog licenses are available.
- Second quarter taxes are due by February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Information is posted on the City website regarding offices up for election at the Annual Town Meeting on March 6, 2018. The deadline for public question petitions is January 18<sup>th</sup>, and the deadline for nominating petitions is January 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Accepting early absentee ballot requests for all elections being held this year.

**Approval of Building Permits** – Council approved the following building permit on motion of Councilor Batham, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried.**

| <u>Applicant</u>           | <u>Address</u>       |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Vermont Historical Society | 60 Washington Street |

**Liquor Control** – NONE

Councilor LePage arrived during the following.

**City Manager's Report** – Manager Mackenzie reported on the following:

- Work is being done to correct and repair traffic signals.
- Continuing to work on refining the proposed FY19 budget.
- Next police union contract negotiation session is later this week.

**Visitors and Communications** – NONE

**New Business –**

**A) Presentation of Barre City School District and Spaulding Union High School District Budgets.**

BCEMS board chair Sonya Spaulding, SUHS board chair Paul Malone, and superintendent John Pandolfo gave a presentation on the proposed City School and Spaulding High School FY19 budgets. Ms. Spaulding said the proposed BCEMS budget represents a 3.78% increase over the current year, and Mr. Malone said the proposed SUHS budget represents a 1.04% increase over the current year. The estimated combined tax rate increase is 8.5 cents. Mr. Pandolfo said some of the reasons for the increases included the impact of the shortfall in the state education fund, reductions in federal funding, reductions in health insurance clawback revenues, and shifts in a portion of teacher retirement costs to the local level.

There was discussion on health insurance increases, legislative mandates, local factors putting pressure on the budgets, local enrolment rates, adjustments in the state funding formula process, and possible consolidation through the Act 46 process.

Mayor Lauzon asked Mr. Pandolfo to forward copies of the proposed budgets to the clerk for the record, as required by City charter.

**Old Business –**

**A) FY 19 Budget Proposal Review and Deliberation.**

There was a brief discussion on workers compensation insurance. Manager Mackenzie said the City will go out to bid for workers comp later this year. Mayor Lauzon said there will be a budget workshop this Saturday, January 20<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 AM.

**B) Discussion on Proposed Charter Amendments.**

Clerk Dawes recommended Council move forward with the local option tax and contract approval amounts proposals for consideration at the March 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting. Council concurred. There were adjustments made to the local option tax language. The Clerk said the first public hearing will be held at next week's January 25<sup>th</sup> meeting, at which time the language will be finalized.

**Round Table –**

Councilor Batham said Washington County Democrats will caucus this weekend in Montpelier to create a list of three recommended names for gubernatorial appointment to fill the recently vacated state's attorney position until the next election. The caucus was originally scheduled for last weekend, but postponed due to weather.

Councilor LePage encouraged people to invest in our youth, and to support the school budgets.

Councilor Higby said the VT History Center held a Martin Luther King Day program yesterday.

Mayor Lauzon said the recently approved marijuana bill is flawed. The Mayor said he will be proposing ordinance language that would require growers in Barre City to be licensed.

**Executive Session – NONE**

The Council meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Batham. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Lauzon asked to reopen the meeting at 8:41 PM. The Mayor said the City had received applications from organizations seeking placement of funding requests on the Annual Town Meeting ballot. Several of the applications received were incomplete, but as this was the first year for this new process, the review committee agreed to give them an additional week to submit missing materials. To

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date, all but two of the organizations have complied. It is the recommendation of the review committee that those who didn't comply not be included on the ballot. Clerk Dawes said she will distribute a draft Annual Town Meeting warning at Saturday's budget workshop.

Mayor Lauzon adjourned the Council meeting at 8:43 PM.

An audio recording of this meeting is available from the City Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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