

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held August 1, 2017**

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, Councilor Lucas Herring. Also present were City Manager Steven Mackenzie and Clerk/Treasurer Carolyn Dawes.

**Absent:** From Ward III, Councilor Anita Chadderton.

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** NONE

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- Minutes of the following meetings:
  - Regular meeting on July 25, 2017
- City Warrants as presented:
  - Approval of Week 2017-31:
    - Accounts Payable: \$279,895.56
    - Payroll (gross): \$118,414.22
- 2017 Licenses & Permits – NONE

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

- First quarter property taxes are due by August 15<sup>th</sup>. A homestead declaration & rebate reminder postcard is going in the mail tomorrow.
- Property tax assessment appeal hearings will begin on September 14<sup>th</sup>.
- There are 10 properties scheduled for tax sale on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Approval of Building Permits** – Council approved the following building permits on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried.**

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Address</u>
St. Monica Parish	79 Summer Street
Spaulding Union High School	120 Ayers Street
Sylvia Beck	38 State Street
Randall & Judie Copping	1 Foss Street

**Liquor Control** –

Council approved a temporary outside consumption permit for the Elks Club for Saturday, August 19<sup>th</sup> on motion of Councilor Batham, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin abstaining.**

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

- Bid openings are tomorrow for north end storm water projects. Construction will be completed this season.
- Demolition continues on the Gunner's Brook project. Construction is expected to be completed by this fall.
- Smith Street bike path segment construction begins tomorrow.
- Staff is preparing updated capital equipment and capital improvement plan budgets, which will come to Council in mid-September.

To be approved at 08-08-17 Barre City Council Meeting

- Council priorities discussion is on next week's agenda.
- Vermont Youth Conservation Corps team members will be at Aldrich Library on August 15<sup>th</sup> to meet the public and discuss this year's projects.

**Visitors & Communications –**

Mayor Lauzon noted that Schuyler Gould has submitted his resignation from the Energy Committee. The Mayor said the resignation is accepted with gratitude for Mr. Gould's years of service to the community.

**Old Business – NONE**

**New Business –**

**A) Public Hearing – 7:15 PM. Closeout of the VCDP Implementation Grant IG-2013-Barre City-00015.**

Mayor Lauzon opened the public hearing at 7:08 PM. Alison Friedkin, Director of Real Estate Development for Downstreet Housing & Community Development, thanked the City for its support through the construction of Summer Street Center. The \$790,000 grant accounted for 9% of the project funding. Ms. Friedkin said this public hearing is the final requirement to close out the grant. No Council action is necessary.

Mayor Lauzon asked if there were any additional public comments or questions. Hearing none, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 7:11 PM.

**B) Public Hearing – 7:30 PM. Interim Zoning Amendment: Amending Article 5.15 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Barre, VT.**

Mayor Lauzon opened the public hearing at 7:13 PM. In attendance were Planning Director Janet Shatney, and members of the Planning Commission: Jackie Calder (chair), David Sichel and Michael Hellein. Ms. Shatney said the Planning Commission has been working with the Civic Center Committee on zoning amendments necessary to allow for a digital sign to announce Civic Center events. The digital sign would replace the movable letter sign already located at the corner of North Main and Seminary Streets. The proposed interim language will create an exemption for the sign, which is considered a state highway sign. State highway signage rules will allow a digital sign in this location. Ms. Calder said the Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend approval of the amendment. Members of the Civic Center Committee voiced their support of the amendment. Mayor Lauzon asked the Civic Center Committee to prepare a cost estimate for the sign.

There was discussion on cost savings related to less staff time necessary to change the sign, use of the sign for public safety announcements, and sources of funding for the sign. Ms. Shatney said the change will go into effect 20 days after publication.

Mayor Lauzon asked if there were any additional public comments or questions. Hearing none, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 7:25 PM.

Councilor Tuper-Giles made the motion to find that the proposed use is consistent with the health, safety, and welfare of the City and the standards contained in subsection (e) of 24 V.S.A. §4415(e). The motion was seconded by Councilor Higby. **Motion carried.**

Council adopted the interim zoning amendment on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried with Councilor Herring voting against.**

Councilor Herring noted Council had voted on this agenda item before the warned public hearing time. He therefore voted against the motion to allow for reconsideration later in the meeting, should members

of the public arrive to participate in the public hearing at its warned time.

**C) Public Meeting – Identifying and Assessing Options For Municipal Swimming Pool.**

Mayor Lauzon said he and the Manager have been talking with representatives from the City's insurer to discuss the status of the pool. Current engineer inspections indicate that the pool will likely be able to open next summer without significant repair work. The Mayor said this gives the Council additional time to review the options. He gave a PowerPoint presentation of options for the pool:

1. Close the pool permanently
2. Repair the current pool and bathhouse
3. Construct a new pool
4. Construct a year-round recreation facility including an indoor pool

There was discussion on the possibility of a regional facility, life expectancy of a repaired/refurbished pool, financing options, creating a facility for little kids with a zero depth entry or shallow end and a sandbox, benefits to the community, current offerings including the summer lunch program and free books, offering swim teams, expanding hours and length of season, winter use as a skating rink, funding through local option taxes, creating a committee to explore options, prioritizing other City improvement needs including the public works buildings, making arrangements for City residents to use facilities in neighboring communities, and relocating the pool to the civic center complex.

Fasil Gill, chair of the Winooski Community Services Commission, spoke of Winooski's recent decision to close its pool. Mr. Gill said they were in a similar situation as Barre City with their pool requiring significant repairs to open each season. They have formed a citizens committee to explore options for constructing a new pool, and current estimates for an outdoor facility are running between \$3-4 million. They are looking into forming a foundation to fundraise and possibly operate the pool. They have spent approximately \$50,000 on engineering studies and pool plans to date. Mr. Gill said he recommends getting the financing in place before extensive planning.

There was continued discussion on finding a sustainable way to keep the pool open, increasing community usage, excellent location near playground and tennis courts, splash parks as an alternative to or in addition to the pool, cost of pool passes, adding Wifi at the pool, the importance of teaching kids to swim and keeping them out of the rivers, teaching water safety, and possible use of Semprebon funds for pool improvements.

The following residents participated in the discussions: Jackie Calder, Shannon Planck, Sonya Spaulding, William Carroll, Giuliano Cecchinelli, Randy Edmunds, Sharon Toborg, Matt Cetin, William Toborg, and Claire Dessureau.

Buildings & Community Services - Recreation assistant director Stephanie Quaranta said she has been getting feedback from pool users this summer; that swim lessons are critical, as are options for laps. Ms. Quaranta said she has been seeing a number of kids, young families and new families using the pool this summer. Council requested statistics on usage. Ms. Quaranta will report back with that information.

Mayor Lauzon took an informal poll of the Council, and found there was no support for permanently closing the pool. There was Council discussion on gauging the community's levels of interest through surveys or questions on a ballot, discussing partnership options with the schools and Barre Town, and creating a citizen committee. Manager Mackenzie will post notices seeking letters of interest in serving on such a committee, and those names will come before Council in a few weeks for appointment. Mayor Lauzon said Council will create the focus for the committee. The Mayor asked the Manager and Public Works Director Bill Ahearn to report on the current condition of the pool concrete. He said the pool is currently losing approximately 10,000 gallons of water each day through leaks, and the leaks have not yet

been located. The Manager said City staff will search for the leaks after the swimming season is over. He said Council will hold at least one additional public meeting on the pool.

**Round Table –**

Councilors voiced their enjoyment of last weekend's Heritage Festival, and gratitude to the organizers and volunteers. It was noted that the smoking ban was generally successful.

Councilor Batham reminded everybody of the final Concerts with Councilors scheduled for August 9<sup>th</sup>. He said he met with Councilor Herring to begin review of the City's policies.

Councilor Herring said he and Mayor Lauzon won the cornhole championship over the weekend, and their winnings will be donated to the pool scholarship fund.

**Executive Session – NONE**

The Council meeting adjourned at 9:58 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk