

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held January 22, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Lucas Herring 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 John LePage and Rich Morey. Also present were City Manager Steve Mackenzie and City Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** NONE

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- Minutes of the following meetings:
  - Special meeting of January 14, 2019
  - Regular meeting of January 15, 2019
- City Warrants as presented:
  - Approval of Week 2019-04:
    - Account Payable: \$170,481.74
    - Payroll (gross): \$141,345.89
- 2019 Licenses & Permits –
  - Food Takeout:
    - Central Vermont Career Center Bakeshop, 136 N. Main Street
  - Food Establishment:
    - Capstone Community Action Community Kitchen Academy
  - Taxicab Service Operator's and Vehicle License:
    - Payless Taxi, 1 vehicle
  - Taxicab Driver License:
    - Thomas Edson, with CV Green Cab. Probationary license good to July 20, 2019

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

- Third quarter property taxes are due by February 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Barre City and Barre Town will go to the polls on February 19<sup>th</sup> to vote on proposed amendments to the unified union school district articles of agreement. Early absentee voting will begin by the end of January. Additional elections related to the BUUSD are tentatively scheduled for April and May.
- Nominating petitions, consent of candidate forms and additional information for the Annual (Town) Meeting officers to be elected on March 5, 2019 are posted on the City website. The deadline for nominating petitions is January 28<sup>th</sup>.

Clerk Dawes distributed draft copies of the Annual (Town) Meeting warning to be approved at next week's meeting.

**Approval of Building Permits** – Council approved the following building permits on motion of Councilor Batham, seconded by Councilor Higby. **Motion carried with Councilor Tuper-Giles recusing himself due to conflict of interest.**

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Address</u>
First Presbyterian Church	19 Seminary Street
Steve Bigras	25 Gable Place
M & B Properties LLC	101 Prospect Street

**Liquor Control – NONE**

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

- The Manager, Planning Director Janet Shatney, and Deputy Community Services Director Stephanie Quaranta presented information on the pool refurbishment project to representatives from the Land Water Conservation Fund. The City is seeking a \$350,000 grant from the fund.
- Meeting tomorrow with representatives from VT Agency of Transportation and City Place to discuss parking needs for the AOT employees moving to Barre in the near future.
- City is seeking residents interested in serving on a joint Barre City/Montpelier solid waste management committee. Letters of interest should be sent to the Manager’s office.

**Visitors and Communications –**

Teddy Waszazak said he is running for the Ward II Council seat in the March 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting elections. He said the City should be making long term investments in infrastructure, and should work to keep up with Vermont tourism.

**Old Business –**

**A) Alley Cat & Mingle Nightclub Entertainment License Renewals.**

Rita and Anthony Avery, owners of The Alley Cat, were in attendance. Councilor Tuper-Giles said he gets calls from people who are complaining about the establishment. He said there is a bad perception in the community, and asked what they are doing to turn that perception around. Mr. & Ms. Avery said they have hired bouncers and new staff, and installed a new security system with cameras in the bar and outside the entrance. They have had no liquor control violations. Police Chief Tim Bombardier said there have been no calls for service since April 2018. The Chief met with the owners to discuss expectations and the security system. The Chief approved the license application.

Scott Mears, owner of Mingle Nightclub, was in attendance. Councilor Tuper-Giles said there is a bad perception in the community, and asked what Mr. Mears is doing to turn that perception around. Mr. Mears said he runs a tight ship. There have been disruptive people, and vandalism, and calls to the police department do not get a response. There were recent Department of Liquor Control violations that will be taken up at a hearing in the near future. Mr. Mears said he will install a security system and establish a better relationship with DLC. Chief Bombardier said there have been 19 calls for service since April of last year, which is approximately when the club opened. He approved the license application.

Councilor Batham made the motion to grant a 6 month probationary entertainment license to Mingle Nightclub, seconded by Councilor Morey.

There was discussion on whether the license should be approved for the year, taking into consideration the Council’s ability to revoke a license at any time.

Council voted on the motion as presented. **Motion carried with Mayor Herring, and Councilors LePage and Boutin voting against.**

Councilor Boutin made the motion to approve the annual entertainment license for The Alley Cat, seconded by Councilor Morey.

Resident Diane Hood said she was originally planning on speaking against the Alley Cat’s license, as her son was beaten outside the establishment in December 2017. At the time the security system failed to tape the incident. Because of the improvements Mr. & Ms. Avery have made, including the new security system, she removes her objections. Ms. Hood suggested Council adopt an ordinance requiring that establishments serving alcohol after 9PM must have indoor and outdoor surveillance security systems, and make the videos available to the police department, upon request.

Council voted on the motion as presented. **Motion carried.**

**B) Budget Discussions.**

There was discussion on eliminating the police department bike patrol (Bees) and/or the community outreach position, in whole or in part. Chief Bombardier talked about staffing options with reduced funding for those positions, and the effect on public safety and safety for staff. The Chief said VT Department of Corrections funding for the community outreach position is being phased out.

There was discussion on the value of the Bees and the community outreach position, offering foot patrols at public events, seeking additional funding from DOC, and staying within the projected tax rate increase developed at last night's special Council meeting.

Chief Bombardier said the Bees are a luxury, and it would be better to remove them from the budget and fully fund the community outreach position. He asked that any additional funds saved by eliminating the Bees be put back in the department's training budget. Councilors voiced unofficial support for the Chief's recommendation.

Public Works director Bill Ahearn distributed a memo on the user cost effects of the proposed \$2.5 million bond for water and wastewater infrastructure that will be included on the Annual Meeting ballot.

**New Business –**

**B) Public Hearing 7:30pm – First Public Hearing for Proposed Charter Changes.**

Mayor Herring opened the public hearing at 8:24 PM, and noted this was later than the warned time. The Mayor said there are no charter changes being considered for the Annual Meeting ballot. He closed the public hearing at 8:25 PM.

**A) Overview of VLCT and Legislative Initiatives.**

Executive director Maura Carroll and Director of Public Policy and Advocacy Karen Horn handed out packets of materials about the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Ms. Carroll said all Vermont towns are members, and she described the items in the packets. Ms. Horn said she oversees legislative issues.

The big ticket lobby items expected for the new legislative session include health insurance, pharmaceuticals, and abortion rights. Ms. Carroll and Ms. Horn invited Councilors and City staff to attend Local Government Day on February 7<sup>th</sup> in Montpelier.

**C) Discussion and/or action regarding a Teen Center in Barre City.**

Mayor Herring gave a Powerpoint presentation on the proposed teen center. There was discussion on:

- Budgeting, and funding in the general fund budget.
- Possible locations, including the City-owned Wheelock House on N. Main Street.
- Partnering with Washington County Youth Service Bureau and Americorps.
- Review of carrying costs & opportunities costs associated with using City-owned property.
- City staff providing oversight.
- Opportunities to partner with Barre Partnership on use of the Wheelock House.
- Renting out the Wheelock House.
- No room available for funding in the proposed FY20 budget.

Councilors voiced reluctance to put money for a teen center back in the proposed FY20 budget.

**D) Consideration of the Sale and Listing Language for the City Owned Wheelock House (135 N. Main Street).**

Councilors discussed the options for sale or lease of the building, including:

- Using the process for sale of the old firehouse as a model.
- Placing deed restrictions on the property.
- Lease for 3 years as a pilot project. Funds received through lease would go towards building improvements.
- Not selling the oldest building on N. Main Street
- Proceeds from any sale would go into the capital fund.

Council approved opening the Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the sale of the Wheelock House on motion of Councilor Batham, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried with Councilors Boutin and Tuper-Giles voting against.**

Manager Mackenzie said the most recent budget changes and corrections have left a \$3,500 hole in coming to the numbers agreed to at last night's special Council meeting. He will work to identify the necessary changes, and there will be a final budget workshop on Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM.

**Round Table –**

Councilor Batham said he attended the opening day of the 2019 legislature. He thanked the street crews for their good work during the weekend's snow storm. Councilor Batham announced he is not running for re-election at the Annual Meeting in March.

Councilor LePage said the Council is making progress on the budget, but is stuck on percentages.

Councilor Morey said as a follow up on last week's Capstone presentation on the effects of the federal government shutdown, that Section 8 housing subsidies won't be available for March, if the shutdown continues.

Councilor Higby held up a piece of copper pipe that has frozen and split at Studio Place Arts. She encouraged people to allow plenty of air circulation in their buildings, shovel out vents, and care for sidewalks. She invited everyone to an opening at SPA this weekend. She said she is running for re-election at the March Annual Meeting.

Mayor Herring announced the following:

- He has been contacted about setting up a scrap metal collection day in the City.
- There is a new MOU between Central Vermont Home Health & Hospice and the Civic Center.
- Green Mountain Transit is holding a public hearing on proposed route changes on February 5<sup>th</sup> at National Life.

**Executive Session – NONE**

The Council meeting adjourned at 10:02 PM on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk