

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held July 1, 2019**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Lucas Herring at 6:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors John Steinman and Jeffrey Tuper-Giles; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors John LePage and Rich Morey. Also present were Manager Steve Mackenzie, Buildings and Community Services director Jeff Bergeron, BCS-Recreation director Stephanie Quaranta, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Mayor Herring said Council will consider for approval the weekly warrants and building permits at the end of the meeting.

**New Business –**

**A) Discussion and/or Approval for the BOR Chiller Repair.**

Manager Mackenzie reviewed his memo on funding options for the chiller repairs, which are estimated to cost approximately \$100,000. The Manager said he expects funds to be available from the \$1.15M bond. The City's bond attorney, Paul Giuliani, gave an opinion that it would be appropriate to use bond funds for the repairs, and the Manager said he recommended Council approve going ahead with the repairs.

Councilor Steinman asked for a show of hands among the large crowd of people in attendance as to how many were Barre City residents, and how many were Barre City taxpayers. There was a mixed show of hands.

Councilor Morey made the motion to approve making the repairs and paying for them out of the identified bond funds. The motion was seconded by Councilor LePage.

There was discussion on what would happen with any donated funds, whether they would be returned to donors, be used to replenish the capital fund, or be designated for future civic center complex needs.

Councilor Steinman offered an amendment to approve the repairs with Barre City paying ½ of the costs and Barre Town paying ½ of the costs. The motion to amend was seconded by Councilor Tuper-Giles.

Manager Mackenzie said there isn't time to approach Barre Town about sharing costs, as the repairs need to begin immediately to guarantee the 2019-2020 ice season. Several people in the audience spoke in favor of making the repairs. Casey Harrington asked what is done with the funds received for dasher board and auditorium banner sponsorships. Manager Mackenzie said the funds are used for debt service of the civic center bond, and he said the funds also paid for the new flooring mats in the auditorium. The Manager said the sponsorship funds are not intended to subsidize the general fund.

Councilor Morey said he reached out to the Barre Town Selectboard, and Barre Town Representative Topper McFaun to discuss support from the Town. Councilor Waszazak polled those in attendance to see how many were in support of making the repairs to the chiller system. He said based on the overwhelming show of hands, he would vote in favor of making the repairs.

Councilor Steinman said the Council has a fiduciary responsibility to Barre City, there is disproportionate use of the BOR rink by Barre Town residents, and the majority of Barre Youth Sports Association's participants are Town residents. There was discussion on the declining number of people using the facilities, and participating in BYSA activities.

Civic Center Committee member Art Dessureau said Barre Town people contributed to the construction of the BOR, and they pay for rental of ice time. Mr. Dessureau said the facility should be able to support itself through rentals, and there is a need to market open ice time for additional usage. He said the facility is also available for non-ice usage in the spring, summer and fall.

Barre Town resident Charlie Atwood said the City would have to refund dasher board sponsorships if the rink is closed. He said sponsors represent businesses from Barre City and the surrounding communities.

Manager Mackenzie and Mr. Bergeron said the BOR lost approximately \$40,000 in FY19, and \$27,000 in FY18. Brent from Williamstown said if BYSA leaves for one year due to shutting the BOR down for repairs, the City will lose a lot of money. City resident Sonya Spaulding said the Council should approve the repairs and then work with Barre Town on a long-term plan. Ms. Spaulding said all communities are experiencing declining numbers of participants, and this may be an opportunity to partner with other communities to share facilities and participants.

Nancy said the City needs to think more broadly – that a recreational facility is a quality of life attraction for people moving into the area. Andy Grandbois said he has coached hockey for more than 50 years. He asked why the repairs weren't made when the leaks started? Manager Mackenzie said that statement wasn't accurate; that the leak in question had just been identified. Grace Gouge said she is treasurer of the Barre Figure Skaters, and she wanted to remind Council that others besides hockey players use the rink. Chad Burke said closing the rink would be devastating to youth programs. Cynthia Fortin said people attending events at the Civic Center support local businesses. Spaulding High School students Addie and Natalie said hockey is meaningful in creating their high school community. Bob Houle asked if maintenance records are available to view. Mr. Bergeron said he can make the records available.

Councilor Tuper-Giles called the question on the motion to amend.

Council voted on Councilor Steinman's motion to amend the original motion. **Motion to amend failed with Councilors Steinman and Tuper-Giles voting in favor, and Mayor Herring and Councilors Morey, LePage, Boutin and Waszazak voting against.**

Council voted on the original motion made by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Herring called a two minute recess to allow people to leave before the next agenda item.

**B) Discussion on long term planning for the Civic Center Complex.**

Mayor Herring reviewed some of the ideas shared during the previous discussion. The Mayor suggested setting up a joint Barre City/Barre Town committee to undertake developing a long-term plan for the complex. There was discussion on models of municipal cooperation, leasing the facility to the BYSA, leasing or selling the complex to the school or a non-profit who would operate it, replacing the Civic Center with a year round facility, increasing the number of events held at the CC, developing specialized facilities, combining youth activities with other communities, and making sure facilities and programs are multigenerational. Resident Kevin Spaulding said he is willing to serve on an exploratory group.

Council asked the Civic Center Committee to give them a tour of the facility, and meet with them to discuss the facility's needs. Council will visit the Civic Center on September 10<sup>th</sup> before the regularly scheduled Council meeting, and then have the committee attend the evening meeting for further discussion.

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

<u>Applicant</u>	<u>Address</u>
Granite City Developers LLC	14 N. Main Street
Nicolas Landry & Heather Runk	110 Berlin Street
Philip Ketchem	435 N. Main Street

**Approval of Council Warrants:**

Council approved the following warrants on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

- City Warrants as presented:
  - Approval of Week 2019-27:
    - Accounts Payable: \$549,042.21
    - Payroll (gross): \$125,867.38

**Round Table –**

Councilors noted the large turnout for the earlier discussion on repairs of the chiller system at the BOR, and thanked those who participated.

**Executive Session – NONE**

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Clerk’s office.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk