



December 21st, 2018:

Residents and Neighbors,

I want to thank you for supporting the four amendments to Charter language during this year's Midterm Election. The changes were minor but will help us continue the work that is needed in the City of Barre.

Council held a Special Meeting along with Montpelier to review the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission's proposed "Project Plan 2018". Following the discussion, both municipalities still had questions and follow up was needed for each Council. On December 4th, Barre City discussed if we should withdraw or cede authority, but ultimately, we chose to do neither and see what was to occur during the next legislative session. This past session, S.273 did not pass but called for a Legislative Study, which may be brought back for discussion again this year.

Council also discussed a combined solid waste/composting/recycling contract or service that may provide additional services at a lower cost to residents. This discussion led to the two municipalities forming a Solid Waste Management Committee to investigate these options further. Councilor LePage has offered to sit on the committee and we are currently in recruitment of a resident from the City of Barre to join this group.

Housing is an item that Council and staff have been working on for the past couple of years. Councilors Boutin and Tuper-Giles are members of our Ordinance Workgroup, working with staff on updating our current ordinances such as the Vacant Building Ordinance. One of our hurdles over the past year was the appointment of a Health Officer to review the Ordinance changes along with our Planning Director, which the appointment was made on December 4th. Councilors Higby and Morey proposed additional ideas to be reviewed by staff along with the current draft.

Early in December, the City was contacted by the American Red Cross requesting use of the Auditorium as a shelter due to local power outages. In coordination with staff, the basement of the Auditorium will be used as a shelter and the ARC trailer was moved to the AUD. Jeff Bergeron noted only one person was served, but it highlights the ability of the City to mobilize in case of an emergency.

The 10th different area for the Neighborhood Watch organizational meetings was held on December 17th. Chief Bombardier spoke about the Street Crimes Unit, which will be highlighted further in 2019. The Barre Housing Authority locations are next on the list to be visited starting in January 2019. The Chief is also providing an additional Monthly Recap report to highlight calls for service, warrants, and arrests.

I held a "Coffee with the Mayor" at Espresso Bueno and invited people to join me through FrontPorchForum. Councilor Boutin attended and we were able to hear comments related to city plowing, sidewalk maintenance, rail crossings, cleaning of brush around the Bike Path Cleaning and Cow Pasture, and ways to ensure consistent terminology is used throughout City documents.

The Manager and I met with Secretary Joe Flynn from the Agency of Transportation to discuss their move to the City of Barre. We also met with the Bike Path Committee to discuss alternatives to connect

the existing bike path segments. The committee agreed to obtain a feasibility study, to include additional sidewalk areas and improvement of aging infrastructure in the River Street area, while also agreeing to other recommendations in the Prospect Street area.

City Council hosted our Barre City Representative and Washington County Senator for introductions. There was open dialogue from councilors to legislators about issues facing the City. I have also followed up with our legislators since the meeting to answer questions on the status of some of the City's current initiatives.

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

- Nick Charyk from All Earth Renewables, presented Budd Cars, which are diesel powered one-car trains that could provide local transportation services.
- Chiefs Bombardier and Brent provided a briefing on concerns they had with the CVPSA plan
- John Sayles provided an overview of the Vermont Foodbank. The City has approved a letter of support related to grant funding they are looking into.
- Scott McLaughlin provided a recap on 2018 at the Vermont Granite Museum.
- The City Manager provided an overview of the FY19 Budget status as well as a presentation of the proposed FY20 General Fund Budget. Former Mayor Thom Lauzon co-presented as a member of the Budget Committee.

City Council approved several items including the following:

- Approve a Resolution to submit a LWCF Pool Refurbishment Grant Application
- Approved Barre Town Thunder Chicken Land Use Permission Request
- Approved Community Profiles request letter to Vermont Council on Rural Development
- Approved December 8th as date for City Council Dollar Drop. Funds were used to buy gifts for students in need at BCEMS.
- Approved Letter of Support for the Vermont Food Bank for grant applications
- Approved permission for Sno-Bees to groom a trail through the Cow Pasture
- Approved Purchase of New Handheld Parking Ticket Enforcement Units
- Approved Removal of Deed Restrictions for 51 Church Street BGA Building
- Assigned Mayor Herring and Councilor Morey to a 2nd Policy Workgroup
- Authorized an Award for Pool Refurbishment A/E Contract
- Authorized DPW Purchase of 2018 John Deere 524KII High Lift Bucket Loader
- Authorized DuBois & King Engineering Agreement for City Hall Heating System & Controls Assessment
- Authorized Manager to Sign Contract for Park-Mobile Meter Payment Cell Phone App
- Authorized to Order New City Hall Boiler #1
- Dedicated the Annual Report to former Mayor Thom Lauzon with a Memoria for former City Councilor Randy Copping
- Established a joint-committee regarding composting, recycling and waste with the City of Montpelier
- Established a Tree Stewardship Committee and appointment members
- Established the Community Garden Committee and appointment members
- Reviewed Errors & Omissions from the City Assessor
- Reviewed report on Electric Vehicle Charging Stations and approved ChargePoint Contract

And lastly, there are several new and returning initiatives being discussed:

- A Taxi Ordinance Survey was requested through the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, which was completed by the City Clerk
- Councilors discussed appointing students to different bodies of the Council
- I provided an update on the status of the proposed Teen Center. I was able to meet with Paul Eley from Basement Teen Center to gather information on their operations and follow up with many other organizations for support. The concept has been presented around the use of the Wheelock House, which will need to have further discussion with Council and other partner organizations.
- Resident Ed Stanak brought forth a concern of traffic study needs for the City in relation to an Act 250 notice and hearing regarding the Beckley Hill housing project in Barre Town
- Councilor Boutin started discussion on proposed Ordinance revisions to Chapter 18 for composting, as well as Chapter 11 for the City's Miscellaneous Provisions.
- Council warn Charter First & Second Public Hearings, to address any needs that may come from the Act 46 votes.
- Future presentations are being arranged with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns, Capstone Community Action and other organizations.
- The Planning Commission is finalizing review of Zoning Changes, which will most likely come to City Council for review in March of 2019.

Lucas J. Herring
Mayor, City of Barre