

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held February 8, 2022**

The Barre City Council met at 6:00 PM at the Wheelock House, 135 N. Main Street, Barre, Vermont. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilor Jake Hemmerick; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilor Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were Manager Steve Mackenzie and Buildings and Community Services Director Jeff Bergeron. Others present were Barre Partnership executive director Tracie Lewis, BP board chair Rich Morey, and Rotary Club president Tony Campos.

Absent: From Ward I, Councilor Emel Cambel.

Adjustments to the Agenda: NONE

Tour of the Wheelock Building.

Those in attendance toured the Wheelock Building at 135 N. Main Street.

The group disbanded in time for Council to reconvene for its regular meeting.

There is no recording of the special meeting.

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held February 8, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Lucas Herring at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Jake Hemmerick; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Ericka Reil and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were Manager Steve Mackenzie, Fire Chief Doug Brent, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Mayor Herring said the following agenda items are being made:

- Consent item D re. the capital improvement consultant RFP will be taken up under new business.
- New agenda items C and D will be deferred.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of February 1, 2022
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2022-06, dated February 9, 2022:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$139,249.66
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$125,331.99
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits:
 1. Waste Disposal Collector's Licenses:
 - i. Myers Container Service Corp., 11 vehicles, pick-up only
- D. Approve and Authorize Release of Capital Improvements Consultant RFP. [N.B. this item is moved to new business.]

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Town meeting information is on the election page of the City website, including sample ballots.
- Absentee ballots will be mailed out by the end of this week.
- Third quarter property taxes are due by February 15th.
- Dog licenses are available. All dogs must be licensed by April 1st.
- The City is participating in the Low Income Household Waste/Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) being sponsored by the VT DCF Economic Services.

The Clerk reviewed the Semprebon funds report included in the Council packet, as was discussed at last week's meeting.

Liquor Control Board - Clerk Dawes said she will be working with the Division of Liquor Control to beta test their new online licensing system.

Visitors and Communications –

Resident Bernadette Rose reminded everyone February is Black History Month, and recommended the television show *Finding Your Roots* as a way to explore history.

Ward III council candidate Michael Deering II thanked the Council for the tour of the Wheelock building before this evening's meeting. Mr. Deering also said there was a great turnout at this past weekend's gun show at the Civic Center auditorium. Mayor Herring said there is pending legislation that would change the laws around gun purchase waiting periods. Approval of the legislation could have an impact on future gun shows.

City Manager's Report –

Manager Mackenzie said he had nothing to add to his written report. Mayor Herring noted snow hasn't been cleared along the sides of Ayers Street yet, as both of the City's large snow blowers are currently down for repairs. Manager Mackenzie said he was impressed with the Public Works Department's response to last week's snow storm.

Old Business –

A) Approve Selection of Strategic Planning Consultant.

Council approved the Manager's recommendation and awarded the contract to Fio Partners on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Councilor Boutin said he will be voting against the motion because he doesn't support spending money on a consultant for strategic planning. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Jim Berson from Fio Partners was in attendance via Zoom, and said he looks forward to working with the City. Mayor Herring noted the project will begin after his term in office has ended, but he's available to participate, should the Council invite him to do so.

New Business –

Other) Approve and Authorize Release of Capital Improvements Consultant RFP. Moved from consent agenda.

There was discussion on including a prioritization process in the RFP language, developing a methodology and criteria for prioritization, and the appropriate time to invite public comment and suggestions from City committees. Council approved releasing the RFP as amended on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. Councilor Boutin said he will be voting against the motion because he doesn't support spending money on a consultant. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

To be approved at 02/15/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

A) CVPSA Update.

Manager Mackenzie noted Central Vermont Public Safety Authority board member Jim Ward won't be here until around 8PM, so this item will be deferred until he arrives.

B) Presentation of FY21 TIF Annual Report to Council.

Clerk Dawes reviewed the FY21 Tax Increment Finance annual report. Council approved certification of the report on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Hemmerick. **Motion carried.**

C) Renew Chargepoint Contract for Merchant's Row EV Charging Station.

This item is deferred.

D) Approval of City Manager Search Task Force Documents.

This item is deferred.

Round Table –

Councilors thanked the Public Works staff for their snow storm response over the past several days.

Councilor Waszazak reminded people to call and request absentee ballots for the March 1st annual town meeting. He said the Aldrich Library has an opening on the board of trustees for a Barre City resident.

Councilor Stockwell said she enjoyed the tour of the Wheelock building. She and Mayor Herring were interviewed on WCAX regarding the housing project.

Councilor Hemmerick thanked Public Works Director Bill Ahearn for a tour of the public works garage. It was noted the City is working with a consultant on future plans for relocation and construction of a public works campus.

Mayor Herring said volunteer opportunities have been updated on the City website. The Manager will give budget presentations during the next two Council meetings in advance of the vote on the budget at the March 1st annual town meeting. The Mayor said the Governor announced \$1.4M in Recovery Housing Program grants, the largest of which will go to the Barre Recovery Residence.

Mayor Herring noted Mr. Ward from CVPSA hadn't arrived yet, so the Council will do its executive session business, and then return for the CVPSA update afterwards.

Executive Session –

Councilor Hemmerick made the motion to find that premature general knowledge of personnel, property acquisition, litigation, and negotiations would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 7:47 PM to discuss personnel, property acquisition, litigation, and negotiations under the provisions of 1 VSA sec. 313 on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Hemmerick. **Motion carried.**

Manager Mackenzie was invited into the executive session.

Council came out of executive session at 8:35 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

New Business – continued

A) CVPSA Update.

Mayor Herring noted Mr. Ward is not present to give the update. Resident Pete Fournier said he has

concerns about the CVPSA funding request included on the annual town meeting ballot. Mr. Fournier said there has been a lack of cohesiveness in the Association's work, and divisiveness within in the organization. Capital Fire Mutual Aid has seats on the board without paying any dues. City of Barre has high property taxes and needs for capital and infrastructure improvements, and can't afford to continue to support CVPSA financially.

Mr. Fournier said CVPSA needs to set a plan before requesting additional funding. CVPSA has the authority to place a funding request on the ballot without needing Council approval. He requested the Council not support the funding request and tell voters they shouldn't vote for it.

Mayor Herring said the CVPSA board has been asked to give a report to the Council to provide information on what their future plans are, so the City can consider whether it wants to remain a member of the authority.

There was discussion on dispatching and communications. Fire Chief Doug Brent said he attends all the meetings, and doesn't think this is the year to ask for funding because there's nothing they can point to that the funding will support. There was discussion on the future of the organization, and pending legislation that will impact dispatching across the state. Mr. Ward will be rescheduled next week to give the CVPSA update.

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Reil.
Motion carried.

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk