

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held May 17, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance in person or virtually were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Thom Lauzon; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Michael Deering and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were Manager Steve Mackenzie, Buildings and Community Services Assistant Director Stephanie Quaranta, Public Works Director Bill Ahearn, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Add acknowledgement of the Memorial Day ceremonies notification letter from the Barre Area Veterans to the consent agenda; add personnel discussion under executive session; add ARPA outreach discussion at the end of the new agenda items.

**Visitors and Communications –**

Former Mayor Lucas Herring thanked the Council for last week's decision regarding the Merchant Street/Maple Avenue intersection, and said the Green Up Day activities in the City were great. Mr. Herring said the Council fell short in its recent actions around displaying the large American flag, in that they approved more than was included on the agenda. He said he will be submitting a request to display the flag on the dates as approved, and will be adding a request for display during the Heritage Festival.

Rep. Peter Anthony said there will be a volunteer recruitment event at the Labor Hall this Sunday from 1-4 PM. Representatives from City, Town and school committees and boards will be on hand to talk with potential volunteers, and answer any questions. All are welcome to attend.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
  - i. Special and Regular meetings of May 10, 2022
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  1. Approval of Week 2022-20, dated May 18, 2022:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$349,913.48
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$186,806.82
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Ratify Manager Signature to Accept the Expanding Access Recreation Grant
- E. Acknowledge receipt of letter from Barre Area Veterans for Memorial Day parade and ceremonies to be held Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>. [added under adjustments to the agenda]

Approval of the warrants did not include check #145266, which was pulled for clarification on possible duplicate payments to the VT City Managers Association.

**City Clerk & Treasurer Report –**

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Fourth quarter property taxes were due yesterday. The delinquency rate currently stands at 6.52%, with additional timely payments expected in the mail over the next few days.
- Still waiting for the Governor to sign the City's charter changes bill, H.444, after which we'll be able to institute the local options sales tax.
- Received the completed VEPC TIF spring monitor visit report with no findings.
- The family of former Deputy Police Chief Andy Marceau, who passed away from COVID in

To be approved at 05/24/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

December 2020, is holding a celebration of his life on Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, from 1-4 at the Canadian Club. All are welcome to come remember Andy and his decades of service to the community.

### **Liquor Control Board – NONE**

**City Manager’s Report** – Manager Mackenzie reviewed his written report, and noted the City is beginning the volunteer recruitment cycle with notifications published in the newspaper and posted on the City website and Facebook page.

### **Unfinished Business – NONE**

#### **New Business –**

##### **A) Review/Revise City Fee Schedule.**

Clerk Dawes reviewed the fee schedule and proposed revisions. The Clerk noted most of the proposed changes are for cleaning up text or updating fees based on previously approved annual escalators. The only fee change being proposed is around electric vehicle charging stations. There was discussion on the different ways EV stations can be used, and how to capture fees for either connection to the stations or for parking in the spaces. There was also discussion on ticket fines for parking in a EV space, and revising ordinance to include language specific to EV charging stations and parking enforcement. The Clerk will review City ordinances to see what sections might need revising.

There was discussion on development impact fees surrounding water and sewer projects, and whether they should be reflected on the fee schedule, and possibly establishing fees for excavation and curb cut permits. There was also discussion on the fees for vacant building registration and how the City’s fees for building and electrical permits compare with VT Division of Fire Safety and other communities.

There was no action taken. The Clerk will bring back more information on the EV charging stations at a future meeting.

##### **B) DPW Campus Replacement Project Status Report.**

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn and Brad Prescott from Banwell Architects gave an overview of the needs around development of a new public works campus. Mr. Prescott said they have been gathering information, assessing the existing property and use of space, and assessing possible new site locations. Mr. Ahearn said the department has more than \$500,000 of equipment being stored outside because of lack of space, and there is \$3M of rolling stock stored in buildings without fire suppression systems. The buildings are nearly 100 years old, and there are issues around the amount of heating oil needed annually to heat the spaces, and a need to improve conditions for employee safety.

Mr. Prescott said the diagrams in his presentation will be available to the Council tomorrow, and will be posted on the City website for public view. They have worked with staff to describe tasks and needs, and how best to place them in their appropriate spaces. Tax maps were reviewed for possible sites, and the City has an option on one possible location and is in negotiations currently for another possible site. Locations are not yet public. Mr. Prescott said the high level cost opinion is approximately \$30M, which doesn’t include possible purchase of a site. There was discussion on funding options, possible adjustments to make the project less expensive, and building in phases.

The next update will be in late August, with a final report due around Thanksgiving.

##### **Other: ARPA Outreach (added under adjustments):**

Councilor Lauzon suggested Council adjust the original plans to use a consultant to develop a community outreach plan, and do the work internally. Mayor Hemmerick said the plan was to develop a landing information page, community survey, and public forum. There was discussion on different approaches to conducting a survey and getting the word out to the public, and involving the Barre Partnership and Barre

To be approved at 05/24/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

Area Development Corporation. Amanda Gustin and Raylene Meunier offered to assist. Councilors Waszazak and Lauzon will pull together a team to work on developing an outreach plan, and report back to Council at the June 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Upcoming Business** – Mayor Hemmerick listed future agenda items including:

- Interviews and public meetings with city manager candidates on May 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup>
- Executive session special meeting on May 25<sup>th</sup>, for final deliberations on the city manager search, and updates on the firefighter and steelworker union negotiations.
- Update on the North Main Street Pump Station Project
- Capital Improvement Plan RFP responses
- Clerk/Treasurer annual compensation review

**Round Table** –

Councilor Stockwell said the recreation path near the VT Granite Museum is great.

Councilor Lauzon said this is National Police Week, and encouraged people to thank police officers. He said he is pleased Governor Scott is seeking reelection, and thanked the Governor for his leadership.

Councilor Deering said there is a Green up Day event at Green Acres this weekend, and all are welcome to attend. He thanked the Public Works Department for getting crosswalks and line painting completed.

Councilor Boutin suggested the flag issue raised by former Mayor Herring could be addressed by ratifying the previous action as part of the consent agenda.

Mayor Hemmerick said Amanda Garland is being recognized this evening for her work on the Tree Stewardship and Community Gardens Committees.

**Executive Session** –

Councilor Stockwell made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of personnel discussions associated with the city manager search would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 9:17 PM to discuss personnel under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Human Resources Director Rikk Taft and Amanda Gustin, chair of the manager search committee, were invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 10:25 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

There was no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 10:25 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk