

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held August 23, 2011**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order at 7:02 PM by Acting Mayor Michael Smith. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors Etli and Poirier; from Ward II, Councilor Boutin; and from Ward III, Councilors Chadderton and Herring.

Attendance for the meeting included: City Manager Mackenzie, City Clerk/Treasurer Dawes, Planning Director Michael Miller, Kay Roberts, Hannah Etli, Arthur Botz, Richard Downer, Wendy Rice, Charles & Brett Acebo, Carol Garland, William Duprey, Joellen Calderara, and reporter David Delcore.

Barre Partnership representative Kay Roberts and We Dig Barre mascot “Digger”, accompanied by two members of the Little Digger Club, drew the latest winning name for the Barre Treasurer Dig. Ms. Roberts said the drawings are scheduled to run into October.

Mayor arrived and assumed the chair at 7:04 PM.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:** Council approved the following consent agenda items as presented on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Chadderton. **Motion carried.**

- Minutes of the Regular Council meeting of August 16, 2011.
- City Warrants, including a Community Development Warrant payable out of the municipal planning grant for work on the municipal plan.
- Building Permits for the following applicant:
  - Michelle Thurston, 114 River Street

**The City Clerk and Treasurer Report** – Clerk Dawes made the following announcements:

- The delinquency rate at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter property tax collection is 4.67%. The amount of the total delinquencies is the lowest its been since November, 2008.
- The Clerk said she has been reviewing the ordinances that will need to be revised to accommodate the Council’s request to have licenses and permits approved administratively rather than by Council. The Clerk recommended a broader and more in-depth review of the ordinances and charter, and suggested a review committee be formed, that would include Councilors, staff members and members of the public. The Mayor asked the Clerk to solicit committee members, and bring a list to Council for appointment at the September 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. The committee will report back to the Council by the December 13<sup>th</sup> meeting. Councilors Etli and Smith indicated an interest in serving on the committee.

Council approved a 2011 Entertainment License application for a block party on Boyce Street on Saturday, September 10, 2011 from 1:00 – 10:00 PM, with conditions as imposed by Chief Bombardier, on motion of Councilor Chadderton, seconded by Councilor Smith. **Motion carried.**

Council approved a 2011 Taxicab Driver’s License application for Christian Mills-Brown with Twin City Taxi on motion of Councilor Chadderton, seconded by Councilor Smith. **Motion carried.**

**Liquor Control Board** – Council approved a request to cater permit application from Valley Bowl, Inc. of Randolph for a wedding rehearsal at the Hollow Inn & Motel on Friday, August 26, 2011 from 4:30 PM – 12:00 AM on motion of Councilor Herring, seconded by Councilor Smith. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin abstaining.**

**Visitors and Communications** – NONE

**City Manager's Report –**

The Manager reported on the following:

- There have been a number of suspicious fires in the City over the past 3-4 weeks, and investigations are ongoing. A 15-year-old has been arraigned in connection with the fire at P&S Furniture, but there is no indication that the same person was involved in other local fires.
- The Manager spent a day last week monitoring the new traffic signals. There is still a conflict with left turn signals and pedestrian signals, which is being looked into.
- Selective mill & fill paving will begin on Summer Street next week. The state is participating, which will reduce the cost to the City. The Manager said he will work with St. Monica's school to mitigate the impact on student drop off/pick up.
- The SBA flood assistance office in City Hall is closing on Thursday of this week, though they can still be reached through September 6<sup>th</sup>. The FEMA flood assistance office at the auditorium will be open through September 6<sup>th</sup>. You can register for FEMA assistance through September 6<sup>th</sup>.
- A vehicle ignition key was found in City Hall Park last week. If someone lost a key, check with the Manager's office.

Mayor Lauzon asked for an update on West Patterson Street. Manager Mackenzie said he expects to have the street re-opened by Monday, August 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business – NONE**

**New Business**

**A) FEMA Mitigation Program Briefing re: Hilltop Avenue Properties.**

Wendy Rice and Richard Downer of FEMA were introduced by Manager Mackenzie. The Manager said Ms. Rice and Dr. Downer met with the affected property owners last night to discuss the mitigation program. The program is administered through Vermont Emergency Management, and would cover 75% of the costs associated with purchasing the properties, demolishing or moving the structures, and turning the ground green forever.

Councilor Boutin made the motion to confirm the Council's expressed interest in pursuing the program in good faith, and to empower the Manager to continue exploring this option to help the property owners while keeping in mind the best interests of the City. Councilor Smith seconded the motion.

Mayor Lauzon asked what the deadline is for the applications. Dr. Downer said applications are due by March 16, 2012, with decisions made in May, 2012.

There was discussion about stabilization of the bank following removal of the buildings, the process of completing the applications, and getting firm estimates for costs associated with the program.

Affected Hilltop Avenue property owners Carol Garland, Charles and Brett Acebo, and William Duprey were in attendance, and asked questions about stripping architectural features from the homes, continuing slippage of the buildings, trespassing and vandalism, issuing orders of condemnation or letters of uninhabitability, and accessing SBA low-interest loan funds.

**Council approved the motion as presented by Councilor Boutin.**

**B) TNT Building RFP – Council Consideration.**

Mayor Lauzon recused himself due to conflict of interest. Acting Mayor Smith assumed the chair.

Planning Director Michael Miller reviewed the history of the City's purchase of the former TNT property, and the issuance of the RFP for removal of the building. Mr. Miller said the City received one proposal in response to the RFP. The proposal was from Metro Development, LLC for \$5,000. Mr. Miller recommended awarding the contract for removal of the building to Metro Development with conditions as included in the RFP, and authorize Mr. Miller to negotiate a timeline for the necessary permits.

Councilor Herring made the motion to approve Mr. Miller's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Councilor Etl.

Mayor Lauzon, speaking as the owner of Metro Development LLC, addressed the Council, reviewing the process by which the RFP was publicized. He said after the City purchased the property, he expressed his interest in the building to Manager Mackenzie and Mr. Miller, and after that time did not have any direct conversations with them about the building or the RFP. He reviewed the costs associated with relocating the building to his property located at Metro Way.

**Council approved the motion as presented by Councilor Herring.**

Acting Mayor Smith stepped down, and Mayor Lauzon resumed serving as chair of the meeting.

**C) Vacant Building Discussion.**

Councilor Boutin said he wants to make sure the City is following the vacant buildings ordinance with regards to vacant storefronts on Main Street. Mayor Lauzon said he has noticed that the floor in one of the vacant buildings seems to be unstable, and perhaps the Vermont Department of Public Safety could make an inspection to determine if the property would be reasonably safe should firefighters need to enter. Mr. Miller said he has notified the property owner about the flooring. He said there are no violations of the ordinance at the properties mentioned. He will contact VDPS about doing some inspections. Mayor Lauzon said he is aware of several properties that appear to have not had mitigation work done after the May flooding, and they are developing mold. The Mayor said in the case of such vacant properties, an inspection should be insisted upon.

**D) Resolution #2011-13: Opening Investment Accounts for Bond Funds.**

Clerk Dawes said no Council action is necessary to open the account. The Clerk said she will work with the Manager to determine the amount to be initially deposited and manage the funds.

**E) Compensation for First Constable – Delinquent Dog Licenses.**

Clerk Dawes reviewed her memo and recommended Council approve compensating the First Constable by paying him the \$50 citation fees collected through his work with delinquent dog licenses. The Clerk said such compensation would be handled through a contract and accounts payable, and not through payroll. She said she will work with the Manager to draft and execute the contract.

Council approved the Clerk's recommendation on motion of Councilor Smith, seconded by Councilor Chadderton. **Motion carried.**

**F) Annual Supply Bids – Council Approval.**

Council approved supply bids as recommended by City engineer tech Larry Morgan on motion of Councilor Herring, seconded by Councilor Smith. Motion included approval of three items, as indicated on Mr. Morgan's memo, after evaluation is complete to the staff's satisfaction. **Motion carried.**

**G) Firefighters Work Agreement Ratification.**

Manager Mackenzie said this item will be deferred, as he has not had an opportunity to review the proposed work agreement with Elizabeth Somaini and City labor attorney, Scott Cameron. The Manager

To be approved at 08-30-11 Barre City Council Meeting

said his intention is to have this item on next week's agenda.

**Roundtable –**

Councilor Etli said he and Councilor Smith participated in last Saturday's river clean-up, which was coordinated by Friends of the Winooski.

Mayor Lauzon said the North Main Street Reconstruction Project is making progress. The Mayor said it would be appreciated if the contractor could mitigate dust during construction.

The Mayor said he attended today's dedication of the new murals on the Summer Street wall.

Council adjourned at 9:20 PM on motion of Councilor Poirier, seconded by Councilor Smith. **Motion carried.**

An audio transcript of this meeting is available through the Clerk's Office. Audio transcripts are kept on file for two years, as per state statute.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk