

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held January 2, 2018**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Thomas Lauzon at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilor Jeffrey Tuper-Giles; from Ward II, Councilors Brandon Batham (attending via phone) and Michael Boutin; and from Ward III, Councilors Lucas Herring and John LePage. Also present was City Clerk/Treasurer Carolyn Dawes.

Note – as per Council policy, a Councilor cannot vote by phone unless their vote is needed for a quorum. Councilor Batham did not vote on any of the action items included in these minutes.

Absent: From Ward I, Councilor Sue Higby; and City Manager Steve Mackenzie.

Adjustments to the Agenda: NONE

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- Minutes of the following meetings:
 - Regular meeting on December 26, 2017
- City Warrants as presented:
 - Approval of Week 2018-01:
 - Accounts Payable: \$355,471.68
 - Payroll (gross): \$119,564.21
- 2018 Licenses & Permits – NONE

The City Clerk/Treasurer Report – Clerk Dawes reported on the following:

- Water & sewer bills were due by today.
- Funding request applications and support materials were due by today. The review team will make their first assessment of the submissions later this week.
- Information is posted on the City website regarding offices up for election at the Annual Town Meeting on March 6, 2018.

Approval of Building Permits – NONE

Liquor Control – NONE

City Manager's Report – NONE

Visitors and Communications –

Elizabeth Stewart of Kirk Street said she moved here from Puerto Rico, and has been working with families in Puerto Rico affected by Hurricane Maria. She is planning on bringing three children here to live with her, but she cannot currently live in her apartment due to mold contamination. She is in need of assistance to find safe housing, and funding support for traveling to Florida to pick up the children. Mayor Lauzon said he will have Fire Capt. Matt Cetin inspect her apartment tomorrow, and will reach out to the local churches for support. Clerk Dawes said the Brusa Trust might also be a source of funds.

Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce president Bill Moore said he and the Chamber continue to be opposed to the Council's consideration of asking the voters to authorize a local options tax on rooms, meals and alcohol.

Bernie Allen of Allen Lumber said his business is sponsoring open gym time at the Civic Center auditorium for the last three Saturdays in January – January 13th, 20th and 27th – from 8:30 – 11:30 AM. He encouraged kids to come out and play, and other businesses to sponsor similar gym times.

Old Business – NONE

New Business –

A) BADC Update.

Barre Area Development Corporation executive director Joel Schwartz and board president Sarah Field reported on the following:

- Working on warehouse and distribution space availabilities.
- Working on expected business expansions.
- Looking for tenant to market Vermont food products.
- Changing census tracks for new market tax credits.
- Marketing contract with Imagination Company, starting this month. End result will be a message and brand for the Barre area.
- Activity in the Wilson Industrial Park.
- Tracking real estate listings.

There was discussion on local option taxes, and workforce development needs surrounding Land o' Lakes' purchase of Vermont Creamery.

B) Review/Update of FY 18 Council Priorities.

Councilor Herring reviewed the status of the projects on the priorities list. There was discussion on developing quality housing stock, development of a housing tax credit program being considered by the legislature, work on a municipal plan update, and timing for the proposed zoning changes.

C) FY 19 Budget Proposal Review and Deliberations.

Mayor Lauzon said he has asked the Manager to identify \$100,000 in cuts to bring the projected tax increase down to 2.02%, or 3.66 cents. The Mayor said Council will hold two budget work sessions on January 13th and 20th at 8:00 AM.

There was discussion on capital planning, pool refurbishment, and placing capital items on the March Annual Meeting ballot.

Round Table –

Councilor Batham wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Councilor LePage recommended people bank snow around their foundations to help insulate their homes. He said the Boy Scouts will be collecting Christmas trees this Saturday as a fundraiser.

Councilor Herring said the Civic Center hosted stick & puck and open gym time over the holiday school vacation, and the digital sign is operational. He thanked City staff for their hard work, especially during extreme cold weather.

Councilor Tuper-Giles thanked Bernie Allen for sponsoring open gym time at the auditorium.

Mayor Lauzon said the extreme cold weather will put a strain on LIHEAP funds, and he encouraged people to support fuel assistance programs.

To be approved at 01-09-18 Barre City Council Meeting

Executive Session – NONE

The Council meeting adjourned at 8:33 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Herring. **Motion carried.**

An audio recording of this meeting is available from the City Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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