

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held November 5, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Lucas Herring at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors John Steinman and Jeffrey Tuper-Giles; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors John LePage and Rich Morey. Also present were City Manager Steve Mackenzie and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Mayor Herring said the grand list agenda item is deferred.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Council approved the following consent agenda items on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Steinman. **Motion carried with Councilor Steinman abstaining.**

- Minutes of the following meetings:
 - Special meeting of October 29, 2019
 - Regular meeting of October 29, 2019
- City Warrants as presented:
 - Approval of Week 2019-45:
 - Accounts Payable: \$168,943.80
 - Payroll (gross): \$125,258.30

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

- Second quarter property taxes are due by November 15th.
- Secretary of State Jim Condos is holding his transparency tour at the Barre Town offices tomorrow evening at 6PM, focusing on election security and access to public records.
- VEPC staff and council members will be here on Thursday, November 7th, for a tour and meeting.
- Annual license renewals are being mailed out this week.

Liquor Control – NONE

City Manager's Report - Manager Mackenzie reported on the following:

- Open paving projects throughout the City were completed today.
- Yard waste curbside pickup continues through Thursday of this week.
- The Pearl Street pedway lighting ceremony is this Friday, November 8th, at 5:00 PM.
- Winter parking ban goes into effect November 15th, and runs to April 1st.

Visitors and Communications – NONE

Old Business – NONE

New Business –

A) Discussion and/or Action Regarding Older Americans Act.

Mary Hayden and Beth Stern from Central Vermont Council on Aging spoke about the services they offer, and the recent bipartisan congressional support for passage of the Older Americans Act. They requested a letter in support of the Act from the City Council. Council approved the letter of support drafted by Mayor Herring on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Boutin. **Motion carried.**

B) Morrisville Connector Update.

Nick D'Agostino from Rural Community Transportation said they have started a commuter route from Morrisville to Barre through Hardwick. The route runs to Barre in the mornings and back to Morrisville in the evenings, and connects in East Montpelier with the Route 2 connector between St. Johnsbury and Montpelier.

The new route is funded through a 3-year grant. RCT will be looking for local support after the grant sunsets. The route is in support of VT Agency of Transportation's ongoing move to Barre City Place.

C) Landlord Security Deposits.

Local landlords Larry Lozier and Brent Slayton said the City charter should be changed to remove the restrictions on security deposits for rentals. Mr. Lozier said most other communities have no limitations on deposits, and allow the collection of first month rent, last month rent, a security deposit, and other special deposits such as for pets. Barre City and Burlington are the only two cities in Vermont that limit it to one month's rent and one month's security deposit. He spoke of the challenges of being a landlord in Barre City. He said he is allowed to collect additional deposits in Barre Town, and therefore his Town tenants can have pets while City tenants cannot. He said most landlords don't support the current law. Mr. Slayton said the law is outdated and should be changed.

There was discussion on when the security deposit language was added to the charter and the charter change process, screening prospective tenants, housing as a right, eviction laws and processes, housing opportunities, subsidized housing, allowing the Housing Board of Review to adjudicate local evictions, and making changes in state law.

Council asked the charter review group to look into proposing changes to the Barre City charter on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Steinman. **Motion carried with Councilor Waszazak voting against.**

D) Acceptance of Johnson Controls Quote for PSB Alarm Panel Replacement.

Buildings and Community Services director Jeff Bergeron said the current alarm panel at the Public Safety Building has faults which cause the system to malfunction. Mr. Bergeron said it won't pass an inspection. He recommended Council approve a sole source replacement of the system by Johnson Controls for \$16,285, due to this being an emergency situation. The panel will be relocated to move it away from the dampness in its current setting.

Council approved the recommended sole source procurement on motion of Councilor Steinman, seconded by Councilor Tuper-Giles. **Motion carried.**

E) Review Status of Grand List.

This item is deferred.

F) DPW Items:

i. Snow Removal Planning Briefing.

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn gave a review of last year's winter operations for snow removal, sanding & salting, plowing streets, plowing parking lots, and extended duration storms. Mr. Ahearn said there will be some operational changes tested this winter with an eye towards reducing overtime and creating efficiencies. Changes in snow removal will likely call for short-term street closures for 15-30 minutes to allow for faster and safer snow removal. The sand and salt spreaders are being calibrated to regulate distribution of product, and new snow storage areas are being identified in the City's parking lots. DPW has an increased number of employees with commercial driver's licenses, which will allow more staff coverage during storms. There was discussion on plowing sidewalks and sand/salt alternatives.

ii. **Approval of Salt Purchase Contracts.**

Mr. Ahearn reviewed the various salt quotes he received through the state and private contractors. He said the two lowest bids came from American Rock Salt and Cargill. Mr. Ahearn requested Council approve awarding a purchasing contract with American Rock Salt for up to 2,000 tons, and a purchasing contract with Cargill for up to 1,500 tons. Two contracts allows the City to move freely between them should either company experience a shortage during the season.

Council approved Mr. Ahearn's recommendation to award contracts to American Rock Salt and Cargill on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

iii. **Authorization to Accept ANR Dix Reservoir Risk Assessment Grant.**

Mr. Ahearn said the Agency of Natural Resources is offering grant funds to dams that have been designated by the state as high hazard. The expected grant amount is \$30,000 with no local share. The state will hire a complete risk assessment on the dam and reservoir system. This is a FEMA grant and a precursor to a national program that might have funding available in the future for needed improvements.

Council approved accepting the grant and authorized the Manager to sign on behalf of the City on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Tuper-Giles. **Motion carried.**

G) Discussion – Council Liaisons to Departments/Committees.

Mayor Herring asked if Councilors were interested in serving as liaisons with departments and/or committees. Councilors expressed an interest in serving as liaisons to committees, but felt the Manager serves as their liaison with the departments. The Mayor asked Councilors to let him know if they are interested in being named as the liaison to any particular committees. Council asked committees to submit in-person or written quarterly reports on committee activities.

Round Table –

Councilor Morey said last weekend's Granite City 5K race, and the Tires for Troops event at Bigras Auto were both successes. He said the Barre Home Brew competition is being put on by the Barre Partnership in May.

Councilors LePage and Waszazak reminded people to be careful when driving through construction zones and infrastructure work.

Councilor Steinman said the Barre Rotary Club and Norwich University Rotaract Club spent time over the weekend cleaning, repairing and painting the second floor area of the Wheelock building, where the Rotary Club is establishing a storage space for clothing and supplies available to people in need. They expect the space to be operational by the end of the month.

Mayor Herring reported on the following:

- The Pearl Street pedway opening is Friday at 5:00 PM.
- City Hall is closed on Monday for Veteran's Day. The Veteran's Day parade will be Monday beginning at 10 AM, with ceremonies at City Hall Park starting at 11 AM.
- Visit www.barrerocksolid.com to view videos on local attractions, businesses and people.
- There will be an opportunity before the November 19th Council meeting for the public to meet police K9 Mikey and his human Officer Amos Gaylord at Wobby Park, where they will give a demonstration.

Executive Session – NONE

To be approved at 11-12-19 Barre City Council Meeting

The Council meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

An audio recording of the meeting is available in the Clerk's office.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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