

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held February 7, 2023**

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, Barre, Vermont. 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 (arrived 8:11 PM) and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were City Manager Nicolas Storellicastro, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Other Present:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** NONE

**Visitors and Communications –**

Under communications, Councilor Lauzon asked that a letter and executive department recognition by Governor Scott presented to the Barre Partnership and executive director Tracie Lewis be read into the record. Mayor Hemmerick said it will be added to new agenda items after item A.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
  - i. Regular meeting of January 31, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  1. Approval of Week 2023-06, dated February 8, 2023:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$134,207.03
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$142,197.83
- C. 2023 Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Approval of updates to the Accounts Payable Policy
- E. Approval of 2023 Certificate of Highway Mileage

**City Clerk & Treasurer Report –**

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Ballots for the March 7<sup>th</sup> annual town meeting have been ordered, and will be available by February 15<sup>th</sup>. Absentee ballots will be mailed out as soon as they're available.
- Third quarter property tax payments are due by February 15<sup>th</sup>.

The Clerk read remarks on civility and respect from Governor Scott at today's weekly press conference.

**Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE**

**City Manager's Report –**

Manager Storellicastro noted the following:

- Thanked staff members and departments integral to the recent safety leadership during last week's extreme cold weather.
- There was a water main break on Railroad Street earlier today, which has been repaired.
- There is a water leak in the Lawrence Avenue area that will be repaired tomorrow. The repair is

expected to take 4-6 hours, during which that area will experience water disruptions.

- The City will be soliciting bids next week for paving services for the upcoming 2023 season.

#### **New Business –**

##### **A) Proclamation honoring Sue Higby for 20 years at Studio Place Arts.**

Mayor Hemmerick read the proclamation honoring Sue Higby on her 20 years of executive director leadership at Studio Place Arts, and naming February 11, 2023 as Sue Higby Day in the City of Barre. The Council and a large group of supporters in attendance gave Ms. Higby a standing ovation as the Mayor presented Ms. Higby with the proclamation and a key to the City. Ms. Higby spoke of the leadership and vision of those who saved the Nichols Block after it was nearly destroyed by fire, and turned it into an art showplace envied throughout the state and beyond.

State Representative Peter Anthony presented a copy of House Concurrent Resolution H.C.R. 6 to the City for its records. The resolution honors Ms. Higby on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her service as executive director of Studio Place Arts.

##### **Added) Letter and Recognition to Barre Partnership.**

Mayor Hemmerick read a letter from Governor Scott to Barre Partnership executive director Tracie Lewis, offering his praises of the holiday lighting in downtown Barre, and honoring the Partnership through the Governor's Rays of Kindness initiative. In the Executive Department Recognition, the Governor called attention to the rays of kindness and good deeds happening throughout Vermont, and noted the Partnership's work over the holiday season is an example of Barre's strong community spirit.

##### **B) Approval of Capital Fire Mutual Aid MOU concerning affirmation of membership, participation in emergency radio project, and appointment of the Fire Chief as the City's delegate.**

Manager Storlicastro reviewed the materials in the packet. Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth said the City was one of the founding members of Capital Fire Mutual Aid System in 1970. The memorandum of understanding is being presented to the member towns to reaffirm their commitment to providing mutual aid in times of need. The 22 member towns of the radio systems user group are working together on dispatch equipment upgrades through a state grant program. Each member community will make an annual contribution to the ongoing maintenance and future equipment replacement fund, based on the assessed values of their grand lists. Barre City's projected contribution in the first year is \$6,256, which is reflected in the FY24 budget.

There was discussion on continuing cooperative efforts, aging equipment, universal support across all member communities, estimated 10-year life of the new equipment, covering ongoing maintenance expenses through the members' annual assessments, accounting and auditing of the consolidated funds, and gathering data on how to quantify use of mutual aid services to ensure regional balance.

Council approved authorizing the execution of the CFMAS MOU, and appointment of the Fire Chief or their designee as Barre City's delegate to the CFMAS, on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

##### **C) Discussion of letter to Green Mountain Transit regarding service cuts.**

Resident Jesse Rosado reviewed the timeline of Green Mountain Transit service cuts and outreach efforts to restore service levels. Mr. Rosado said he used the bus system for four years to commute through Montpelier and Waterbury to Stowe for work. Such a commute is no longer possible with the reduced service schedule. It was recently reported that there's a possibility these service cuts will become permanent. Mr. Rosado said GMT is providing services along the Stowe Mountain Road, and needs to return focus to public transportation.

There was discussion on including the House and Senate Transportation Committees on the distribution list for the letter, sharing the letter with the media, and including a time limit in the letter for service restorations.

Resident Steven Finner said frequency of service is important, and noted the buses are now an hour apart instead of 30 minutes.

There was additional discussion on getting Barre City representation on the GMT board, and placing the annual allocation in the City's budget to give the City more control over the funding.

Council approved the letter as edited on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Boutin.  
**Motion carried.**

**Upcoming Business –**

- Special Council meeting/executive session by Zoom only, February 8<sup>th</sup>.
- Next regular Council meeting February 21<sup>st</sup>, followed by February 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Round Table –**

Councilors noted the positive attitudes and outcomes from tonight's meeting.

Councilor Stockwell said she's pleased to see a long-time vacant home in her neighborhood being brought back to life.

**Executive Session – NONE**

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Waszazak.  
**Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk