

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held August 2, 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 City Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro, Finance Director Dawn Monahan, Planning Director Janet Shatney, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:**

- Move water/sewer rate approval to beginning of new agenda items.

**Visitors and Communications** – NONE

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
  - i. Regular meeting of July 26, 2022
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  1. Approval of Week 2022-31, dated August 3, 2022:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$195,937.69
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$156,476.10
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits:
  1. Food Vendor License:
    - i. Candy Van, James Fitzgerald

**City Clerk & Treasurer Report** –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Absentee ballots for the August 9<sup>th</sup> primary are available. Voters may stop by the office to vote or pick up their ballots, or call to request them by mail. To date just under 900 ballots have been issued, and just under 500 have been returned.
- The tax bill file will be created tomorrow and sent to the printer. The bills will be in the mail by August 15<sup>th</sup>, with the first quarter due date set for September 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Liquor Control Board** – Council approved an alcohol day use permit for Rotary Park for the Redmond Family event on August 22nd, on motion of Councilor Cambel, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin abstaining.**

**City Manager's Report** –

Manager Storrellicastro noted the following:

- Public Works Department is working on sidewalk improvements on Maple Avenue, followed by Ayers Street and North Main Street.
- The Finance Department has rolled out a new payroll system that will transition the City away from paper timesheets.
- Interim Assessor/Planning Director Janet Shatney finalized and lodged the 2022 grand list on Friday.
- Last weekend's Heritage Festival was a great success, thanks in large part to the work of the Fire,

Police, Public Works, and Buildings & Community Services departments.

- There will be a free literacy event at the municipal pool on Wednesday, August 10<sup>th</sup>. It will include a storyteller and free books for children.

**Unfinished Business –**

**A) Approval of Reconciled Annual Appointments List.**

Council approved the reconciled appointments list on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak, and asked that the list be entered into the record. **Motion carried.**

**New Business –**

**D) Approval of FY23 Water and Sewer Rates: Resolution #2022-08.**

Manager Storrellicastro reviewed the history of water/sewer rate adjustments, and said this year's changes are the last of a 4-year cycle put in place by the Council beginning in 2019.

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn said expenses continue to outpace revenues in the wastewater enterprise fund, with the wastewater plant requiring extensive maintenance to remain operable. Mr. Ahearn reviewed the impact of the fee increases based on low, average and high usage. There was discussion on whether municipal tax dollars are used to subsidize the enterprise funds, and Mr. Ahearn noted the enterprise funds are self-sustaining with no support from the general fund.

Council approved the FY23 water and sewer rates on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

**A) Partner Update – Jon Moore, Executive Director Green Mountain Transit.**

GMT executive director Jon Moore and board member Bonnie Waninger (Central VT Regional Planning Commission executive director) updated the Council on recent commuter route changes. Mr. Moore said five of their twenty drivers took early retirement during the pandemic, and they have been struggling to fill the vacancies. GMT made the decision to reduce the City Commuter route by 150 hours/week, which means their first run of the day starts 30 minutes later than the previous schedule, and regular runs are once every hour instead of once every half hour. They are exploring partnering with Capstone to help fill gaps for Medicaid transports, and are actively recruiting to fill the five vacancies. GMT provides free CDL training for drivers.

Resident Jesse Rosado said the new later start for the first commuter bus to Montpelier does not allow riders to transfer to other commuter routes, making the bus less of an option for riders. Mr. Rosado said the bus is fully funded, and there should be no reductions in service. He noted good public transportation is an important part of a healthy and vibrant community.

Mr. Moore said finances aren't an issue; the issue is being able to recruit new drivers. He said they will review the early morning schedule and connectivity to other commuter routes, and see if changes are possible.

Raylene Meunier said GMT should reach out to local CDL training schools to see if recent or soon-to-be graduates might be interested in a position with GMT.

Mr. Moore said these are temporary changes, and service will be restored once the vacancies are filled.

**B) Approval of Fund Balance Retention.**

Manager Storrellicastro reviewed his memo. Council approved retaining any further fund balance up to \$641,817 as of June 30, 2022, noting this represents 5% of the FY22 budget, as an undesignated fund balance for future use as permitted by §601(b) of the city charter, on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

**C) Approval of FY23 Municipal Tax Rate.**

Clerk Dawes reviewed the calculations for the municipal and local agreement tax rates. Council approved the rates as presented on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

**Upcoming Business** – Mayor Hemmerick noted Council will not be meeting over the next three weeks, with the next meeting scheduled for August 30, 2022. The Mayor said he won't be here that day, and Councilor Boutin will chair the meeting.

**Round Table** –

Councilors said last weekend's Heritage Festival was a great event, and this evening's National Night Out community picnic in Currier Park was wonderful.

Mayor Hemmerick spoke of the following:

- Thanked Councilors Lauzon and Stockwell for providing and decorating the float for the Council to ride on in the Heritage Festival parade.
- Public Works has installed a bulb-out on Washington Street as a traffic calming and pedestrian safety measure.
- Senator Sanders has advanced the City's congressional earmark request for \$4.3M in funding support for improvements to the auditorium and the water transmission line along Route 302. The request will now be included in the bill being sent to congress.

**Executive Session - NONE**

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk