

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held August 22, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 6:00 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, Councilor Michael Deering (arrived 7:02 PM). City staff members present were City Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: From Ward III, Councilor Samn Stockwell.

Others Present: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda:

- Moved the paving contract approval from new business to the consent agenda.
- Added a discussion on post-flood engagement under new business.

Visitors and Communications

Amy Galford asked what the plans are for flood recovery at the City's playgrounds. Manager Storrellicastro said they are scheduled to be included in the clean-up efforts being coordinated by Vermont Green-Up this coming Saturday.

Ellen Kaye said the crosswalk signals are included in each traffic cycle at the corner of Elm and Summer Streets, even when not activated. The Manager said the contractor who maintains the traffic signals throughout the City will be on site in the near future, and this will be on their list of locations to look at. There's also been a request to review the traffic lights at the intersection of South Main, Hill and Ayers Streets in advance of the start of school. This intersection will be negatively impacted by the flood-related closing of West Patterson Street. Mayor Hemmerick asked that the intersection be studied for a possible roundabout.

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. Special meeting of August 15, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2023-34, dated August 23, 2023:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$311,256.50
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$139,126.21
- C. 2023 Clerk's Office Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Authorize the Manager to execute contract(s)
 - i. Flood Repair Paving Bid (moved from new business)

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

City Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes reported on the following:

- Tax bills went in the mail today, and the first quarter installment due date is October 2, 2023.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Storellicastro reported on the following:

- Green Mountain Transit reported they have four drivers leaving their employ, and they are considering temporary service reductions until those positions can be filled. They intend to spread the service reductions over their service areas, but there will be an impact on the city commuter route. Councilors urged GMT to offer vouchers for cabs, or work with the Community Rides Vermont program available through Capstone.
- The municipal pool closed for the season last week. In spite of rainy weather, usage at the pool was nearly the same as last year. Improvements this season included accepting credit/debit card payments, and installation of the grant-funded sunscreen dispenser.
- The waiver of parking meter fees will expire the day after Labor Day, at which time enforcement will resume.
- Building, electrical and flood hazard permit fee waivers will continue for at least another month. There will be a two-week notification before the waivers expire.
- There have been 52 abatements in the water/sewer billing department due to excess water usage associated with the flooding. Some additional abatements are expected before the bills go out September 1st.
- All City streets have been inspected for debris piles. There are 16 piles that have been identified, and they will be picked up in the near future. Any future debris disposal will be the property owners' responsibility. FEMA provides funding support for debris removal, and those impacted by the flooding are urged to sign up with FEMA before the September 12th, deadline.
- Staff members are working to reschedule the tire disposal event originally scheduled for July.
- Staff members are working to schedule a fall bulky waste disposal event.
- RFPs have been issued for repairs to City-owned buildings, and for hiring a long-term disaster management consultant.

New Business –

A) Authorize the Manager to execute contract(s)

i. Flood Repair Paving Bid

Moved to the consent agenda.

Other) Post-flood recovery engagement (added under adjustments) –

Councilor Lauzon said the City has now solidly transitioned from response to recovery, and suggested there be a series of meetings to allow residents and businesses to share their needs. He suggested the date of the first meeting be before the September 12th deadline to file with FEMA, and that FEMA be present at the meeting to facilitate applications. Manager Storellicastro said he is working with the City's volunteer ad hoc working group to put together such a series of meetings to be facilitated by Vermont Council on Rural Development, similar to the meetings being held in Montpelier.

There was discussion on having FEMA set up booths in various locations in the City to facilitate application registrations, spreading the word about registrations and the community meetings to landlords and tenants, and contacting GMT to provide transportation to and from the meetings.

Upcoming Business –

- August 29th: Planning Commission holding first public hearing for revisions to the accessory dwelling unit (ADU) zoning ordinances.
- August 29th: Downstreet presentation on purchase of South Main Street motel for housing.
- Quarterly updates from finance department re. flood impacts on general fund budget.

Round Table –

Councilor Boutin said there have been discussions with the school about the impact of closing of West Patterson Street due to flood damage.

Councilor Lauzon said he participated in the meeting with Congresswoman Becca Balint earlier this week, and he thanked her for her interest in the City. He thanked the Lions Club for their \$10,000 donation to the Barre Community Relief Fund.

Mayor Hemmerick said he is proud of the way the City has worked towards flood relief and recovery over the past six weeks.

Executive Session – Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of personnel issues to be discussed would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 6:46 PM to discuss personnel issues under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Cambel. Manager Storrellicastro was invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 7:22 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

The open portions of the meeting were recorded on the video platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk