

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held November 1, 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, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Buildings and Community Services Director Jeff Bergeron, Buildings and Community Services Assistant Director Stephanie Quaranta, Finance Director Dawn Monahan, Interim Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Add new consent agenda item to authorize the Manager to execute a lease extension with the Barre Rotary Club for use of the 2nd floor of the Wheelock House until May 31, 2023.

Visitors and Communications – NONE

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Special meeting of October 25, 2022.
 - ii. Regular meeting of October 25, 2022.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2022-44, dated November 2, 2022:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$259,150.45
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$133,187.99
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Ratification of authorization for the City Manager to execute the Wheelock House lease extension.
- E. Authorization for the City Manager to execute the lease extension with the Barre Rotary Club for use of the 2nd floor of the Wheelock House.

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- To date 4,700 ballots have been issued for the November 8th General Election, and 1,500 voted ballots have been returned. Voters can return voted ballots before the election, or bring the ballots with them to the polls.
- The Board of Civil Authority is holding its pre-election meeting on Thursday, November 3rd, at 6:00 PM in the Council chambers.
- The winter parking ban goes into effect at 12:01 AM on November 15th. Parking is prohibited in parking lots or on streets from 1:00 AM – 6:00 AM from November 15th – April 1st.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board –

Councilor Lauzon recused himself from the discussion and action due to conflict of interest.

Clerk Dawes noted Green Mountain Hash LLP has applied to the Vermont Cannabis Control Board for a Manufacturers Tier 2 license, which requires local approval. Green Mountain Hash LLP representative Justin Massie appeared before the Council via Zoom, and introduced himself and the business. There was

discussion on the manufacturing process, precautions around odor controls, and their partnership with Forbins Finest LLC, which was granted a Cultivator Tier 3 license last month. Clerk Dawes noted GMH LLP has been issued a zoning permit, which has a 15-day waiting period before going into effect. The Clerk recommended Council approve the license, which will be submitted to the Vermont Cannabis Control Board once the waiting period has expired next week.

Council approved the license on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Deering.
Motion carried with Councilor Lauzon recused, and Councilor Boutin abstaining.

City Manager's Report –

Manager Storrellicastro noted the following:

- There have been two water main breaks today which caused the City to issue a boil water notice for the entire system. Once the repairs are made and the required testing is done, the order will be lifted. It will likely take a day or two.
- There was a great Halloween parade and party on Saturday, and trick-or-treating in the downtown yesterday. There was an incident where a child was struck by a vehicle. The City's emergency services responded immediately and the injuries were minor. There was discussion on reviewing and enhancing safety measures.
- There is no Council meeting next week. The next meeting is November 15th, which is a community forum on use of the ARPA funds. A survey soliciting ideas for the ARPA funds will go live November 9th, and be accessible through the City's website.

Unfinished Business – NONE

New Business –

A) Holiday free parking request from The Barre Partnership.

Barre Partnership executive director Tracie Lewis requested free parking in the downtown from Thanksgiving through New Year's. Council approved the request on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Deering. **Motion carried.**

It was noted over the past few years that Council has encouraged people to feed the parking meters during the holiday season free parking, with the funds raised benefiting a local organization or need. Council approved donating this year's funds to the Renita Marshall Helping Hands Foundation on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried with Mayor Hemmerick voting against.**

Councilor Lauzon thanked Ms. Lewis for her care in holding the downtown trick-or-treating event. There was discussion on the safety measures put in place, with people serving as crossing guards at the crosswalks in the core downtown area between the Depot and Cornerstone restaurant. Mary Jane Magnan from Wobby Jewelers said there are traditionally 700 – 1,000 kids walking along N. Main Street during the 1-hour event. There was discussion on additional safety measures and possible street closures.

B) FY24 Budget Department Reviews: Planning, Permitting and Assessing Services, Buildings & Community Services, and Recreation Departments.

Planning Director Janet Shatney reviewed her Powerpoint presentation of the proposed FY24 budgets for the Planning, Permitting and Assessing departments. Ms. Shatney shared a link to the Vermont Department of Taxes website where they offer a tutorial on how to read a tax bill, and provided statistics and facts on property sales volumes and sale prices. There was discussion on filling staff vacancies, the impact of recent sales prices on the grand list, and what work could be handed off to the junior planner when that position is filled.

Buildings and Community Services Director Jeff Bergeron reviewed his Powerpoint presentation of the proposed FY24 budget for the City Hall & Public Safety Building, Facilities, and Cemeteries departments. There was discussion on current staffing vacancies; summer staffing for maintenance of cemeteries and parks; building maintenance; major repairs included in the capital improvement plan; the number of parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, and cemeteries maintained by the departments; and emergency uses of the civic center complex. Mr. Bergeron noted budget increases are tied to cost increases for propane and heating oil and staffing expenses. There was discussion on placing trash cans in City parks, and ongoing purchase of more efficient lawn maintenance equipment.

Buildings and Community Services Assistant Director Stephanie Quaranta reviewed her Powerpoint presentation of the proposed FY24 budget for the Recreation Department. Ms. Quaranta said the increase is tied to increased expenses for staffing. She noted grant funds covered the costs for pool personnel, pool supplies, pool passes, and summer camps last year. There was discussion on finding and training lifeguards, efforts to make the pool more accessible and inclusive, and expanding programs to be intergenerational. Ms. Quaranta says you create community through people, parks, and programs.

Sarah Helman suggested adding picnic tables and shelters or umbrellas for shade in the pool area.

C) Establishment of a Governance Committee.

Mayor Hemmerick reviewed the draft resolution creating a governance committee and establishing its areas of focus. The Mayor said he proposes a 7-member committee. There was discussion on new statutory language that allows non-residents to serve on certain committees and boards, allowing time for Councilors to review the proposal and taking it up for further discussion at a future meeting, revising or eliminating some of the focus items listed in the resolution, and Council responsibilities for governance.

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to approve the resolution after striking out all the bullet points, seconded by Councilor Lauzon.

There was further discussion on how to provide guidance to the proposed committee without including focus points in the resolution.

William Toborg said charter changes are the purview of the Council, and Councilors can ask for input from the public. Times Argus reporter David Delcore noted there is no November 2023 general election as is referenced in the draft resolution.

Councilor Waszazak withdrew his motion.

Councilor Lauzon made the motion to establish the governance committee of seven people to include the Mayor, Clerk and five additional people, and to have the Council continue to work on the committee charge and priorities. The motion was seconded by Councilor Cambel.

There was additional discussion on needing more time to explore the issue, and the proper process around tabling a motion. Councilor Lauzon withdrew his motion, thereby removing the option to table. Mayor Hemmerick said the proposed governance committee may be included in the ongoing committee reset proposal being worked on by the Manager.

Round Table –

All Councilors encouraged people to vote in next Tuesday's General Election.

Councilor Stockwell said her neighbors had water in their basement and reached out to the City. Manager Storellicastro and Public Works Director Ahearn responded and visited the home. Councilor Stockwell

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thanked them for their excellent response.

Councilor Lauzon thanked all those responsible for the wonderful Halloween events over the past several days. He thanked all election candidates for their dedication to public service.

Mayor Hemmerick said they handed out candy to lots of kids who came to their home last night. The Mayor reminded people of the upcoming Veterans Day activities, and recognized Wobby Jewelers for celebrating their 50th anniversary in business.

Executive Session – NONE

The meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Waszazak.
Motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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