

To be approved at 04-10-12 Barre City Council Meeting

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held April 7, 2012**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order at 8:00 AM by Mayor Thomas Lauzon. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors Dominic Eтли and Paul Poirier; from Ward II, Councilor Michael Boutin; and from Ward III, Councilors Anita Chadderton and Lucas Herring. Also in attendance were Manager Steven Mackenzie and Clerk/Treasurer Carolyn Dawes.

Mayor Lauzon reviewed the proposal from Central Vermont Community Action Council, requesting a letter in support of its application for an EPA grant to fund a training program. Council approved the letter of support on motion of Councilor Eтли, seconded by Councilor Chadderton. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Lauzon opened discussions on the FY13 proposed budget by presenting his recommended budget adjustments totaling approximately \$196,000. The Mayor said \$106,000 of the adjustments are related to adjustments in the Planning & Zoning Department and consolidation of the Recreation, Facilities and Cemetery Departments. The Mayor said he will discuss the details further in executive session.

The following were discussed:

- The possibility of not spending all of the money authorized by the voters for street reconstruction, and the impact on the tax rate
- Parking meters
- Assistant manager position
- No elimination of labor hours due to restructuring of departments

Manager Mackenzie distributed copies of his proposed budget reductions, as requested at the April 5, 2012 Council meeting. The following were discussed:

- Reducing overtime expenses
- Possible level funding of support to the Aldrich Library, Barre Partnership and Barre Area Development Corporation
- Changes in union contracts to allow management of how shifts are run
- Efficiencies in consolidated departments
- Glasses benefits

Chief Tim Bombardier, Deputy Chief Joe Aldsworth and members of the Barre City Fire Department engaged with the Council on the following discussion topics:

- Overtime
- Parking fees and the development of a 3-phase implementation plan for parking
- Dispatch services and contracts
- Ambulance income as offsetting revenue against overtime expenses
- Current Fire Department vacancies
- Lack of a moonlighting clause in current contracts
- Police fees and special details and the impact on overtime
- Call in protocols and policies
- Ways to present to the public information about revenues and relationship to overtime with regards to ambulance runs and special details
- Council would like to see a pro forma of a typical ambulance run
- Call in protocols for lift assists, sprinkler alarms and false alarms
- ISO rating for the City is 4
- The cost to run a fire department without an ambulance service would be approximately \$387,000

Councilors Chadderton and Herring left at 10:00 AM.

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Discussion continued on the following:

- The need for better communication between the departments and City Hall
- Have Fire Department members attend Council meetings to talk about how the department operates
- FD members invited Councilors to spend a shift learning about how the department operates
- Barre City is the 2<sup>nd</sup> busiest Fire Department in the state, behind Burlington. They make ½ as many runs with 20% of the staff
- Fire Department personnel have collateral duties related to inspection, hydrants, training, education in the schools
- Duties of the day man and ability to use him to cut overtime expenses
- Have a conversation about altering the current shift schedule in the Fire Department
- Police Department dispatch and problems with coverage due to a tower being moved
- Ambulance billing
- Possible changes in legislation that would have private insurance companies making payments for ambulance services directly to the policy holders, which would increase debt collection services for the City
- A failure in leadership while exploring regional dispatching services and the need to develop governance and funding models

City Planner Michael Miller joined the Council to discuss his departments and the City inspection programs. The following topics were discussed:

- Keep the commitment to enforcement while running the department more efficiently
- Learning curve on the new permitting computer system
- Seven different permits issued through the department
- Expand the powers of the Zoning Administrator to allow for more administrative approvals
- Need for better reporting re. inspections and enforcement
- Building inspector position and expectations
- Types of inspections, including building, life safety and rental housing
- Follow-up process on inspections and enforcement
- Establishing a process for chronic offenders
- Reorganization and use of space in City Hall

Mayor Lauzon said he will make his memo regarding his proposed \$106,000 in cuts related to staffing changes public at the April 10, 2012 Council meeting. He requested an executive session to discuss a current personnel issue. Councilor Poirier requested an executive session to discuss FY13 budget-related personnel issues.

Council went into executive session to discuss personnel issues at 11:11 AM on motion of Councilor Etli, seconded by Councilor Boutin. **Motion carried.**

Manager Mackenzie was invited to join the executive session.

Council came out of executive session at 11:45 AM on motion of Councilor Etli, seconded by Councilor Poirier. **Motion carried.**

Council adjourned at 11:45 AM on motion of Councilor Etli, seconded by Councilor Poirier. **Motion carried.**

There is no audio file of the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk