

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held May 12, 2012**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order at 7:35 AM by Mayor Thomas Lauzon. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilors Dominic Etli and Paul Poirier; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Michael Smith; and from Ward III, Councilors Anita Chadderton and Lucas Herring (arrived 7:40 AM). Also in attendance were Manager Steven Mackenzie and Clerk/Treasurer Carolyn Dawes.

Others in attendance included Chief Tim Bombardier, Deputy Police Chief Andrew Marceau, Deputy Fire Chief Joseph Aldsworth, residents Martin Prevost, Bonnie Marceau, Hannah Etli and John Hannigan.

Mayor Lauzon opened the meeting and invited general discussion about possible budget adjustments. The discussion included the following:

- Adjustments to the salaries of non-union employees, including department heads and others.
- Elimination of the department heads in the Cemetery and Recreation Departments and replacement with entry level staff positions.
- Reducing or eliminating the \$15,000 approved by the voters in March for the regional public safety study.
- Elimination of the deputy chiefs in the Fire and Police Departments, and the hiring of a chief for the Fire Department.
- Duties of the chief and deputy chiefs.
- More than \$4 million in grants received by the public safety departments in recent years.
- Writing and administering grants through the various departments.

Councilor Etli made the motion to take the deputy police chief off the table in regards to this budget discussion. The motion was seconded by Councilor Poirier. **Motion carried.**

Councilor Poirier made the motion to take the deputy fire chief off the table for this part of the discussion, and to set a committee of at least two councilors to come back to the Council by July 1st with a report on Fire Department operations. The motion was seconded by Councilor Herring.

There was further discussion on the motion, including:

- Impact of regionalization discussions on public safety staffing.
- Councilors creating subcommittees to look at specific issues, talk to employees, look for efficiencies, etc.

Councilor Poirier called the question. **All voted in favor to call the question.**

Councilor Poirier's original motion passed with Councilor Etli voting against.

Mayor Lauzon appointed Councilors Poirier, Boutin and Etli to serve on a committee to review Fire Department operations. The committee will give weekly updates to the Council.

Councilor Poirier made the motion to go back to the voters with a net reduction of \$35,000 through elimination of the finance director/human resources position in the City manager's office and reinstatement of the permit position in the Planning & Zoning Department. The motion was seconded by Councilor Herring.

There was further discussion on the motion, including:

- Increasing public notification of the next budget vote.
- Need to see the City taking ownership and looking better – increased public perception.
- Performance of previous permit position and reallocation of duties.

To be approved at 05-15-12 Barre City Council Meeting

Councilor Boutin called the question. **The vote on the calling of the question failed, with Councilors Poirier and Smith voting for, and Mayor Lauzon and Councilors Boutin, Herring, Chadderton and Etlé voting against.**

There was continued public discussion on the following:

- Offering better explanations of the budget to the public.
- Need to grow the grand list.

Councilor Poirier asked if the Mayor intended for Council to set the revised budget figure at this meeting. Mayor Lauzon said no, that is not his intention. Councilor Poirier withdrew his motion, and Councilor Herring withdrew his second.

Councilor Poirier left at 9:05 AM.

Mayor Lauzon called for a brief recess at 9:05 AM.

Mayor Lauzon called the Council meeting back into session at 9:17 AM.

Public discussion continued on the following:

- Reorganization in the Recreation and Cemetery Departments.
- Review of salary adjustments reflected in the budget that was defeated on May 8th.
- Bring more events to the civic center/additional promotion of the civic center.
- Prioritization of duties in the Recreation and Cemetery Departments.
- Council consensus of the need to cover the hours in the Recreation and Cemetery Departments.

Mayor Lauzon said the Council will vote up or down on Tuesday with regards to reducing the salaries in the Recreation and Cemetery Departments to an entry level.

Discussion continued on the following:

- Consideration of shutting down the pool.
- Installation of “splash pads” in neighborhoods in lieu of having the pool open.

Mayor Lauzon asked if Council wanted to have any further discussion on closing the pool. The consensus was for no further discussion on that topic.

Discussion continued on the following:

- Reductions of department head salaries by 5-10%.
- Level funding department head positions.
- Elimination of the Police Department bike patrol (Bees).
- One year moratorium on the Bees due to the North Main Street Reconstruction project.
- Reducing the amount approved for paving.
- Placing additional items on the ballot for voter approval, including the Bees, adjustments to the paving program, Recreation and Cemetery Department heads.
- Statutory requirements with regards to budget re-votes and other voting.

Mayor Lauzon said he will put together a spreadsheet with information from today’s meeting and will get it to Council by Monday. The spreadsheet will be discussed at Tuesday’s Council meeting, and items will be voted upon one by one.

Councilor Chadderton asked about reducing to a 4 day work week. Mayor Lauzon said he conferred with the City labor attorney and the Department of Labor and the net savings would be minimal.

To be approved at 05-15-12 Barre City Council Meeting

Councilor Etli said he would like to see the City move to a bi-weekly payroll as an efficiency measure. Manager Mackenzie said it will require working with the unions. Mayor Lauzon recommended the change go into effect in September.

Councilor Boutin said he would like to talk about a 2% reduction across the board on non-personnel expenses, which would be approximately \$70,000.

Councilor Etli said he would support reducing the paving expenditures by \$150,000 and the recommendations made by Manager Mackenzie.

Council adjourned at 10:30 AM on motion of Councilor Etli, seconded by Councilor Smith. **Motion carried.**

An audio transcript of this meeting is available through the Clerk's Office. Audio transcripts are kept on file for two years, as per state statute.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

DRAFT