

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held January 15, 2019**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order by Mayor Lucas Herring at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance were: From Ward I, Councilor Sue Higby; from Ward II, Councilor Michael Boutin; and from Ward III, Councilors John LePage and Rich Morey. Also present were City Manager Steve Mackenzie and City Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: From Ward I, Councilor Jeffery Tuper-Giles; and from Ward II, Councilor Brandon Batham.

Adjustments to the Agenda: Mayor Herring said the order of agenda items would be adjusted to accommodate those in attendance.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- Minutes of the following meetings:
 - Special meeting of January 8, 2019
 - Regular meeting of January 8, 2019
- City Warrants as presented:
 - Approval of Week 2019-03:
 - Account Payable: \$231,773.68
 - Payroll (gross): \$115,649.28
- 2019 Licenses & Permits – NONE

Clerk Dawes said the owners from Mingle Nightclub and The Alley Cat will be attending next week's meeting, at the request of Council. They are appearing in response to the Council's questions related to their entertainment license renewal applications.

The City Clerk/Treasurer Report – Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes reported on the following:

- Barre City and Barre Town will go to the polls on February 19th to vote on proposed amendments to the unified union school district articles of agreement. Additional elections related to the BUUSD are tentatively scheduled for April and May.
- Nominating petitions, consent of candidate forms and additional information for the Annual (Town) Meeting offices to be elected on March 5, 2019 are posted on the City website. The deadline for nominating petitions is January 28th.
- Recreation program funds raised through the holiday parking period total \$1,850.
- The 2018 TIF report was submitted to the Vermont Economic Progress Council yesterday. After VEPC has reviewed the report, it will come back to Council for approval, and then back to VEPC for final approval.

Approval of Building Permits – NONE

Liquor Control – NONE

City Manager's Report – Manager Mackenzie reported on the following:

- The municipal pool advisory committee held its organizational meeting last week.
- The Manager emailed out a detailed report on the City Hall heating system. The second boiler is up and running. Next up will be assessing and replacing other components.

- The Manager and Planning Director Janet Shatney will be attending a Land Water Grant presentation later this week. The City has applied for a \$350,000 grant to help cover costs associated with the municipal pool refurbishment project.
- The City is seeking citizens interested in serving on a joint Barre City/Montpelier solid waste management committee.
- The Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee meeting this Thursday is at 5:30 PM; not at 6:30 PM as was previously listed.

Visitors and Communications – Robert Demars said he continues to be a victim of cyberbullying, an outcast from society, and that postings on social media and the internet aren't true. He will no longer offer to help people due to being an outcast.

New Business –

C) Introduction of K-9 Mikey and Handler Amos Gaylord.

Police Chief Tim Bombardier and K-9 handler Officer Amos Gaylord introduced the City's new police dog to the Council and public. His name is Mike or Mikey, after fallen police officer Mike Zemanek. The dog came from the Czech Republic and has been through preliminary training. Officer Gaylord and Mikey will attend training school later this year, and will hold a public field day when finished. Chief Bombardier and Officer Gaylord thanked the Hometown Foundation, Zemanek Foundation, Wilkins Harley-Davidson, and local churches, all of whom contributed towards the cost of the dog.

A) Presentation on Capstone Community Action.

New executive director Sue Minter said Capstone is one of five community action councils in the state. They offer a wide variety of services to fight against poverty and to help people in crisis. They have the largest food shelf in central Vermont, offer fuel assistance, help with workforce development, offer counseling in financial stability, and run the Headstart program. Last year they served 2,100 households in the Barre area, and are one of the largest employers in the City. Ms. Minter said they partner with a number of local organizations and schools. It was suggested Capstone reach out to the new Barre City Community Garden Committee for partnering opportunities.

B) Winterfest Event at the Barre City Cow Pasture sponsored by VT Bicycle Shop.

Mark Martin from the Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee and Darren Ohl from the VT Bicycle Shop said they are partnering to run an event in the Cow Pasture on February 10th from 1-3 PM. The event will feature opportunities to test fat bikes and sleds, showcase conservation efforts in the area, and highlight outdoor recreation options. Councilors voiced support for the project.

D) Overview of Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and Street Crimes Unit (SCU).

Chief Bombardier and State's Attorney Rory Thibault talked about the effectiveness of the new SCU, which began in early November. The Chief said the Street Crimes Unit has been active in increasing the number of arrests, arrest warrants, and search warrants, and is interrupting criminal activity and getting people in front of judges. Mr. Thibault said the work of the SCU has improved the quality of cases, and Barre City's already high success rates. He said they are disrupting the human network that transports and traffics in drugs, and are increasing opportunities for treatment.

E) Cameras in Public Areas.

Chief Bombardier reviewed his memo, showing potential locations of cameras along N. Main Street, and estimated the cost for equipment to be approximately \$163,000. There was discussion on areas covered in the proposed plan, surveilling areas that are considered less safe, responses from a Facebook poll on security cameras in the downtown, and whether other communities in Vermont have similar systems.

Council informally tabled the discussion.

F) BSU Budget Presentation, Charter Changes, and Appointment of Vacancies.

Clerk Dawes noted City charter calls for the school to present its proposed budget to the Council at least 45 days before Town Meeting. With the school merger underway, but not effective until July 1st, it seemed prudent to have a brief presentation of what information is available at this time. The Clerk also noted there are several sections of the City charter that deal with the school. These sections will be obsolete once the merger is complete, but we don't know at this time what will need to be done to correct the charter. The Clerk recommended waiting until the 2020 Annual (Town) Meeting elections to address any school merger-related charter changes.

Barre Superintendent John Pandolfo noted there's no need to fill any vacancies, due to recent Barre Town election results for the school merger.

Mr. Pandolfo and BCEMS school board chair Sonya Spaulding spoke of the school merger and upcoming elections, and gave a draft budget presentation for the proposed FY20 Barre Unified Union School District. The draft budget will be finalized by the BUUSD board after it's elected in April. It was noted that tax incentives and transition assistance funds originally being offered by the state to support school mergers are no longer available, as Barre City and Barre Town did not merge voluntarily.

G) Water and Sewer Bond Recommendation.

Public Works director Bill Ahearn reviewed his list of short term and long term maintenance and capital improvement projects needed for water, sewer and storm water systems. There was discussion on prioritizing projects and placing a bond on the 2019 Annual (Town) Meeting ballot. Council will review the list further at the Monday budget workshop meeting.

H) Merchants Row Redevelopment – Soils Characterization Consultant Selection.

Manager Mackenzie said the selection team recommends the contract be awarded to the Johnson Company. Council approved the recommendation on motion of Councilor Morey, seconded by Councilor Higby. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

I) Approval of Coin Drop Requests: Project Independence and Barre Figure Skating Club.

Council approved the Project Independence coin drop for September 14th, and the Barre Figure Skating Club coin drop for October 5th on motion of Councilor LePage, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

Old Business –

A) City Hall Boiler Replacement and Heating System Upgrade Status Report.

Manager Mackenzie said he covered this during the City Manager's report.

B) Budget Discussion.

There was discussion on the Community Service position, loss of state funding for the position, and the impact on the police department due to the high number of VT Department of Corrections placements in the City. Additional information was requested from Chief Bombardier.

Round Table –

Councilor LePage said he has been impressed with the level of involvement in the budget process.

Councilor Morey said he was struck by Ms. Minter's comments about the impact of the federal government shutdown on availability of EBT funds.

Councilor Higby said she appreciates the work of City staff members.

To be approved at 01-22-19 Barre City Council Meeting

Mayor Herring said he has been attending meetings on the proposed teen center, held “Coffee with the Mayor and Police Chief” last Saturday, met with Montpelier Mayor Watson, and is taking a Local Emergency Management workshop. He said the next neighborhood watch meeting is at Washington Apartments.

The Mayor reminded Councilors of the next budget workshop on Monday, January 21st at 5:30 PM.

Executive Session – NONE

The Council meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM on motion of Councilor Tuper-Giles, seconded by Councilor Morey. **Motion carried.**

An audio recording of this meeting is available from the City Clerk.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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