

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held July 13, 2021**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Lucas Herring at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance, participating in person, or by video platform, were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Jake Hemmerick; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Ericka Reil and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present in person or via video platform were City Manager Steve Mackenzie, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Councilor Waszazak asked to move the discussion on ground rules to the end of the agenda, to accommodate those in attendance. He also requested a brief discussion on 111 Seminary Street. Councilor Hemmerick asked for a discussion on developing shared goals and challenges, strategic planning, and ARPA funding, and he asked to separate the perpetual easement discussion from the consent agenda.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Minutes of the following meetings:
 - a. Regular meeting of June 29, 2021
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 - a. Ratification of Week 2021-27, dated July 7, 2021
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$512,540.49
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$125,555.79
 - b. Approval of Week 2021-28, dated July 14, 2021:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$387,554.64
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$135,184.14
- C. 2021 Licenses & Permits: The Clerk noted that due to no Council meeting last week, she administratively approved the licenses below so as to allow the events to happen, and is asking Council to ratify those approvals as part of the consent agenda.
 - a. Entertainment Licenses:
 - i. Central VT Council on Aging, “welcome back” picnic luncheon, Currier Park, July 12th from noon – 2PM.
 - b. Food Vending Licenses:
 - i. Double Dip Desserts LLC, for Food Truck Thursdays
 - ii. Paquet Apple Shack, for Food Truck Thursdays
 - iii. The Candy Van, city-wide and Food Truck Thursdays
 - iv. Cornerstone Pub & Kitchen, Food Truck Thursdays
- D. Ratify Council Allocation of Hollow Inn Donations.

The City Clerk/Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Council will approve the municipal tax rate at the July 27th meeting, and tax bills will be in the mail by August 6th. First due date is September 15th, and all other due dates are the same as usual.
- Continue to work with the State Auditor’s Office to put finishing touches on the TIF audit.

Liquor Control – NONE

City Manager's Report - Manager Mackenzie noted his written weekly report distributed over the weekend to Council. He gave a paving update, saying the base course has been laid on Perry and Camp Streets, and final paving is scheduled to be completed this week. The Manager noted tonight's meeting is using new equipment installed to hold the meeting both in person and virtually. The equipment is being Beta tested this evening, and upon a successful test run, the installation will be made permanent. Councilors and in-person and virtual attendees are invited to give feedback.

Councilor Hemmerick offered congratulations for securing the dam removal grants, for getting the municipal general roads permit assessment underway, and for having three-acre sites designated in accordance with the 2018 stormwater master plan.

Visitors and Communications –

Resident Peter Zakrewski said there are no teeth in the new Police Advisory Board, and he would like to see a Civilian Review Board formed to address public complaints about the police department. Councilor Waszazak said he supported that idea, but it hadn't received Council support in the past.

Resident Stephen Budd said he used to work for the Salvation Army as a volunteer cook. He experienced a fall in the kitchen, and has been unsuccessful in getting funding support from the Salvation Army to address medical expenses. Mr. Budd talked about the surgeries he has undergone and the pain he is experiencing, and requested assistance in seeking funding support. He also talked about code violations at the Salvation Army facility. Manager Mackenzie will meet with Mr. Budd to refer him to code enforcement, and our community service staff person.

Old Business – NONE

New Business –

Other – from consent agenda) Perpetual Easement with Metro 159, LLC

Councilors asked for additional details on the easement and the Keith Avenue parking lot project. There was discussion on the project and its relationship with the TIF district plan, project completion in 2019, attorney assistance with the project and drafting of the easement; and actions taken by previous Councils. Metro 159, LLC principal Thom Lauzon said the easement is related to completed construction of a sidewalk across his property to provide access to the new Keith Avenue parking lot, and the document is codifying his obligation to the City made in 2015.

Council approved the easement and authorized the Manager to execute the document on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

B) Update from Central Vermont Solid Waste Management District.

Councilor Hemmerick noted his personal relationship with the CVSWMD general manager. He recused himself from the discussion and stepped out of the room.

General Manager Lisa Liotta and Operations Manager Brenna Toman said there are 19 member municipalities, including Barre City. CVSWMD provides waste management and education services, grant funding, household hazardous waste collections, teaching, hauler licensing and enforcement, workshops, and access to the ARCC (Additional Recyclables Collection Center). Ms. Liotta said they are planning to create a household hazardous waste facility to consolidate their one-day collections held throughout the district. They have received grants to support the project, in addition to reserve funds, and don't expect to bond. There is the possibility they will consolidate all functions and facilities to one location, including hazardous waste collections, ARCC, and administration. Manager Mackenzie said there is a possibility of co-locating with the DPW campus currently being explored. Mayor Herring said the City received a grant to host a free tire disposal on July 24th for City residents.

Councilor Hemmerick returned to the dais at this point in the meeting.

C) Homelessness Discussion.

Tammy Menard said she has been living in local motels through the state's homelessness voucher program during the pandemic, and serves as an advocate for others who are experiencing homelessness. She spoke of the violence and fear being experienced by those housed in the motels, and the fear about the upcoming end of the voucher program, which will take away these temporary housing options. She said people need safe and secure places to camp where they have access to water, sanitary facilities, wifi and electricity. Such camping sites need to be located on the bus routes.

There was discussion on the lack of services provided to those housed in the motels, little police presence, no mental health or drug and alcohol counseling services provided, lack of affordable housing, threats made to those housed in the motels, access to transportation and employment. Dawn Little, a member of the Montpelier Homelessness Task Force, said transportation is vital for those working night jobs, and disabilities can make it difficult to find work. Ms. Little asked people to report any available employment opportunities to Vermont Vocational Rehab.

D) Resolution 2021-11 Reductions in the Motel Housing Program.

Councilor Stockwell said there needs to be a statewide plan to address homelessness. Councilor Boutin said he would not support public camping sites, and would like to see language about providing services added to the resolution. There was discussion on the possibility of either partnering with the Montpelier Homelessness Task Force to form a regional task force, or creating a Barre Task Force; and Barre being a hub for services. Councilor Stockwell read the proposed amendment language for the resolution.

Council approved the resolution as amended on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Reil. **Motion carried, with Councilor Hemmerick recusing himself due to possible conflict of interest.**

A) Discussion on Council Ground Rules.

Mayor Herring reviewed the list of ground rules. There was discussion on the rule against taking notes during executive session, and it was decided to remove that language.

Other) 111 Seminary Street.

Councilor Waszazak said he has been talking with Capstone about alternatives to demolishing 111 Seminary Street to expand their parking at the Brook Street School. He has been searching the City for a location to which the 3-unit apartment building can be moved. They haven't identified such a spot yet, but he will continue to search.

Other) Goals and Planning.

There was discussion around setting goals and identifying challenges for the City and the Council, using the upcoming Community Visit as a way to gauge needs, developing the strategic plan, working jointly with staff to identify capacity and establish common goals and priorities, and holding a facilitated joint Council/department head meeting in the fall. Manager Mackenzie said he discussed such a retreat with Montpelier's City Manager, and will get additional details from him.

Round Table –

Councilor Stockwell said she met with Public Works director Bill Ahearn and toured the DPW facilities. She said the meeting and tour were informative.

Councilor Waszazak said the Friends of Aldrich Library will be holding a book sale this Friday &

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Saturday, and will likely hold more throughout the year.

Mayor Herring asked those attending by zoom to share their thoughts on the new technology. The Mayor reminded City residents of the free tire disposal on Saturday, July 24th.

Executive Session – NONE

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Hemmerick.
Motion carried.

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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