

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held September 14, 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 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 were City Manager Steve Mackenzie, Finance Director Dawn Monahan, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Public Works Director Bill Ahearn, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** Council Boutin asked for a reconsideration of the appointments made to the Manager's Search Committee at last week's meeting. He said he doesn't believe it's appropriate to discuss appointments in executive session, and guidance from the VT League of Cities and Towns says decisions on appointments should state the reasons.

Councilor Hemmerick said he'd like to add an executive session discussion on a personnel matter if the rest of the agenda items are finished by 9:30 PM.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- A. Minutes of the following meetings:
  1. Special meeting of September 7, 2021
  2. Regular meeting of September 7, 2021
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  1. Approval of Week 2021-37, dated September 15, 2021:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$568,081.05
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$130,191.73
- C. 2021 Licenses & Permits:
  1. Fireworks Permit:
    - i. Barre Partnership, Fall Festival, Friday, October 1, 2021 at dusk.
  2. Entertainment License:
    - i. Vermont Workers Center, City Hall Park rally, Sept. 18<sup>th</sup> from 11AM – 3PM
    - ii. The Meltown, 83 Washington St., temporary license for Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> from 6 – 10 PM.
- D. Authorize Execution of Berlin St. Railroad Crossing Safety Improvements F&M Agreement FM0410.
- E. Appointment of City Manager as Voting Delegate to VLCT Town Fair. [N.B. This item previously approved at last week's meeting.]

**The City Clerk/Treasurer Report –**

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- The first quarterly property tax payment is due by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Water/sewer payments are due by September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Liquor Control – NONE**

**City Manager's Report -** Manager Mackenzie made the following announcements in addition to his written report:

- Water flushing scheduled to begin Sunday and continue for several days.

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- The Friends of the Winooski are sponsoring a clean-up in the Stevens Branch this Sunday, September 19<sup>th</sup>. Meet at City Hall Park at 8:30 AM for assignments.
- Bulk waste disposal drop off at the BOR parking lot on September 25<sup>th</sup>.
- Local share of the Quarry Street intersection project is \$98,000 - \$100,000 for the road share, and \$30,000 for utilities.
- The intersection at Perry and Hill Streets has been upgraded, including traffic flow changes.

**Visitors and Communications** – Resident Bernadette Rose spoke of Christine Litchfield, who recently passed away. Ms. Litchfield offered a lifetime of community service, including serving as president of the Friends of the Aldrich Library. Ms. Rose asked for a moment of silence to remember Ms. Litchfield.

Mayor Herring noted the letter from the Energy Committee included in the Council packets.

#### **Old Business –**

##### **A) Reminders re: Friends of Winooski River Clean-up and Bulk Waste Removal Events.**

Mayor Herring noted Manager Mackenzie covered both events during the Manager's report.

#### **New Business –**

##### **A) Appointment to Homelessness Task Force.**

###### **i. Rosemary Averill.**

Rosemary Averill expressed her interest in serving on the Homelessness Task Force. Mayor Herring said discussion on her appointment will be taken up in executive session. Councilor Boutin said executive sessions aren't appropriate for discussion of appointments, and made the motion to appoint Ms. Averill to the task force. The motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak. There was further discussion on use of executive sessions. Mayor Herring said he will be voting against the motion as the Council should be consistent in its processes. **Council did not pass the motion with Councilor Boutin voting in favor, and all others voting against.**

##### **F) Cemetery Investment Policy.**

Mayor Herring said we'll take this agenda item out of order to allow additional time before the Turning Point warned meeting. Clerk Dawes reviewed the proposed changes to the policy. Council approved the changes on motion of Councilor Cambel, seconded by Councilor Hemmerick. **Motion carried.**

##### **B) Warned for 7:30 pm: Turning Point Center VCDP Application for 18 S. Main Street.**

Mayor Herring opened the warned meeting at 7:28 PM. Turning Point board member Chip Castle said TPC specializes in peer recovery services. Turning Point executive director Bob Purvis said they are applying for a VT Community Development Grant to support purchase and rehabilitation of the building at 18 S. Main Street. Mr. Purvis spoke of the value of recovery centers, and the condition of the current facility reflects the stigma associated with addiction. He noted the new facility will allow for increased capacity and staffing. Architect John Alden reviewed the proposed plans for the property, including restoration of the façade and construction of a new back portion of the building. There was discussion on accessibility and parking. Planning Director Janet Shatney said the plans still need City staff review and Development Review Board approval.

Council approved submission of the grant application on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

The warned meeting closed at 7:51 PM.

**C) Warned for 7:45 pm: Hearing re: NMPS Finding of No Significant Impact.**

Mayor Herring opened the warned meeting at 7:52 PM. Engineer Naomi Johnson from Dufresne Group reviewed the wastewater ejector pump station replacement project. Ms. Johnson noted the station is 55 years old, and funding is available through the clean water state revolving loan fund. She reviewed the project and alternatives, economic evaluation, non-economic evaluation, and the project summary. Council approved the summary recommendation on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Johnson said a public hearing is necessary to complete the process. Mayor Herring opened the public hearing portion of the meeting at 8:06 PM, and invited public comment and questions. There was discussion on what ordinances or agreements protect the City from increased usage and adverse impacts created by users outside the municipal boundaries. Public Works Director Bill Ahearn said there is an inter-municipal agreement in place between Barre City and Barre Town, which covers any such contingencies. Any agreement developed in the future with Berlin would include similar conditions. Hearing no additional questions or discussion, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:11 PM. No Council action is necessary.

**D) Department Head Priorities Review and FY23 Budget Preview.**

Mr. Ahearn reviewed the day-to-day work in his department, and said he has three priorities for FY23:

1. Succession planning & implementation.
2. Advancing work organization.
3. Bond projects.

Mr. Ahearn said he has included an assistant director in the FY23 budget draft as part of his succession planning, and has carried the bulk waste and yard waste events forward. He is exploring having the City host its own yard waste disposal site. There was discussion on record keeping, overtime budgeting, paving budget, staffing needs in the field, and truck traffic.

**E) Presentation of FY22 Capital Equipment Plan.**

Finance Director Dawn Monahan reviewed the plan, and noted the majority of the funds come from the voter-approved streets and capital line item on the town meeting ballot. Ms. Monahan talked about how the money is spent on debt service, and the needed equipment on the list that currently has no identified funding source. There was discussion on funding resources, implementation of a local options sales tax, cost savings opportunities through cross-department sharing, renting vs. owning, renting out equipment to other municipalities, and electric vehicle options. The City is looking for assistance from the Regional Planning Commission or a consultant to finalize the Capital Improvement Plan.

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to accept the FY22 Capital Equipment Plan, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Councilor Hemmerick offered a friendly amendment to add speed indicator signs at a cost of \$20,000 to the plan. The friendly amendment was accepted by the mover and seconder. **Motion as amended carried.**

**G) ARPA Overview and Spending Priorities Process Presentation.**

Manager Mackenzie gave a Powerpoint presentation on ARPA funds and noted there are four categories of approved expenditures:

1. Pandemic Response.
2. Workforce.
3. Revenue Loss.
4. Infrastructure.

There was discussion on whether the funds could be used for a part-time administrator to oversee the

projects, deadlines for allocating and spending the funds, developing lists of proposed projects and a process for making decisions. It was decided to wait until after the Community Visit report is issued next month, as the report may be a guiding document.

**H) Discussion of Organizing/Implementing a Strategic Planning Process.**

Manager Mackenzie said he's looking for guidance from the Council with regards to engaging a consultant. Councilors agreed on that approach. The Manager will bring back a draft RFP for review in two weeks. There was discussion on how long the process will take, who should participate, and incorporating tracking software similar to what they use in Montpelier.

Councilor Hemmerick left the room at this point.

**Other) Revisit appointments from September 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

Councilor Boutin said those not appointed to committees are owed an explanation as to why they aren't appointed. There was discussion on going into executive session to discuss appointments, when the process changed, and whether this is a violation of the open meeting or use of executive session laws.

Councilor Hemmerick returned to the room at this point.

**Round Table –**

Mayor Herring reviewed the calendar of upcoming events in the community including the Barre Rotary Club Barre Art Splash auction on Saturday, the Stevens Branch cleanup on Sunday, and the Community Visit step 2 on September 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Executive Session –**

Councilor Cambel made the motion to find that premature general knowledge of personnel to be discussed would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussion be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried, with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Council went into executive session at 10:14 PM to discuss personnel under the provisions of 1 VSA sec. 313 on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Reil. **Motion carried, with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Council came out of executive session at 10:25 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Council appointed Rosemary Averill to the Homelessness Task Force based on her qualifications and interest on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:26 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk