

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held January 11, 2022**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Lucas Herring at 6:00 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, Councilor Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were Manager Steve Mackenzie and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: From Ward III, Councilor Ericka Reil.

Adjustments to the Agenda: NONE

New Business -

A) Review of Town Meeting Funding Requests.

Clerk Dawes reviewed the process as outlined in the recently revised Funding Request Policy, which went into effect July 1, 2021. The Clerk noted the policy calls for the Council to meet and review all applications and support materials, and determine funding amounts not to exceed the prior year's budget. Council reviewed a list of the funding requests, having reviewed the applications and supporting documents before the meeting. There was discussion on lumping all the requests together into one ballot article as is called for in the revised policy, the differences between support of organizations that are voted on separately and those included in the City's budget, and revising the application instructions to provide for more unified submissions in the future. The Clerk said the list of organization requests will be included on next week's review of the draft Town Meeting warning, which is scheduled to be approved at Council's January 25th meeting.

The special meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM on motion of Councilor Cambel, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform. The recording was paused and then resumed when the regular meeting was called to order.

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held January 11, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Lucas Herring at 7:02 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, Councilor Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were Manager Steve Mackenzie, Public Works Director Bill Ahearn, Fire Chief Doug Brent, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: From Ward III, Councilor Ericka Reil.

Adjustments to the Agenda: Councilor Stockwell asked for a discussion on the proposed housing initiative before the ARPA discussion.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of January 4, 2022
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2022-02, dated January 12, 2022:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$262,189.00
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$120,532.51
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits:
 1. Food Establishments:
 - i. Gusto's, 28 Prospect Street
 2. Entertainment Licenses:
 - i. Gusto's, 28 Prospect Street
- D. Approve Authorization to Conduct Tax Sales and Purchase Lands and Buildings at Tax Sale.

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Town Meeting election information is posted on the City website, including a list of officers to be elected, nominating petitions, and consent of candidate forms.
- Postcards about absentee voting have been mailed to all active voter households.
- Testifying tomorrow at Senate Finance with Rep. Anthony re. S.169 to reimburse the City for taxes overpaid to the education fund, as was identified during the TIF audit.
- Emergency election legislation S.172 was passed last week, which allows towns to move town meeting day elections, and switch from floor voting to Australian ballots. Another emergency election bill, S. 223, is working its way through the statehouse. It would do away with nominating petitions for this year, and would allow boards to vote to not require commingling ballots. The legislature is also considering emergency changes to the Open Meeting Laws (S.222), which would allow fully remote meetings again, due to COVID.
- Running for re-election this year for what will likely be the 8th and final term.

Liquor Control Board - NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Mackenzie said he has nothing to add to his written report.

Visitors and Communications – NONE

Old Business – NONE

New Business –

Other) Housing Proposal.

Councilor Stockwell said the proposal calls for the creation of 125 homes over a five year period of time through a number of different strategies. There was discussion on use of ARPA funds, other funding sources, growing the grand list and population, encouraging different types of housing, and easing the inequities in poverty and housing ownership.

A) ARPA Funding Process “Workshop”.

Manager Mackenzie reviewed his objectives for the workshop, and the list of allocations already approved and projects proposed by City Councilors and staff. There was discussion on maximizing available funding by tapping into other sources such as Local Options Tax revenues, general fund, enterprise funds, capital fund, grants, and bonds.

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn reviewed a list of capital improvement needs across streets, sidewalks, paving, bridges, stormwater, water distribution, water treatment, sewer, and wastewater treatment. There was discussion on setting priorities, establishing the differences between total value and total cost to the City, opportunities for technology changes due to staffing changes, incorporating Barre Town municipal and resident participation in payment for improvements serving the Town, developing a timeline for creation of a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan, utilizing outside assistance to develop a CIP, and recognizing deferred maintenance and end of service life needs.

Council discussed setting global allocations from the total \$2.5M+ ARPA funds. There was discussion on percentages for infrastructure, housing development, and community initiatives; and developing a process and timeline for soliciting community ideas.

Council informally agreed to allocate \$1M for municipal infrastructure, facilities and operations; \$1M for housing initiatives, and \$500,000 for community innovations. They will discuss development of a task force of community members to create a solicitation and review process at the February 1st meeting.

Round Table –

Councilor Waszazak said there are two vacancies on the Aldrich Library board.

Councilor Boutin said he posted information on the proposed FY23 budget and the Local Options Tax charter change on social media, and has heard from a few people who don't support the proposed budget. He said he'd like to see a budget proposal that shows 0% increase. No other Councilor voiced support for that request. Manager Mackenzie said Council will do a final review of the FY23 budget at next week's meeting in advance of approving an amount for the Town Meeting warning at the January 25th meeting.

Councilor Cambel encouraged people to wear masks, and to take care of the kids and themselves.

Councilor Stockwell thanked Public Works for salting the Berlin Street sidewalks.

Councilor Hemmerick said he's been reviewing postcards sent to him during his campaign two years ago, along with community surveys. He noted his early goal for the budget increase was not more than 2%, and he's pleased the proposed budget is below that.

Executive Session – NONE

The meeting adjourned at 9:06 PM on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Cambel.
Motion carried.

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk