

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held November 29, 2022**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 6:30 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance in person or virtually were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Thom Lauzon; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Michael Deering and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present was City Manager Nicolas Storellicastro.

Absent: NONE

Also present: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: NONE

Executive Session – Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of personnel issues to be discussed would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 6:32 PM to discuss personnel issues under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Cambel. Manager Storellicastro was invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 7:00 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Hemmerick adjourned the meeting at 7:00 PM.

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held November 29, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 7:02 PM at Barre City Hall. In attendance in person or virtually were: From Ward I, Councilors Emel Cambel and Thom Lauzon; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin and Teddy Waszazak; and from Ward III, Councilors Michael Deering and Samn Stockwell. City staff members present were City Manager Nicolas Storellicastro, Finance Director Dawn Monahan, Public Works Director Bill Ahearn, Interim Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, Community Outreach Specialist Brooke Pouliot, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: The following adjustments were made:

- Move authorization of engineering contract to follow the DPW FY24 budget presentation.
- New a new agenda item to schedule an Animal Control Committee hearing.
- Add approval of a special community development warrant to the consent agenda.
- Add discussion on the VT IDEAL grant program on advancing equity at the local level.

Visitors and Communications –

Bernadette Rose reminded everyone that we are on unceded Abenaki lands. Ms. Rose thanked the interfaith community and downtown churches for supporting those experiencing housing insecurities.

Porter Walbridge Jr. said he has completed his Eagle Scout project, and his court of honor is scheduled for December 17th. He invited Councilors to attend. Mayor Lauzon asked Council to add an agenda item making December 17th Porter Walbridge Jr. Day in recognition of his accomplishment and dedication to the community. Those in attendance offered a round of applause to Mr. Walbridge.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of November 15, 2022.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Ratification of Week 2022-47, dated November 23, 2022:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$82,415.59
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$133,366.59
 2. Approval of Week 2022-48, dated November 30, 2022:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$271,987.32
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$151,155.40
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits:
- D. Approval of donation from Brusa Trust to Capstone Crisis Fuel Assistance Program.
- E. (added) Approval of special community development warrant to transfer ACCD housing grant funds to Downstreet Housing & Community Development.

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Annual license renewals were mailed out last week.
- The Clerk noted Capstone has matching opportunities for donations, and the City's donation to their fuel assistance qualifies for a 100% match.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Storlicastro noted the following:

- Recent special events were great including the November 18-20 college basketball tournament, and last weekend's holiday parade, tree lighting, and craft fair.
- A committee has been formed for the fire chief search, led by Interim Chief Joe Aldsworth. They are reviewing applications.
- The ARPA survey closes December 9th, and the final report will come to Council in January. There have been 18 letters of interest for funding requests received to date.
- Continuing to meet people in the community. Met with Gregg Forbis at Rainbow Bridge Community Center.
- Noted the recent passing of Judith Miles, who was a fixture in the community for many years. The Manager said the first piece of mail he received when he started working for Barre City was a welcome card from Ms. Miles.

Unfinished Business – NONE

New Business –

A) Authorize an emergency allocation in support of the operation of a day-time warming shelter at Aldrich Library.

To be approved at 12/06/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

Manager Storrellicastro said the estimated costs for the 2022-2023 winter proposal total \$12,000, with the Barre Interfaith Community covering half of the costs, and the City being asked to cover the balance. The Manager said his recommendation is to allocate the funds out of the FY22 fund balance.

Ericka Reil, chair of the Homelessness Task Force, said there is an urgent need, and the proposed expenses would cover staffing and minimal supplies for the center at the Aldrich Library.

Aldrich Library director Loren Polk said the library standardized hours to accommodate those needing shelter between when the local church breakfasts close and the library opens to the general public.

Community Outreach Specialist Brooke Pouliot spoke of the importance of a warm space and access to services.

Interim Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth said people need to get out of the weather, and a warming shelter reduces the need for emergency services and emergency rooms.

There was discussion on the amount of the request, and whether the City's share should come from ARPA funds instead of the fund balance.

Councilor Lauzon made the motion to allocate up to \$6,000 out of ARPA funds for the welcome and warming center. Motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak.

Sarah Helman asked about last year's expenses and what was provided for services. Ms. Polk said last year's costs totaled \$3,739.45, and covered expenses associated with staffing and supplies. The estimate for this year includes similar expenses for an extended period of time.

Councilor Lauzon called the question. The motion died for lack of a second.

Bernadette Rose said the City should seek support from surrounding communities. There was discussion on including these expenses on an ongoing basis in the library's budget.

Council voted on the motion as made. **Motion carried.**

B) FY24 Budget Department Reviews: Public Works.

Public Works Director Bill Ahearn reviewed his presentation on the engineering and public works departments' proposed FY24 budgets. Mr. Ahearn said he oversees general fund budgets that include engineering, streets, snow removal, and fleet operations. He also oversees the water treatment, water distribution, and wastewater treatment departments, which are separately funded through enterprise funds. He noted his presentation this evening deals exclusively with the general fund departments. The integrated increase between the engineering and public works departments shows an increase of 1.49%. Mr. Ahearn reviewed the percentage of costs for patching potholes, stormwater-related activities, and staff costs, and increases associated with rising fuel costs. He noted popular community service activities including tire collections, bulky trash days, and making drop off locations available for yard waste.

There was discussion on what the breakdown of paving expenses between the general and capital funds, bike path planning and funding sources, new procedures to reduce the amount of salt needed, use of the See. Click. Fix. application for reporting issues to the department, using hired project managers for upcoming projects, building capacity to complete projects so as to take advantage of the state and federal funding currently available.

E) Authorize an engineering contract with Wright-Pierce Consulting Engineers for completion of a 20-year Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Review.

Mr. Ahearn said the last review was completed in 1993, and is supposed to be done every 20 years. He said there are major upgrades needed, and the review will help identify and prioritize them. There was discussion on the scope of work included in the contract, and the loan program helping to fund the review, which is forgivable should any portion of the work be completed within a certain timeframe.

Council approved the authorization on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Deering.
Motion carried.

C) FY24 Revenue Review.

Manager Storellicastro reviewed the presentation highlighting proposed changes in revenues, which includes removing some licensing, increasing some fees, and creating new permits. There was discussion on collection efforts for unpaid parking tickets, reviewing stormwater connection fees, and reviewing reinspection fees for properties that aren't meeting building codes.

Manager Storellicastro said all departments have now presented their draft FY24 expense budgets to the Council, along with revenues. The December 20th Council meeting will focus on the entire budget.

D) Introductory committee re-set discussion.

Manager Storellicastro reviewed his memo and draft reorganization chart. There was discussion on how to merge committees and appoint members when there might be more people than there are spaces on the new committee, limiting people's service to one committee, and rearranging some of the proposed committee groupings. The Manager said he will solicit input from committee members with an eye towards making changes in the new year. Council asked to see the list again with current committee members included.

Added) Scheduling an Animal Control Committee Hearing.

Manager Storellicastro said the City has received a request for a hearing before the Animal Control Committee related to a dog bite incident. Current members of the ACC are Councilors Boutin, Deering, and Stockwell. The hearing was scheduled for Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 5Pm at Alumni Hall. It was requested that the final written decision be reviewed by the City Attorney before being issued.

Added) IDEAL Program.

Councilor Lauzon distributed information about the IDEAL Vermont program for advancing equity at the local level. The program is administered by the Vermont Office of Racial Equity, and is a coalition of Vermont municipalities dedicated to advancing racial and other forms of equity across the state through shared learning and tangible action. Councilor Lauzon encouraged people to read through the materials and perhaps bring it back for further discussion.

Added) Naming December 17, 2022 Porter Walbridge Jr. Day

In recognition of Mr. Walbridge's upcoming Eagle Scout Court of Honor, Council named December 17, 2022 as Porter Walbridge Jr. Day on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell.

Motion carried.

Upcoming Business – NONE

Round Table –

Councilor Boutin asked for a five-minute executive session to discuss personnel. He said it was a great weekend of holiday festivities. He reminded the other Councilors of this coming Saturday's coin drop for the Christmas for Kids program.

Other Councilors offered kudos to the Barre Partnership for the wonderful holiday events over the past weekend.

Mayor Hemmerick encouraged people to take the ARPA survey, available through the City's website. He said the Downstreet Recovery House grand opening is December 6th. Light Up the Library is kicking off with numerous displays throughout the library that are available for purchase or raffle. The Mayor thanked Councilor Stockwell for sitting in for him on the Mayors Coalition.

Executive Session – Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of personnel issues to be discussed would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 10:07 PM to discuss personnel issues under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Manager Storellicastro and Clerk Dawes were invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 10:12 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 10:12 PM on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

The open portions of this meeting were recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk