

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held March 14, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 7:00 PM at Barre City Hall, Barre, Vermont. 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 Storrellicastro, Assistant Manager Dawn Monahan, Fire Chief Keith Cushman, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Others Present: NONE

Mayor Hemmerick noted this is the beginning of the 128th Council session, as the City was chartered in 1895.

Adjustments to the Agenda:

Manager Storrellicastro said there will be an executive session for personnel at the end of the meeting. The Capstone PILOT consent agenda item was moved to new business.

Visitors and Communications – NONE

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of February 28, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Ratification of Week 2023-10, dated March 8, 2023:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$152,358.86
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$133,136.44
 2. Approval of Week 2023-11, dated March 15, 2023:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$
- C. 2023 Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Ratify Council's February 28, 2023 approval of the AFSCME contract
- E. Authorize sole source procurement for an independent auditor
- F. Approve new PILOT agreement with Capstone (moved to new business)
- G. Designate Brian Baker as an alternate authorize representative for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds
- H. Authorize lease financing of planned capital equipment purchases
- I. Authorize a letter of support for the Building Energy Code & Ordinance Compliance Project
- J. Resolution recognizing Fire Marshal Howarth's service to the City

There was a brief discussion about interest rates and the lease financing of capital equipment purchases before the vote on the consent agenda.

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Results from the March 7th annual town meeting elections are posted on the website.
- The BUUSD budget revote is tentatively scheduled for May 9th to coincide with Barre Town's town meeting elections. The civic center isn't available, so an alternate location is being sought. Because the

budget revote is considered a continuation of the original election, ballots will be mailed out automatically to all those who voted early absentee for the March 7th elections.

- Water/sewer bills are due by March 31st.
- The Manager and Clerk testified this afternoon before the Senate Finance Committee on the City's request for TIF extensions, S.94. The bill passed out of committee and is headed to the full Senate for consideration.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Storrellicastro noted the following:

- Executed the new AFSCME agreement yesterday.
- Will be touring public works facilities in other communities to continue planning for a new facility for the City.
- Working with EPA on managing the water project; beginning training on EPA grant procedures.
- Facilities staff has been working hard over the past several weeks, with multiple events at the Civic Center, including turning over the auditorium from the basketball tournaments to Town Meeting voting and back.
- New permit administrator Michelle La Barge-Burke begins in the planning and zoning office tomorrow.

New Business –

A) Approve 2023 coin drops schedule.

Clerk Dawes distributed an updated proposed list of coin drops for 2023. Council approved the list as presented on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried.**

B) Approve letter of support regarding the Prospect Heights project.

Manager Storrellicastro said the project is on the top 5 priorities list for funding from the Northern Borders Regional Commission (NBRC). The next step is for a letter of interest to be submitted. The City Council's letter of support will accompany the letter of interest. Barre Area Development Corporation (BADC) is taking the lead on the application, and BADC executive director Aimee Green said other letters of support are coming from Barre Town and large employers in the area who have housing needs for employees and potential employees.

There was discussion on the creation of a common interest community to serve as the developer for the project, and what representation will be included on the common interest community's board. The original subdivision plans were developed and approved 30 years ago, so will need redesign and updated permits. The Planning Commission will likely play a role through their work on zoning amendments.

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to authorize the Manager to submit the letter of support for inclusion in Barre Area Development Corporation's application for funding from the Northern Borders Regional Commission, seconded by Councilor Boutin. **Motion carried.**

Other) Approve new PILOT agreement with Capstone.

Manager Storrellicastro said a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement has been developed with Capstone to cover their main campus at 20 Gable Place, and their Brook Street property. The Manager noted this will replace the current Gable Place agreement, and will implement an agreement with an annual escalator for the Brook Street property, which has been at a flat \$5,000 annual PILOT payment since 1987. The new agreement calls for both properties to have an annual 2.5% increase.

There was discussion on the percentage increase and the value of consistency for budgeting purposes for both the City and Capstone.

Council approved the new PILOT agreement on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Deering. **Motion carried.**

Upcoming Business –

- The March 28th meeting will include discussion on the committee reset and review and possible final approval of the strategic plan.
- Council will begin ward meetings again, after taking the last several years off due to COVID.
- The Council is interested in holding a forum so community members can share their thoughts and concerns on levels of service with Green Mountain Transit representatives.

Round Table –

Councilor Waszazak said the Aldrich Library has a board vacancy for a Barre City resident, and the Friends of the Library are looking for book donations for an upcoming book sale.

Councilor Deering said he and his family had a great time at the library recently, and he's excited about the success of the Spaulding High School girls' hockey team, which is this year's Division 1 state champion.

Councilor Lauzon congratulated those elected at last week's Annual Town Meeting elections, and he said he's thankful for the opportunity to work on the Prospect Heights project. He spoke of the recent run on Silicon Valley Bank in California. He said Vermont's banks are solid, and communications is key for banking success.

Mayor Hemmerick said he is looking forward to tomorrow evening's housing discussions at the Old Labor Hall, featuring Congresswoman Becca Balint. The Mayor also noted this is AmeriCorps Week.

Executive Session – Councilor Waszazak 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 Cambel. **Motion carried.**

Council went into executive session at 7:52 PM to discuss personnel under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Manager Storellicastro and Clerk Dawes were invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 8:37 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk