

**Special Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held April 11, 2023**

The Special Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 5:00 PM at Barre City Hall, Barre, Vermont. In attendance in person 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 and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Others Present: Realtor Michelle Hebert.

Mayor Hemmerick asked if anyone had any conflicts of interest to disclose having to do with the Wheelock House. Hearing none, the Council moved into executive session.

Executive Session – Councilor Stockwell made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of real estate discussions concerning the Wheelock House 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 with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Council went into executive session at 5:05 PM for real estate discussions concerning the Wheelock House under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Cambel. Manager Storrellicastro and Ms. Hebert were invited into the executive session. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Representatives from Fox Market and Wheelock House LLC were invited separately into the executive session.

Council came out of executive session at 6:56 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

No action was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 6:57 PM on motion of Councilor Deering, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held April 11, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 7:10 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, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Assistant City Manager Dawn Monahan, Buildings and Community Services Assistant Director Stephanie Quaranta, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Others Present: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Manager Storellicastro asked to add a presentation from Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas after adjustments to the agenda. Councilors moved approval of the city fee changes to the consent agenda.

Added: Presentation from Secretary of State Copeland Hanzas:

Vermont Secretary of State Sarah Copeland Hanzas and Deputy Secretary of State Lauren Hibbert presented a National Association of Secretaries of State Medallion Award to Clerk Dawes for her work and advocacy on elections in service to the Barre City community, fellow clerks, and the state. Those in attendance gave Clerk Dawes a standing ovation. The Clerk was flabbergasted.

Visitors and Communications –

Charlie Atwood and Jon Valsangiacomo, members of the Civic Center Committee, said the committee has concerns about the recently approved committee realignments that would merge the Recreation Committee with the CCC. They noted the CCC is currently engaged in design work with Norwich University students, and planning for use of the federal earmark funds to make significant improvements to the complex. They are working to re-establish relationships with former renters following three years of the pandemic, and are concerned incorporating recreation issues will dilute their ability to carry out these important projects. They recommended the Recreation Committee be incorporated into the Cemeteries, Outdoor Recreation & Conservation Committee. Manager Storellicastro said he supports the proposed change. Council said they will take it up for consideration as part of the discussion on amendments to staff and community appointments scheduled for later in the meeting.

Ericka Reil said she is offering an update from the Homelessness Task Force to keep the Council informed. Ms. Reil said 40% of those currently being housed by the state at area motels will be exiting from the program in the near future, which will put approximately 160 people on the streets throughout the area. Montpelier is looking at developing plans to allow camping. Barre City and Berlin have no such plans at the moment. Ms. Reil said she will continue to keep the Council informed.

Sarah Helman said someone is cutting trees in Canales Park. Manager Storellicastro will look into it. Ms. Helman said there are lots of dead trees in the park that need removal. Joelen Mulvaney said the Boy Scouts have worked in the park in the past, and the wetlands need to be preserved.

Amy Galford thanked the City workers who have been cleaning streets, and the water/sewer workers who dealt with several water issues over the past few days. Ms. Galford also thanked the fire department for their work putting out last Thursday's fire on Prospect Street. She asked for information on the upcoming Green Up Day activities. Manager Storellicastro said the City is working with the local GUD coordinators to plan for a central drop location, streetside pick-up, and making bags available for pick-up at City Hall.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

Councilors asked to move item J to the end of the agenda under new items. Approval of city fees was added to the consent agenda under adjustments.

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of March 28, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 - 1. Ratification of Week 2023-14, dated April 5, 2023:

- i. Accounts Payable: \$450,039.64
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$148,842.57
- 2. Approval of Week 2023-16, dated April 12, 2023:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$310,861.47
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$134,211.44
- C. 2023 Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Ratify approval of American Legion August 5th coin crop.
- E. Ratify application for an AARP microgrant for community gardens
- F. Approve the 2023 local emergency management plan
- G. Authorize application for PACIF safety and training grants
- H. Authorize execution of a contract with Sullivan Powers as the City’s independent auditor
- I. Accept Transit-Oriented Development grant award
- J. Approval of amendments to staff and community appointments (moved to new items)
- K. Appoint the Manager as the City’s representative to the board of Prospect Heights Development, Inc.
- L. Approval of 2023-2024 fees (moved from new items)

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- The May 9th BUUSD budget revote will be held at the Old Labor Hall on Granite Street. Ballots will be mailed out automatically to those who voted early absentee for the March 7th elections. Ballots are expected to be in the mail by the end of the week.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – Councilor Lauzon made the motion to approve the completed liquor and tobacco license renewals included on the list below, and approve the list of incomplete license renewals contingent upon successful filing of renewal applications and receipt of the local portion of applicable fees. The motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin abstaining.**

List for full approval

License holder	1st class	2nd class	3rd class	outside consumption permit	tobacco	local pay?
Delicate Decadence	yes					yes
Dente's Market		already approved			yes	yes
Forget-Me-Not Flowers And Gifts		yes				yes
Gusto's	yes		yes	yes		yes
Jerry's Sports Tavern	yes		yes			yes
Ladder 1 Grill	yes		yes	yes		yes
Mulligan's	yes		yes	yes		yes
Paramount Theater	yes					yes
Quarry Kitchen & Spirits	yes		yes	yes		yes
Reynolds House Inn LLC	yes		yes	yes		yes

List for contingent approval

License holder	1st class	2nd class	3rd class	outside consumption permit	local pay?
American Legion	yes		yes	yes	no

Cornerstone Burger Co.	yes		yes		no
Elks Lodge	yes		yes	yes	no
Morse Block Deli	yes				no
Pearl St Pizza	yes		yes	yes	no
Roscini LLC		no			no

City Manager’s Report –

Manager Storellicastro noted the following:

- The Public Works Department continues to work on water line breaks and issues following last week’s fire. People may be experiencing discolored water, and should run their cold water taps to help clear the lines.
- The committee reset details have been shared with all affected committees. The newly merged/formed committees need to hold organizational meetings before they can move forward with their work.
- The City is hosting a capital planning forum being put on by the VT Municipal Bond Bank this Thursday at the Old Labor Hall.
- The back entrance of City Hall will be closed this Thursday and Friday for repairs.
- Last Saturday’s egg hunt was a big success, with thanks going to the volunteers who assisted.
- Thanks to the Fire Department for their good work putting out last Thursday’s fire on Prospect Street, and to the mutual aid provided by area departments.

New Business –

A) Presentations by the prospective purchasers of the Wheelock House.

Manager Storellicastro said the City listed the Wheelock House and received two purchase offers. The Council met in executive session earlier this evening with representatives for the prospective buyers to discuss financial and other details that aren’t subject to public disclosure, and the prospective buyers are now here to provide presentations on their plans for the building. The Council has the option to proceed with selling the building or accept neither offer.

It was noted that the Barre City Zoom account is maxed out at 100 people. The City will seek to expand capacity for future meetings.

Fox Market co-owners Doni Cain and Liv Dunton spoke of their current location in East Montpelier, and their excitement about relocating to Barre City. They look forward to working closely with the Barre Partnership, and participating in the community through fundraising and sponsorships. Their current location is a community space in a building they rehabilitated after years of vacancy. Donations to the community have totaled \$70,000 in the last two years, and they are working with local producers and filling the building with local people. They offer grab-and-go breakfast, lunch and dinner and other meal options, and have offered the full asking price for the building. The building offers the bones of a commercial kitchen and enough bathrooms to allow them to be up and running relatively quickly. They have outgrown their current location and are looking for more space. The plan is to focus on the historic nature of the building and they want to be part of the Barre community.

Wheelock House LLC representative Bill Koch and Barre Partnership board chair Chandra Pollard spoke of the interest in having WHLLC purchase the building and restore it with care. The Barre Partnership, as a nonprofit organization, would not be the property owner, but would be one of the tenants in the building. WHLLC’s goal is to leverage private equity, tax credits, contributed goods and services, and tax stabilization to purchase and restore the building. They have offered \$50,000 as a sale price, and would look to raise \$250,000 in a private campaign. Once the building is restored spaces would be leased out to the highest and best uses. After ten years, the building would be given to the Partnership, and if the

Partnership isn't able to follow through, the City will have the first right of refusal to repurchase the building. A request for a tax stabilization agreement is part of the proposal.

The following people attending in person and on Zoom shared their thoughts on the two proposals, and the future of the Wheelock House:

Garrett Grant	Iris Sandusky	Rosemary Averill	Bernadette Rose
Cat Allen	Tracy Corey	Sarah Helman	Kim Madalinski
Tina Routhier	Ellen Kaye	Stefano Coppola	Renita Marshall
Anne Fairway	Linda Macris	Joan White	Karen Lieberman
Jamie Bower	Marcus Marena	Bob Flood	Jake McBride
Trish Franklin	Danny McGibney	Larkspur Dente	Dawn Magnus
Sarah Chase	Barbara Druge	Ryan Ward &	Laura Matthew
Katie Golden	Joelen Mulvaney	Kirstie Grand	Amy Guilford
Cheryl Anderson	Paulo Mutino	Jesse Rosado	Keith Jaegman
Bo Mustafic	Harlow Carpenter	Scott Hess	
Laura Miller	Raylene Meunier	Paul & Mary Dupre	
Joel Reil	Heather Slayton	Angela Fowler	

Mayor Hemmerick thanked everyone for their comments and called a 10-minute recess at 9:35 PM.

Mayor Hemmerick reconvened the meeting at 9:45 PM.

Mayor Hemmerick said the next step is for the Council to continue deliberations on the presentations and comments in executive session.

C) Approval of 2023-2024 fees.

Approved as part of the consent agenda.

D) Approval of the 2023-2024 paving bid and assign undesignated fund balance to expand the paving program.

Council approved the paving plan as presented by the Manager on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Added from consent agenda: Approval of amendments to staff and community appointments.

Manager Storlicastro called attention to the list of amendments and appointments included in the Council packet.

- Appoint Dawn Monahan as Assistant City Manager;
- Appoint Keith Cushman as Fire Chief, Chief Inspector – Minimum Housing Standards, and Director of Emergency Management;
- Appoint Brian Baker as Director of Public Works and Acting Superintendent of Water/Wastewater;
- Appoint Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth as Acting Health Officer;
- Appoint Rikk Taft as ADA Coordinator;
- Eliminate the appointment of a Finance Director;
- Establish 1-year terms for student members of the Diversity & Equity Committee; and
- Establish 2-year terms for the Homelessness Task Force and appoint Dr. Steve Finner, Ericka Reil, Philip Moros and one vacant seat to terms through 2024;
- Remove Brooke Pouliot as a member of the Homelessness Task Force (she will be assigned as the staff liaison);

- Accept the resignations of Fabienne Pattison (Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee) and Rachel Rudi (Homelessness Task Force).

The Manager said he recommends including the discussion from earlier in the meeting where the Civic Center Committee requested being a stand-alone committee to be called the Facilities Committee, and the Recreation Committee is to be included in the Cemeteries, Outdoor Recreation & Conservation Committee, to be renamed the Cemeteries, Recreation & Conservation Committee.

Council approved the amendments and appointments recommended by the Manager on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin out of the room at the time of the vote.**

B) Approval of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan.

E) Set dates for Ward barbecues.

Council tabled these agenda items on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

F) Discussion of a letter to the Governor regarding GMT service cuts.

Councilor Deering said he has been working with Councilor Waszazak and Jesse Rosado on a draft letter, but noted the City is scheduled to be on the GMT board agenda at their April 18th meeting. Mr. Rosado said he recently had a good meeting with the new rural coordinator to discuss restoring commuter services. It would be best to wait until after the board meeting before moving forward with a letter to the Governor. If the board has no plans for restoring service in the City, then the Council can act to show solidarity with the people at the bus stops.

Bernadette Rose asked about plans to relocate the bus shelter and crosswalk near North Barre Manor. Manager Storlicastro said he will check with the Public Works Department and follow up with Ms. Rose.

Council tabled this agenda item on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Upcoming Business –

This item was deferred due to the late hour.

Round Table –

This item was deferred due to the late hour.

Executive Session – Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of real estate discussions concerning the Wheelock House would clearly place the City of Barre at a substantial disadvantage should the discussions be public. The motion was seconded by Councilor Waszazak.

Linda Macris asked why the discussions are being held in executive session when the presentations were made in open session. Mayor Hemmerick said there are confidential details to be discussed that would place the City or the prospective purchasers at a disadvantage if they were talked about in open session. The Mayor noted any decision will be made in open session.

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

Council went into executive session at 10:02 PM to discuss real estate concerning the Wheelock House

To be approved at 04/25/2023 Barre City Council Meeting

under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Cambel, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Manager Storrellicastro was invited into the executive session. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

Council came out of executive session at 10:43 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to authorize Manager Storrellicastro to enter into negotiations with Fox Market for the sale of the Wheelock Building, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried with Councilors Boutin and Deering voting against.**

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk

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