

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held June 6, 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, Councilor Thom Lauzon; from Ward II, Councilors Michael Boutin (arrived 7:13 PM) 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, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Buildings and Community Services Director Jeff Bergeron, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: From Ward 1, Councilor Emel Cambel.

Others Present: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda: Defer consent agenda item on stormwater and excavation permit fees to a future meeting.

Resolution #2023-06 Recognizing Pride Month.

Councilor Stockwell read resolution #2023-06. Council approved the resolution on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Those in attendance celebrated approval of the resolution with a round of applause.

Visitors and Communications –

Jesse Rosado said minutes from a recent Green Mountain Transit leadership team meeting indicated general manager Clayton Clark recommended restoring the first and last commuter busses to the Barre City schedule, however, the board rejected the recommendation. Mr. Rosado said the Council should continue to push GMT to restore prior service levels.

Bernadette Rose said she continues to raise awareness of tick-borne Lyme Disease. Ms. Rose gave Manager Storrellicastro booklets for DPW and public safety employees on ways to protect themselves against ticks.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Special meeting of May 30, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2023-23, dated June 7, 2023:
 - i. Accounts Payable: \$80,424.19
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$145,425.92
- C. 2023 Clerk's Office Licenses & Permits:
 1. Food Vending:
 - i. The Candy Van, ice cream truck, James Fitzgerald
 2. Entertainment:
 - i. Forbin's Finest, job fair, 21 Metro Way, June 24th, 11AM – 2PM
 - ii. Faith Community Church, event in Currier Park, July 9th, 8AM – 2PM
- D. Approve stormwater and excavation permit fees [Deferred to a future meeting]

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Water/sewer bills were mailed out last week. Due by end of June.

Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board – NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Storrellicastro noted the following:

- Council will complete committee, board, and task force interviews at the June 20th meeting, which will start at 6:00 PM.
- The municipal pool is scheduled to open on June 23rd. Admission on opening day will be free.
- The farmer's market starts tomorrow, and will be held in Depot Square this year.
- Paving has begun, with areas of River and South Main Streets first on the list. The City secured a cost-sharing agreement with the state on S. Main Street, as that is a state highway, and the paving is in serious need of interim overlay paving in advance of the state's next scheduled repaving.

Cat Allen said she is looking for ways to stay in touch with events in Barre City, and recommended there be a consolidated calendar available, perhaps on Instagram.

Sarah Helman said there's a paving area on Pleasant Street that needs repair. Manager Storrellicastro said City crews are concentrating on preparing certain areas for the paving contractor, and with then work on local projects such as Pleasant Street. Ms. Helman asked if the City will be mowing a section of Canales Woods that was previously mowed by a neighbor. She also asked if dead trees in the area will be removed. Buildings and Community Services director Jeff Bergeron will look into both issues.

New Business –

A) Update on preparations to address emergency housing transitions and designation of locations to authorize encampments.

Manager Storrellicastro reviewed the data on numbers of people coming out of the motel housing project, status of discussions with the state on use of the BOR as a temporary shelter, current practices surrounding encampments in the City, zoning and unified development ordinance restrictions on camping and campgrounds, feedback from last night's emergency meeting of the Homelessness Task Force and Cow Pasture Stewardship Committee, and possible locations for portable toilets and shower trailers. The Manager said the state has issued an RFP looking for people, organizations or agencies to provide staffing for facilities such as the proposed shelter at the BOR. The deadline for RFP submissions is June 11th.

Sam Acuff asked what the police department practice is for moving along people who are camping. Manager Storrellicastro said Community Outreach Specialist Brook Pouliot is usually engaged to help people find services and safe spaces with facilities. Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth said Good Samaritan Haven has two staff people who are helping those on the streets, and there are two locations in Montpelier that are being used as unofficial camping sites.

Bert Saldi asked how much Barre City taxpayer money is being used to support those who have recently been unhoused. Manager Storrellicastro said no City taxes are being used.

Sarah Helman asked about maintenance of portable toilets and shower trailers. The Manager said it would be part of any rental contracts.

Ellen Kaye said she wants the City to be compassionate in its interactions with those experiencing homelessness.

Cat Allen said this is a state level issue, and people should voice their concerns to state agencies and leadership.

Councilor Stockwell thanked the City and those involved for taking a statewide leadership role on this issue. She said using the BOR as a temporary shelter would only address the issue until fall. There won't be enough new housing by that time, and so the cycle will begin again. Councilor Stockwell said there needs to be a regional plan for a pod system, and the burden needs to be divided among communities.

B) Capital Improvement Plan implementation update and assign FY23 undesignated fund balance to the Capital Fund to support infrastructure improvements.

Manager Storrellicastro reviewed the timeline on development of the capital plan, accumulated capital needs by fiscal year, sources of funding, and key accomplishments for FY23.

The Manager said the City is projecting a budget surplus at the end of FY23, and he requested Council make the following balance transfers and assignments:

1. Assign \$44,600 in unspent funds to the current fund balance for a total of \$686,417 to be carried over into FY24 as undesignated fund balance;
2. Assign \$180,000 in additional unspent funds to the Capital Fund; and
3. Assign up to \$170,000 in any additional unspent funds evenly into a reserve for future costs associated with the public works garage and the match for the Auditorium congressionally-directed spending grant.

Cat Allen asked what grant funds the City is looking for. Manager Storrellicastro said the City is seeking funding wherever it can find it, including USDA, congressional delegations, and state ARPA funds.

Mayor Hemmerick said the City's capital plan won this year's Vermont Bond Bank Capital Planning Contest. There was discussion on where the required matching funds will come from for the congressional grant, creating an enterprise fund for recreation to see what costs are being subsidized by City taxpayers for services provided to residents of neighboring communities, and exploring other revenue generators such as installing turf in the BOR.

Assistant Manager Dawn Monahan said the FY23 year-end surplus is projected to be approximately \$225,000. Councilor Lauzon said he gave his word as mayor to the voters when they approved the charter change allowing the City to carry a surplus up to 5%, and that surpluses over 5% would be used to reduce the following year's municipal tax rate. He said the proposed assignments are good decisions, but he is beholden to his promise to the voters, and will vote against the assignments.

Jesse Rosado asked if the state funding being proposed for use of the BOR could be put towards the required match needed for the congressional grant. Manager Storrellicastro said yes. Mr. Rosado said Manager Storrellicastro is doing a great job and everybody should just do whatever the Manager says. The comment was met with laughter, but no formal Council action to codify the suggestion.

Councilor Waszazak made the motion to approve the requested assignments listed above. Councilor Lauzon said the list should be amended to include that any additional unspent fund balance over the amounts included in the motion be assigned towards the FY25 municipal property tax rate. Councilor Waszazak accepted the friendly amendment. Councilor Lauzon seconded the motion, but noted he will be voting against, as per his previous comments. **Motion carried with Councilor Lauzon voting against.**

C) Volunteer appointments/reappointments.

Buildings & Facilities Committee

Brent Gagne expressed his interest in being reappointed to the committee. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Boutin. **Motion carried.**

Development Review Board (Ward III)

Katrina Pelkey expressed her interest in being reappointed to the DRB. DRB chair Linda Shambo voiced her support for the reappointment. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Colin Doolittle expressed his interest in being appointed to the DRB. Council approved the appointment on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Transportation & Public Works Committee

Joanne Reynolds expressed her interest in being reappointed to the committee. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Colin Doolittle withdrew his name from consideration due to the appointment to the DRB.

Homelessness Task Force

Manager Storrellicastro said incumbent task force member Chip Castle wasn't available to attend this evening's meeting. He will be scheduled for his interview at the June 20th meeting.

Jeremy Spiro-Winn expressed his interest in being appointed to the task force. Council reappointed Mr. Castle to the two-year task force seat, and appointed Mr. Spiro-Winn to the one-year seat on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Samantha Hiscock said she submitted an application in the fall for appointment to the Homelessness Task Force. Ms. Hiscock said she has been attending meetings, and continues to be interested in being appointed. Manager Storrellicastro apologized that her application had slipped through the cracks. It was noted the task force is full, and her application will be taken up at the next opportunity. Mayor Hemmerick said Ms. Hiscock's continued unofficial participation in the task force is welcome.

Police Advisory Committee

Bob Nelson expressed his interest in being reappointed to the PAC. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Sandy Rouse expressed her interest in being reappointed to the PAC. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Abby Blum expressed her interest in being reappointed to the PAC. Council approved the reappointment on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

Cemeteries, Recreation & Conservation Committee

Manager Storrellicastro said there are two available seats on the CRCC. Incumbent member Norena Zaneoni isn't available this evening, so will be interviewed at the June 20th meeting. Council will interview those here tonight, and Ms. Zaneoni on June 20th, and make appointments after the interviews are completed.

Ilene Gillander expressed her interest in being reappointed to the CRCC. She noted she has served as the official Hope Cemetery tour guide for many years.

To be approved at 06/20/2023 Barre City Council Meeting

Haley Erin Pero, Sonya Spaulding, and Catlin Allen expressed their interest in being appointed to the CRCC.

Pam Wilson and Jordan Heiden withdrew their names from consideration.

Manager Storellicastro said final interviews for the last appointments will be held at the June 20th meeting.

D) Appoint Councilors to the TIF Downtown Action Team.

Mayor Hemmerick and Councilors Deering and Lauzon said they were interested in serving on the action team. No formal appointment action was necessary.

Upcoming Business –

- Final committee, board and task force interviews June 20th.
- Barre Area Development Corporation update June 20th.
- Friends of the Winooski/River Access Task Force update June 20th.
- Award of ARPA Community Innovation Fund allocations.
- Update on environmental court case decision.
- Appoint Councilor liaisons to committees.
- Consider expanding the Police Advisory Committee from 5 members to 7.

Round Table –

Councilor Deering wished his wife a happy 8th anniversary.

Executive Session – NONE

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM on motion of Councilor Deering, seconded by Councilor Waszazak.
Motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk