

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council
Held July 19, 2022**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order in person and via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 7:00 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 outgoing City Manager Steve Mackenzie, incoming City Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro, Police Chief Braedon Vail, Fire Chief Doug Brent, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, Finance Director Dawn Monahan, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

Absent: NONE

Also present: NONE

Adjustments to the Agenda:

- No update from the Aldrich Library.
- Move the executive session interviews of the city attorney candidates to the end of the agenda.
- Review last week's actions with regards to appointment of Raylene Meunier at the next meeting.
- Consider holding a Council meeting next week to have a preliminary discussion on setting the municipal tax rate, which is scheduled to be done at the August 2nd meeting.
- Conversation on the 22 Hill Street RFP for sale of the property.

Ceremonial Appointment & Welcome of New Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro -

Council approved the appointment of Nicolas Storrellicastro to the position of City Manager on motion of Councilor Deering, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Manager Storrellicastro said he is looking forward to making Barre City home for he and his family, and he thanked the Council, retiring Manager Mackenzie, department heads and staff, and City residents for welcoming him so warmly.

Visitors and Communications –

Sarah Helman said people are concerned about safety and walking home after dark. She asked about police presence in the downtown, and said she'll reach out to the department.

Bernadette Rose reminded everyone that Barre City is located on Abenaki land. Ms. Rose also noted July 26th marks the 32nd anniversary of the adoption of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and reminded people to work towards accessibility to everyone.

Mayor Hemmerick said representatives from Green Mountain Transit will be at the August 2nd meeting to discuss recent route changes. Jesse Rosado thanked the Mayor for making these arrangements, and said public transit is an important topic for City residents.

Approval of Consent Agenda:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
 - i. Regular meeting of July 12, 2022
- B. City Warrants as presented:
 1. Approval of Week 2022-29, dated July 20, 2022:

To be approved at 07/26/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

- i. Accounts Payable: \$327,654.85
 - ii. Payroll (gross): \$151,973.88
- C. 2022 Licenses & Permits: NONE

City Clerk & Treasurer Report –

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- Absentee ballots for the August 9th primary are available. Voters may stop by the office to pick up their ballots, or call to request them by mail. The new ballot curing procedures are working well.

Liquor Control Board – NONE

City Manager's Report –

Manager Emeritus Mackenzie noted the following from his written report, distributed earlier in the day:

- Strategic planning process continues.
- Capital improvement planning process kicked off today.
- Current vacancies listed. There are currently 17 vacancies city-wide including the 4 new positions.
- Enough additional lifeguards have been recruited to allow the pool to be open weekends through the rest of the season.
- Strong ambulance revenues were received through the month of June and for FY22.
- A tire recycling event for City residents will be this Saturday at the BOR.
- The Heritage Festival is next weekend.
- National Night Out community picnic is Tuesday, August 2nd, from 5-8 PM in Currier Park.

Manager Storrellicastro said he is meeting one-on-one with staff, and working on a list of initiatives and projects.

Unfinished Business – NONE

New Business –

A) Partner Update – Aldrich Library.

There is no update for this meeting.

B) Partner Update – Barre Partnership.

Barre Partnership executive director Tracie Lewis gave an update on next weekend's Heritage Festival activities. The schedule is available on their website and Facebook page.

C) Partner Update – BADC.

Barre Area Development Corp. acting director Karl Rinker gave an update on BADC activities over the past few months. It was suggested there be efforts to attract a healthy, affordable food vendor for the City's north end.

E) Final Approval of Reconciled Annual Appointments List.

Councilors noted a few corrections that need to be made to the list. It will be brought back for final approval at the next meeting.

F) Authorize Purchase of Police & Fire Non-Emergency Service Vehicles.

Police Chief Braedon Vail, Fire Chief Doug Brent, and Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth reviewed the memo outlining seven administrative vehicles being proposed for purchase for the police and fire departments. There was discussion on trade-in of older vehicles, quotes from various dealers, funding options from the FY21 fund balance and capital fund. Chief Vail said the recommendation is to go with the \$192,360 quote for the seven vehicles from Formula Nissan. Both Manager Emeritus Mackenzie and City Manager Storrellicastro said they recommend approving the purchases.

Councilor Lauzon said he has concerns that proper procedures weren't followed when Council allocated \$233,000 from the FY21 fund balance to the capital fund at its December 18, 2021 budget workshop. There was additional discussion on the capital fund balance, supply chain delays and costs impacted by inflation, tracking maintenance costs, and review of the capital equipment plan.

Councilor Lauzon said there is plenty of money in the capital fund regardless of whether the \$233,000 allocation was properly warned and carried out, and he made the motion to approve the purchases as recommended. The motion was seconded by Councilor Deering.

There was additional discussion on offering stipends for use of personal vehicles rather than purchasing, researching potential use of electric vehicles for public safety uses, mechanical and structural condition of the vehicles being replaced, and creation and maintenance of the capital equipment plan and budget.

Council approved the vehicle purchases as moved and seconded, with Councilor Waszazak voting against.

G) Authorize Replacement of Police Department Firearms.

There was a brief discussion on 9mm vs. .45 caliber firearms, and Chief Vail noted ammunition for the 9mm is less expensive. Council approved the purchase of the 9mm firearms as recommended by Chief Vail on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Deering. **Motion carried.**

H) Authorize Purchase of Replacement Police Dispatch Consoles.

Fire Chief Doug Brent and Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth said the Cities of Barre and Montpelier are working to have identical equipment to provide backup for each dispatch center. Funds are set aside annually towards replacement of the dispatch consoles, along with a percentage of the dispatch contracts the City has with other communities. In addition to the new consoles, the dispatch center is in need of new work stations. The intent is to issue an RFP for the work stations, with payment to come out of the reserve funds over the next several years. It was noted the Council will review the RFP results before one of the proposals is selected for replacement of the work stations. Clerk/Treasurer Dawes was asked to research interfund borrowing options for whatever financing will be necessary.

Council approved moving forward with the console purchases, and authorized submittal of an RFP for work station upgrades by utilizing existing funding sources with financing of the remaining balance, on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

Added - Councilor Waszazak asked about the criteria that will be included in the RFP for purchase and redevelopment of 22 Hill Street. He said there is a concern the criteria might preclude some organizations from qualifying to bid. Clerk Dawes noted the criteria aren't exclusionary, and all proposals will be considered. The Clerk noted the legal notification of the City's intent to sell the property was published in the newspaper last week, and opens a 30-day period of time for public comment, after which the RFP will be issued.

Upcoming Business – NONE

Round Table –

Councilor Deering said registration for Barre Youth Sports Association football is underway.

Councilor Waszazak said he is happy to see so many community activities coming back after two years of cancelations due to the COVID pandemic.

Councilor Lauzon said Central Vermont Council on Aging was recently recognized for its advocacy actions. He noted the technical difficulties experienced this evening by those attending the meeting virtually, and said the issues need to be addressed.

D) Applicant Interviews for City Attorney Candidates.

- i. **Stitzel, Page, and Fletcher. P.C.**
- ii. **Oliver L. Twombly Law Office, P.C.**

Mayor Hemmerick noted interviews of the two applicants will be conducted in executive session, as will discussion of the candidates.

Executive Session - Councilor Lauzon made the motion to find that premature general public knowledge of city attorney candidate interviews and discussion 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 8:47 PM for city attorney candidate interviews and discussion under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. Manager Emeritus Mackenzie, Manager Storrellicastro, Clerk Dawes, and Stitzel, Page, and Fletcher representatives David Rugh, Robert Fletcher, and John Klesch were invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Rugh, Mr. Fletcher, and Mr. Klesch exited the executive session, and Oliver Twombly was invited into the executive session.

Mr. Twombly exited the executive session.

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

Council appointed Oliver Twombly to serve as City Attorney for a term of three years, effective July 1, 2022, on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Boutin. **Motion carried with Councilors Lauzon, Boutin, Deering and Waszazak voting in favor, and Mayor Hemmerick and Councilors Stockwell and Cambel voting against.**

Other –

Councilor Lauzon said he'd like to request a Council meeting next Tuesday, July 26th, to discuss use of the fund balance and the FY23 municipal tax rate before Council sets the tax rate at the August 2nd meeting. Council approved holding a meeting on July 26th on motion of Councilor Deering, seconded by Councilor Boutin.

Motion carried with Councilors Lauzon, Deering, Boutin, Cambel and Stockwell voting in favor, and Mayor Hemmerick and Councilor Waszazak voting against.

The meeting adjourned at 10:23 PM on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

The meeting was recorded on the video meeting platform.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk