

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held September 13, 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 City Manager Nicolas Storrellicastro, Fire Chief Doug Brent, Deputy Fire Chief Joe Aldsworth, Police Chief Braedon Vail, Human Resources Director Rikk Taft, Public Works Director Bill Ahearn, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:**

Councilors talked about placing a discussion around the Diversity & Equity Committee on the agenda. It was decided to put it on next week's agenda to allow notification to committee members who might want to attend the meeting.

**Visitors and Communications –**

Bernadette Rose reminded Barre City is located on unceded Abenaki lands, and encouraged people to participate in neighbor-helping-neighbor programs benefiting those in need. Ms. Rose thanked City staff members who are helping with posting and information dissemination of committee agendas and minutes.

Rosemary Averill thanked City staff members for keeping the cemeteries looking great. She asked for information on public outreach efforts surrounding use of the ARPA funds. Manager Storrellicastro said he has engaged a firm to work on creating a survey and holding forums to gather public input. More information about the process will be shared at next week's meeting.

Ms. Averill asked what the City's position is with regards to the recent news surrounding the Diversity & Equity Committee. She said the committee isn't representative of the community, and the Council needs to consider the damage that's been done.

Steve Whitaker said he resubmitted his April public records request to Manager Storrellicastro, but hasn't received a response. The Manager said the City has responded to two of three recent requests from Mr. Whitaker. Regarding the April request, there are provisions in statute that allow for review of documents related to public safety, to determine if it's appropriate to release them. That review is taking place.

Laurel Maurer said she is disturbed by the situation regarding the Diversity & Equity Committee.

**Approval of Consent Agenda:**

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

- A. Approval of Minutes:
  - i. Regular meeting of August 30, 2022, as corrected.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  - 1. Ratification of Week 2022-36, dated September 7, 2022:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$287,976.48
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$131,925.62
  - 2. Approval of Week 2022-37, dated September 14, 2022:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$320,690.03
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$174,507.93

To be approved at 09/20/2022 Barre City Council Meeting

C. 2022 Licenses & Permits: NONE

D. Approval of Spaulding High School Homecoming Parade, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **City Clerk & Treasurer Report –**

Clerk/Treasurer Dawes reported on the following:

- First quarter property taxes are due by September 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Water/sewer bills are due by September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- September 15<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for submissions in response to the Request for Proposals and Offers associated with 22 Hill Street. Submissions must be received by the Clerk's office by 11:00 AM. Report and recommendation will come to Council at September 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

There was discussion on the 22 Hill Street RFPO, and it was decided if there are three or less submittals, the entire Council will receive copies of the proposals and the score sheet. Discussion will take place at the September 27<sup>th</sup> Council meeting.

### **Liquor Control Board – NONE**

### **City Manager's Report –**

Manager Storrellicastro noted the following:

- A traffic alert has been issued for North Main Street in the vicinity of the pump station replacement project. Traffic will be affected periodically between now and September 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Will give an overview of the FY24 budget building process and timeline at next week's meeting.
- Reviewing draft Capital Improvement Plan, to be presented to Council in November.
- Holding town halls with all members of staff over the next few weeks.

Councilors asked for an update on the shooting incident on Brook Street. Police Chief Vail said they are working with the state's attorney's office, and are confident the issue will be settled.

Councilors asked Manager Storrellicastro how he's settling in, and if there are things he needs. The Manager said he continues to evaluate City procedures and policies, and expects to make some recommendations for changes in the future. Councilors expressed appreciation for the open lines of communications.

### **Unfinished Business – NONE**

### **New Business –**

#### **A) Authorize contract for new dispatch consoles.**

Chief Vail said Council had approved moving forward with replacement of the dispatch work stations at a previous meeting. The Chief reviewed the three proposals received in response to the RFP, and recommended the contract be awarded to low bidder Sustema. The expected life of the equipment is 15-20 years, and costs are offset by dispatch revenues and capital funds. The Chief said the RFP was issued jointly with Montpelier, with the option for each community to move forward independently.

Council approved awarding the contract to Sustema on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

#### **B) Accept grant for installation of dry hydrants.**

Chief Brent said the Department of Public Works plays an instrumental role in the installation of the dry hydrants, which allow water to be drawn from the river in three different locations. Council approved accepting the grant on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried.**

Councilor Lauzon made the motion to suspend the rules for the next action, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

**Added) Presentation of Resolution #2022-09: Honoring Fire Chief Doug Brent on His Retirement.**

With a large number of Fire Department staff members present, Mayor Hemmerick read the resolution commemorating the retirement of Fire Chief Doug Brent, and declaring September 16, 2022 as “Doug Brent Appreciation Day” in the City of Barre. Those in attendance offered a standing ovation, and Chief Brent spoke of his devotion to the City of Barre and public safety.

**C) Discussion of Extra Mile Day nominations.**

Clerk Dawes said the City of Barre has participated in the national Extra Mile Day program, honoring community service, since 2015. In addition to issuing a mayoral proclamation naming November 1<sup>st</sup> as Extra Mile Day, the City traditionally nominates people or organizations noted for their service to the community for inclusion on the national Extra Mile website. Councilors Deering, Stockwell and Boutin will work together to gather a list of names for this year’s honorees, and present the list to the Council before the end of October.

**Upcoming Business –**

Mayor Hemmerick noted the following for upcoming business:

- ARPA – solicitation of community input
- FY24 budget kickoff
- Finalization and presentation of Capital Improvement Plan
- Review & selection of proposals for purchase and redevelopment of 22 Hill Street
- Extra Mile Day proclamation and honorees

Councilor Lauzon said he visited many of the committee, commission and board pages on the City’s website, and noted there are a number of missing agendas and minutes, which have posting requirements under Vermont Open Meeting laws. There was discussion on including committee charges and mission statements on the web pages, and reviewing committees for possible overlap or merger. Manager Storellicastro said he plans on meeting with all committee chairs to discuss compliance and operations.

Bernadette Rose noted she is chair of the ADA Committee, and said collaboration between the Council and the committees, boards and commissions is important to avoid any perception of “us vs. them”.

**Round Table –**

Councilor Waszazak said he attended the Opera House’s Second Century event, which was wonderful.

Councilor Boutin visited the Public Safety Building to view the 9/11 tribute this past weekend. He said he had a great time at the mixed martial arts event at the auditorium.

Councilor Deering said he is working with the football program for kids in kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and they’ll be practicing at the Bond Field Thursday evening. He encouraged people to attend the Spaulding High School homecoming football game this Saturday evening.

Councilor Stockwell said she visited the 9/11 memorial quilt on display at the Public Safety Building, and she said it was a moving tribute.

Mayor Hemmerick announced the following:

- Thanked Assistant Clerk Cheryl Metivier and Delinquent Collections Clerk Sylvie Rivard for holding down the fort in the offices while so many staff members were out with COVID over the past two weeks.
- There will be a Chalk It Up event at Mathewson Playground on Saturday from 10:30 AM – noon.
- The River Access Task Force is holding a river cleanup on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

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

There was a question on what personnel item will be discussed in executive session. Manager Storellicastro said it's related to interim leadership in the Fire Department following the retirement of Chief Brent.

Council went into executive session at 8:17 PM to discuss personnel issues under the provisions of 1 VSA § 313 on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Deering. Manager Storellicastro was invited into the executive session. **Motion carried.**

Council came out of executive session at 8:26 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Deering. **Motion carried.**

There was no action taken.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Waszazak. **Motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk