

**Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council  
Held November 7, 2023**

The Regular Meeting of the Barre City Council was called to order via video platform by Mayor Jake Hemmerick at 6:00 PM at, Barre, Vermont. In attendance 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, Police Chief Brad Vail, Planning Director Janet Shatney, Assistant Manager Dawn Monahan, Homelessness and Housing Coordinator Tess Taylor, and Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes.

**Absent:** NONE

**Others Present:** NONE

**Adjustments to the Agenda:** The following adjustments were made:

- Add under new agenda items: approval of assurance of discontinuance between the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the City of Barre.
- Remove the new agenda item re. the Transportation and Public Works Committee.

**Visitors and Communications:** NONE

**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. Regular meeting of October 24, 2023.
- B. City Warrants as presented:
  1. Ratification of the Warrants from week 2023-44, dated November 1, 2023
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$273,122.18
    - ii. Special Accounts Payable: \$1,000.00
    - iii. Payroll (gross): \$153,186.85
  2. Approval of Week 2023-45, dated November 8, 2023:
    - i. Accounts Payable: \$400,505.12
    - ii. Payroll (gross): \$138,137.18
- C. 2023 Clerk's Office Licenses & Permits: NONE
- D. Ratify Council's 10/24/23 approval of Downtown Vibrancy Fund municipal letter of attestation
- E. Accept assistance through the Municipal Technical Assistance Program
- F. Authorize the Manager to execute a 10-year \$416,345 contract with Axon for Police Department body worn cameras and ratify acceptance of a federal \$22,000 grant to support implementation

**City Clerk & Treasurer Report –**

City Clerk/Treasurer Carol Dawes reported on the following:

- Second quarter tax payments are due by November 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Barre City Hall is closed Friday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, for the Veterans Day holiday.

**Liquor Control Board/Cannabis Control Board –**

Council approved a new third class liquor license for Tally at 224 N. Main Street on motion of Councilor Stockwell, seconded by Councilor Cambel. **Motion carried with Councilors Boutin and Lauzon abstaining.**

### **City Manager's Report –**

Manager Storrellicastro reported on the following:

- Drilling for testing has been done on the landslides above Pike Street, and the City is awaiting the reports.
- The FEMA office in Alumni Hall is closing at the end of the day on November 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Barre Up is open for drop-in hours on Wednesdays from 6-8 PM.
- The ice has been made in the BOR and skating has started for the season.
- Flood repair work as started at the public safety building, and will move to City Hall once PSB is completed.
- Yard waste disposal continues at the Barre Town drop off location through this Saturday.
- Councilors are invited to attend the Planning Commission meeting on Thursday at 5PM.
- There will be a free COVID/flu vaccination clinic at Spaulding High School on November 8<sup>th</sup> from 4-8 PM.
- The winter parking ban goes into effect at 1:00 AM on Wednesday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, and continues to April 1<sup>st</sup>. Overnight parking permits are available in the Clerk's office for downtown residents.

Manager Storrellicastro said the Parking Committee has been exploring ways to modify the winter parking ban to ease some of the restrictions. A reliable means of communication is required, and different text and robocall options are being explored. There was discussion on installing flashing lights, and the need for a more City-wide way to alert people to dates when on-street parking would not be allowed. Clerk Dawes said overnight parking permits available through her office are good for specifically marked parking spaces in specific parking lots.

Ellen Kaye said she is happy to hear the City is exploring ways to improve the winter parking ban as it is inequitable. Ms. Kaye asked when the application for the welcoming and engaging communities grant will be on the agenda. Mayor Hemmerick said it's not quite ready for consideration, and he is seeking an application extension from VLCT.

Manager Storrellicastro welcomed Tess Taylor as our new Homelessness and Housing Coordinator. Ms. Taylor's position is being funded through a state grant, and she will be working closely with area service providers and stakeholders. The Manager said the position was filled in concert with development of the job description rather than through an application process.

### **New Business –**

#### **A) Update from State of Vermont on North End recovery and resiliency.**

Julie Moore, Secretary of the VT Agency of Natural Resources, introduced the new Central Vermont Recovery Officer Patricia Moulton. Ms. Moulton said she has started working with Manager Storrellicastro on developing plans to engage the community in the planning process for redevelopment of the north end. Ms. Moore said they will be looking to identify a few key partners to work with the state on community outreach and engagement planning. Mayor Hemmerick said the Council will discuss housing, identify key partners, and name a point of contact at the next meeting.

There was discussion on timelines, buyouts, and supporting property owners as they determine whether to seek a buyout or invest in property repairs.

Sec. Moore said we could self-impose a deadline of 3-6 months to ensure we don't look opportunities.

Jeremy Spinowinn said a plan needs to be developed for details on outreach.

Amy Galford asked how to offer input and feedback at this time. Manager Storellicastro suggested gathering the information and have it available for submission once a line of communication has been opened.

There was discussion on reviewing and integrating past plans and flood resiliency, and Representative Peter Anthony said there should be attention focused on river corridor issues.

Linda Gustafson said she grew up on Second Street, and she is concerns as an historian about being sure residents' voices are heard.

Joellen Calderara asked if the plan as presented at the last Council meeting is moving forward. Sec. Moore said that was just a concept and a starting point. There will be public engagement in whatever final development takes place in the north end, and more than a dozen funding sources will be included. Ms. Calderara said identifying those homes that might be interested in a buyout or relocation would be a good starting point. It was noted the conceptual designs shared at the last Council meeting are posted on the City website.

**B) Authorize Friends of the Winooski to proceed with dam removal projects.**

Michele Braun, executive director of the Friends of the Winooski, gave a Powerpoint presentation of the Winooski watershed area and the three dams whose removal is being planned. Ms. Braun noted the two more southerly dams are owned by the City, and the northern dam is owned by Trow & Holden. There was discussion on the benefits of removing the dams.

Danielle Owczarski with the River Task Force said removal of the dams supports their work to increase access to the waterways and improve safety. There was discussion on improving the riverside pathway near Rotary Park, monitoring water quality and surveying fish populations. It was noted construction documents will come to Council for final review and approval. Representative Peter Anthony recommended engaging the Barre Fish and Game Club.

Council approved removal of the two City-owned dams on motion of Councilor Boutin, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

**C) Discussion with former members of the Transportation & Public Works Committee.**

This item was canceled under adjustments to the agenda.

**D) Second Reading and Public Hearing warned 6:30 PM: Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Revisions.**

Mayor Hemmerick opened the public hearing at 7:09 PM. Councilor Deering said he is still concerned about parking for ADU's, and would prefer for the appeal process to play out. Mayor Hemmerick said there are ways to tweak the minimum housing ordinances to address parking and landlords who don't disclose lack of parking to potential tenants. There have only been four ADU's constructed in the past six years, and this issue can be revisited in the future.

Council approved the ADU revisions on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried with Councilor Boutin voting against.**

**E) Approval of Assurance of Discontinuance between the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and the City of Barre.** (added under adjustments to the agenda)

Mayor Hemmerick noted approval of the assurance of discontinuance will free up access to other grant funds. Councilor Waszazak said he's voting against this settlement as the state could have done more to support the City by waiving the fees.

Council approved the assurance of discontinuance on motion of Councilor Lauzon, seconded by Councilor Stockwell. **Motion carried with Councilor Waszazak voting against.**

**Upcoming Business –**

For the November 21<sup>st</sup> agenda:

- FY25 budget introduction
- Presentation on the upcoming City-wide reappraisal
- Discussion on housing and the north end project
- Review of the equity tool
- Appointment to the Development Review Board

**Round Table –**

Councilor Deering said the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade boys football team brought home the state peewee championship. This is a first such title for Barre. He thanked Hope Coalition for their work rebuilding and repairing 100 homes in 100 days.

Councilor Lauzon reminded people of the continuing needs in the community, and the opportunities to support our neighbors through Giving Tuesday and Thanksgiving.

Councilor Stockwell said last night's housing meeting highlighted this as a moment to move forward and be innovative.

Councilor Waszazak said he participated in a bowling fundraiser on Saturday for People's Health and Wellness Clinic.

Mayor Hemmerick spoke of this weekend's Veterans' Day remembrance, and that both of his grandfathers fought in World War II.

**Executive Session – NONE**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25 PM on motion of Councilor Waszazak, seconded by Councilor Lauzon. **Motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn S. Dawes, City Clerk