

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, April 6, 2015

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:48 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. The pledge of allegiance to the flag preceded roll call. Present: Councilors Remillard, Otis, Morgan Allain, Gentili, Higbee, Rozek, Nelson and Theberge. Also present: City Manager James Wheeler, Susan Tremblay and Barbara Tetreault.

Minutes, Previous Meeting

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to accept the minutes of the March 16 Regular Meeting/Work Session, March 18 Budget Meeting, March 23 Work Session, March 25 Budget Meeting and March 30 Work Session. So moved, the motion carried.

Disbursements: Disbursement Summary Draft #1737 start date 3/17/2015 end date 4/6/2015 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,678,740.45. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Nelson to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – No Comments

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports – No Reports

NEW BUSINESS

2. Ordinance 2015-06 Amending the Code of Ordinances, Chapter 2, Administration, Article V Finance by adding Division 2a Elaine Hardie Scholarship Fund. (1st read)
Councilor Nelson moved with a second by Councilor Morgan Allain to table the ordinance and schedule a public hearing on April 20. So moved, the motion carried.
3. Resolution 2015-11 Authorizing an application to the Harvard Pilgrim Healthy Food Fund Grant for Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.) to expand and/or build the permanent capacity of gardening programs including opening new locations; purchasing equipment; and/or expand staff or group of volunteer participants. (1st read)
Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Morgan Allain to table the resolution and schedule a public hearing on April 20. So moved, the motion carried.
4. City Manager's Report
 - I. An article regarding the Cell House Superfund site recently appeared in Science Daily. A copy is attached.
 - II. Our request for the Berlin Beautification Project was accepted by the FCI Berlin. This is the program that will employ a supervisor for a crew of inmates that will go about doing a lot of the beautification projects that we don't get to in the spring and summer months including mowing, trimming, litter pick up, and weed control to name a few.
 - III. The City has received confirmation of grant approval for \$2,400 for two USDA summer Food Program food shelters.
 - IV. Attached is an updated Revaluation Schedule and brief report on progress to date. The conversion from AVITAR's software to VISION has and continues take time. There have been no issues that have not been overcome. As a result the revaluation time line has shifted. The updated schedule currently maintains the original deadline.
 - V. The City has recently submitted a State Aid Grant request to the NHDES for the Inflow and Infiltration Reduction Project Phase I, Contract 2. The grant requested is \$155,384.46.
 - VI. In consultation with Wright-Pierce the City has prepared and sent the attached letter to EPA Region 1. The letter provides comment on proposed NPDES permit restrictions that EPA has included in our draft permit. There is nothing overly onerous in the proposed regulations however we do not see any benefit coming from some of the added testing and limitations that are proposed. Therefore we are expressing our position against their inclusion in the permit.
 - VII. Demolition of 155 Willow and 52 Ottawa were recently completed. Final site work including loaming and seeding will be done this spring. The asbestos abatement of 32 Ottawa was completed this past Friday and demolition was completed today April 6th.

- VIII. Legislative Items – As widely reported SB 30, the Balsam's financing bill, was passed unanimously by the Senate. Senate Bill 547, the Pole Tax bill, may be voted on by the House Ways and Means Committee this week on Tuesday. The Committee is also likely will vote on HB 192, DRA Utility Value Bill, when they meet. HB1, the House version of the State budget. This bill includes many cuts to municipalities. Attached are two tables provided by the NHMA. One shows the estimated impact to the State overall and is listed by funding category. The other estimates the impact to each community. The reduction in aid to the City of Berlin for the biennium is \$642,893. \$469,656 of this comes from State Aid Grants for Sewer and Water Infrastructure. Other reductions include the Meals and Rooms Tax, FEMA Grants and the Highway Block Grants.

The City Manager added that he will email Council with the dates scheduled for the mandatory HUD Domestic Violence Training so they can pick a date. The sessions are approximately three hours long.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Morgan Allain to accept the City Manager's Report and place it on file. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Rozek mentioned the scenic point on the river known as twin falls is largely overgrown and asked if there were plans to trim in that area. The City Manager replied there are regulatory issues due to the riverbank. We need to understand from the landowner (Eversource) what we can and can't cut. Councilor Theberge cautioned we need to keep some trees to shade the river.

Councilor Rozek stated that the Pole Tax issue affects the City of Berlin more than anyone else and he inquired if there was anything in the state that we can do? The Mayor replied that NHMA is fighting for us on this and he trusts they will do everything in their power to help.

5. Mayor's Report – Appointment: BIDPA.

Mayor Grenier nominated Gregory Westcott of Marshall Insurance Agency who recently purchased the Croteau Insurance Agency in Berlin. Mr. Westcott submitted a letter of interest to serve on the Berlin Industrial Development and Park Authority Board. Term is set to expire July 2016.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Gentili to accept the Mayor's nomination of Gregory Westcott for a term to expire July 2016 on BIDPA. So moved, the motion carried.

Mayor Grenier told Council that the City Manager is being considered by the Governor to serve on the State Assessor Standard Board and that Jim will serve the City of Berlin very well. The City Manager replied he will need to come to Council if he receives the nomination since it specifies that to serve on the Board, you must be an elected official or their designee.

Councilor Rozek asked how much time is involved with the Board? The City Manager replied that they have eight meetings per year and the meetings are approximately two hours long.

Mayor Grenier added that this is a good opportunity for someone from the North Country to represent the City of Berlin and surrounding area and Jim will do a great job.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to accept/file the Mayor's Report. So moved, the motion carried.

6. Public Comments – No Comments

7. Council Comments - No comments

8. Adjournment: There being no further business before the Mayor and Council, Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Nelson to adjourn the regular meeting. So moved, the motion carried and Mayor Grenier declared the regular meeting closed at approximately 8:08 p.m.

A True Record, Attest:
Debra A. Patrick, CMC
City Clerk