

CITY OF BERLIN
New Hampshire

Minutes of Council Public Works Department 3/22/2017
Council Conference Room
6:30 pm

Members:

Mayor Grenier
Councilor Theberge
Councilor Higbee
Councilor Rozek
Councilor Gentili
Councilor Remillard
Councilor Morgan-Allain

City Staff:

James Wheeler, City Manager
Elaine Riendeau, City Clerk
Mike Perreault, Public Works Director
Henry Noel, Superintendent
Terry Letarte, Recreation Program Director

At 6:30 p.m. Mayor Grenier brought the meeting to order.

Ms. Letarte presented the Mayor and Council with an overview of programs along with her “wish list” of additional expenditures for the operation of the department and programs. The wish list includes additional hours for her assistant, an increase in open gym hours and additional money for program development. The assistant spends much of her time supervising programs. This does not leave much time to assist with daily work or for grant research. Ms. Letarte has been slowly showing her assistant, Missy Wedge, some regular office work, but cannot train her as she should because of this lack of time. A discussion took place regarding the current programs and participation levels. Ms. Letarte noted that the baseball program participation has been decreasing over the last few years. She also informed the Council that the USDA money for the summer program is in its third year. After four years, the lunch fees will need to go out to bid. Currently, Tri County CAP, Senior Meals is providing lunches and snacks. Senior Meals works with the City and will provide the meals/snacks for the amount that the USDA provides for meals. The Mayor asked Ms. Letarte if she had to compromise on her requests for the budget, would allowing additional money for her assistant only work. Ms. Letarte stated that it would. Ms. Letarte said that she is asking for additional money for program development because she feels that while businesses have been generous, she is concerned that businesses are being stretched thin. The Council suggested that Ms. Letarte try to work with Pam Laflamme to find grant monies. It was noted that fuel/utilities expenditures have decreased with the installation of LED lighting and the Police Department is now splitting the heat and lighting.

Mr. Perreault started by reviewing the budget summary sheet. Account 432, Sewer Line, is currently in good shape. Pump station upgrades and equipment have been replaced during recent projects. The department is looking to replace two pieces of equipment this year. Currently, the undesignated fund balance is still healthy enough that it could be used to keep the user rate flat. The proposed budget request is up less than 1% from the previous year, which includes debt service. The projects that are

completed as well as the upcoming work continue to reduce the sources of inflow and infiltration as well as combined sewer overflow. Mr. Perreault had two additional staff members become certified to inspect the equipment.

Account 422, Street Lighting – The budget is up \$11,000, or a 7.5% increase, for street lights. This number is based on the actual budget for FY 2016. Mr. Perreault stated that he is looking into replacement of the current high pressure sodium street lights with LED lights. The project would take three years to pay back for the City. This type of project is usually completed by an outside company. The RFP for the project would require the City to give the first three years of savings to the installation company for repayment for the cost of the project.

Mr. Perreault stated that the Public Works budget is up \$65,181 or 3.4%. A large portion of this increase is due to contractual wage increases. He also moved a foreman position from the Rec & Parks Maintenance line into the Public Works line as an additional supervisor. This will allow a larger on-call rotation schedule. No additional staff has been added, he has simply moved them around into positions that they better serve. Additionally, he is eliminating the summer supervisor position. He has also been in contact with Michelle Lagoon (sp?) from the Federal Prison regarding the possibility of getting year round workers. Mr. Perreault also provided a list of the current vehicles and equipment for Public Works. There are pieces of equipment that are upwards of 40 years old. As equipment is being replaced, he said that he will not be looking to continue using the loaders as plows in the winter. He is more interested in wheelers so that a front plow, wing and sander can be placed on them for plowing. In the summer months, the vehicle can be used for other maintenance.

Mr. Perreault stated that the gas and diesel fuel tank removal will take place in May. As previously discussed, the City will be looking into using WEX bank cards for fuel purchases. The Council reminded Mr. Perreault of the information that they would like to see included when fuel is purchased.

At this time, trash is picked up 4 days per week with two trucks and six guys. Two men pick up recycling on Fridays. The other guys do odd jobs that need to be taken care of. The Council asked Mr. Perreault to check into whether or not recycling cardboard curbside would be feasible. Mr. Perreault recommended checking into a “pay as you throw” program for trash pick-up. The Council asked him to check with other communities that are currently doing that to see how it is working for them. Further discussion took place regarding the non-profit organizations in the City that currently have trash pick-up. Those businesses are reaping the same benefits as taxpaying businesses. The Council asked Mr. Perreault to look into billing those properties for trash removal and recycling.

The Mayor stated that this year’s budget is extremely difficult. Mr. Perreault was asked to look at all of his departments and cut \$100,000.

Councilor Rozek with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to adjourn the budget work session. So moved, the motion carried and Mayor Grenier declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 7:53 pm.

Submitted by Elaine Riendeau