

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 8:32 pm for Resolution 2021-19 Great Northwoods Community Foundation Donation. There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 8:33 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 8:33 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Otis, Morgan, Eastman, Higbee, Rozek, and Theberge

Absent: Councilor Berthiaume

Also present: City Manager James Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to accept the minutes of the August 16, 2021 Regular Meeting and Work Session, and the August 30, 2021 Work Session. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1895 start date 08/17/2021 end date 09/03/2021 for a total cash disbursement of \$2,085,526.23. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Morgan to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. Mayor Grenier advised that he requested flowers be sent for Lise Malia's funeral, with the cost taken from the Council Contingency. So moved, the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

There were no Council Committee Reports.

2. Resolution 2021-19 Great Northwoods Community Foundation Donation

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-One

A RESOLUTION authorizing the City of Berlin to accept a donation from the Great Northwoods Community Foundation in the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the purpose of use in projects and programs that advance the health and well-being of its Citizens for Fiscal Year 2022.

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Berlin as Follows:

WHEREAS the Great Northwoods Community Foundation wishes to make a \$20,000 donation to the City of Berlin; and

WHEREAS the City of Berlin recognizes the use of this donation in projects and programs that advance the health and well-being of its Citizens; and

WHEREAS the City of Berlin recognizes the Public Benefits of improving recreation opportunities for its Citizens which aligns with the foundation's vision of promoting health and well-being.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH, that the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) is hereby appropriated to be deposited in Revenue Account #30-368-601-0004 for the City of Berlin Fiscal Year 2022 budget, in addition to all previously-appropriated funds, for the use in projects and programs that advance the health and well-being of its Citizens. Said projects and programs shall be approved by City Council.

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after passage.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to remove this item from the table. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-19 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-19 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, that Resolution 2021-19 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Resolution 2021-20 Sale of 121 Main Street and Abutting Lots

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for September 20, 2021. So moved, the motion carried.

4. City Manager's Report

1. Attached is the property transfer list for August 2021. Sale prices continue to average considerably higher than assessed values.
2. Attached is the August Fire Dept. Incident Report.
3. The Capital Improvement Plan process for the FY 23-28 has been initiated with all departments.
4. Spencer Croteau of the Public Works Dept. has received notice of his promotion to the position of Carpenter with the department. Congratulations Spencer!

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

Mayor Grenier asked if the City has the equalization rate for this year. City Manager Wheeler advised they do not have it yet, but will soon.

5. Mayor's Report

a. Planning Board Appointment

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I was informed recently of an open seat on the Berlin Planning Board, and I would like to offer myself for consideration. I've lived in the Androscoggin Valley my entire life and I feel a strong commitment to the City of Berlin

as the center of our greater community. Since moving to the city full-time in 2016 I've found several ways to give back to the community and this feels like another opportunity for me to do so.

I graduated with a B.S. in Physics in 2012 from Boston College and afterward returned to Coos to work at my family's lumber business here in Berlin. Over the last decade I've filled numerous positions there which have exposed me to many parts of the construction process. My academic background has pushed me to examine those practices through a scientific lens, but I also have a soft spot in my heart for the historical character of our city. I look forward to playing a part in blending the old with the new. Although I feel qualified for this position, I am no expert and I know that I will learn a lot from the current board members. I hope that I can take the knowledge they provide and help pass it along to the next generation of city leaders.

Thank you for your consideration.

Kindly,

Eamon Kelley
396 Grafton Street
Berlin, NH 03570

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Morgan, to accept the Mayor's nomination of Eamon Kelley as an alternate member of the Planning Board with a term to expire April 30, 2023. So moved, the motion carried.

b. Berlin Housing Authority Appointments

Dear Mayor and Berlin City Councilors,

This is to request that City Council appoint Susan Tremblay to the Berlin Housing Authority Commission. She would replace Theresa Saucier whose term is set to expire December 2022.

We are honored that Sue has volunteered to work with BHA and profusely thank Mrs Saucier for all the meetings she has faithfully attended. Mrs Saucier helped to guide us through Covid among other challenges and we are grateful for her efforts. Sue has been an outstanding contributor to the City of Berlin and this will continue in her position as Commissioner.

We request that you kindly begin this process of appointment. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Paul Croteau
Chair BHA Commission

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Higbee, to accept the Mayor's nomination of Susan Tremblay as a Berlin Housing Authority Commissioner with a term to expire December 31, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

Dear Mayor and Berlin City Councilors,

This is to request the appointment of a new Commissioner on the Berlin Housing Authority's board for a term to end in December of 2021.

In requesting this appointment, we off for your consideration, Mr. Michael Perreault. Berlin Housing is fortunate that Mr. Perreault is willing to fulfill an unexpired term till December of 2021 and has agreed to stay on for a full 5-year term to end in December of 2026.

The Commissioners and I are looking forward to a lasting relationship with Mr. Perreault as his knowledge of the resources in the area can only complement our objectives.

We request that you kindly begin the process of his appointment. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Paul Croteau
Chair BHA Commission

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second from Councilor Morgan, to accept the Mayor's nomination of Michael Perreault as a Berlin Housing Authority Commissioner with a term to expire December 31, 2021. Mayor Grenier advised Mr. Perreault could be re-appointed to the 5-year term in December. So moved, the motion carried.

c. Cemetery Trustees Appointment

To the Mayor and City Council of the City of Berlin:

I have been on the cemetery committee and would like to continue to serve on this committee. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

B. Edward Bryant

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Otis, to accept the Mayor's nomination of Edward Bryant as a Cemetery Trustee with a term to expire August 31, 2024. So moved, the motion carried.

d. BHS Backers Parade Request

Dear Mr. Wheeler and Ms. Fortin,

The Berlin High School Backers are writing to request permission to hold the annual BHS Homecoming Parade and Bonfire on Friday September 24, 2021, beginning at 5:00pm as part of the 2021 BHS Homecoming festivities.

We are requesting permission to utilize the same parade route as in the past. The parade would begin at the 12th Street Bridge and proceed south down Main Street to Iceland Street across from the Northern Forest Heritage Park. This is the same route that we used in previous years and is an established route that all city departments are familiar with.

We ask that the route be closed from 5:00pm to 8:00pm from the start of staging to the end of the parade. We understand if the lower part of this route needs to remain open until 6:00 to accommodate local businesses. This would allow for parade participants to safely prepare for the parade, line up with the floats and proceed down Main Street. The actual parade would start at 7:00pm. The parade would end with the annual bonfire event at Northern Forest Heritage Park. As in past years, we ask that the corner of Norway Street to Iceland Street and the southern end of Norway Street from Brown School to the corner of Iceland Street be labeled "no parking" to accommodate the redirected traffic.

As part of the planning process we will be meeting with the city departments coordinating this event. As this is my first year involved with the Backers Officers, please feel free to let me know if I have forgotten anything, and please let us know of any restrictions due to Covid.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. We appreciate your continued support of the BHS Backers and the students of Berlin High School. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns by calling me, Becky, at [603-723-9833](tel:603-723-9833) or by sending an e-mail to the Backers at berlinbackers@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Woodward, President
BHS Backer's
2021-2022

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Higbee, to approve the request of the BHS Backers for the Homecoming Parade and Bonfire. So moved, the motion carried.

e. Coos County Medical Freedom Fighters Parade Request

The Council reviewed the parade permit application from Coos County Medical Freedom Fighters.

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Eastman, to approve the parade permit for the Coos County Medical Freedom Fighters for October 2, 2021.

Councilor Remillard shared concerns about how long the parade will be and if the street will need to be blocked, as this will affect businesses in the area and there is already increased traffic due to the Mason Street Bridge closure.

Councilor Rozek withdrew his motion, and Councilor Eastman withdrew his second.

The City Clerk will contact Ms. Hamel for additional information and contact the Police Chief for recommendations.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

7. Council Comments

Councilor Eastman asked if there was any new information about Brown School. City Manager Wheeler advised that the committee met tonight and discussed a path forward. The committee is planning to put it out for proposals again.

8. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Rozek, seconded by Councilor Higbee, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 pm. So moved, the motion carried.

A True Record, Attest:

Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

Note: Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the Council by motion.