

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, August 21, 2023

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:08 pm for Resolution 2023-29 NCHC Opioid Abatement Program.

Deputy Chief Nathan Roy advised that this Resolutions is to accept funds to help the recovery center open, before Federal funds are available.

There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:09 pm.

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:09 pm for Resolution 2023-30 NHPWMA Membership.

City Manager Warren advised that this is a mutual aid program similar to Police and Fire mutual aid. Mr. Warren advised they will be able to send and receive aid when appropriate.

There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:10 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:10 pm.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Robert Theberge, Higbee, Morency, and Roland Theberge.

Absent: Councilors Berthiaume, Remillard, Eastman, and Morgan

Also present: City Manager Phillip Warren, Jr., Finance Director Holly Larsen, Deputy Chief Nathan Roy, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Robert Cone, and Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to accept the minutes of the August 7, 2023 Regular Meeting and Work Session. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1943 with a start date of 08/08/2023 and an end date of 08/21/2023 for a total cash disbursement of \$498,729.24. Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

Councilor Morency advised that the Traffic Safety Committee has discussed the issue of Moreau Street. The Committee will hold a public hearing and contact abutters about the possibility of subdividing this street, which is narrow and was originally created for deliveries to a store that is no longer there.

2. Resolution 2023-29 NCHC Opioid Abatement Program (tabled 8/7/2023)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Three

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Berlin Police Commission to apply for and accept up to Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) in grant funds from the North Country Health Consortium, Inc. for the Opioid Abatement Program for Fiscal

Year 2024.

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

WHEREAS, the Berlin Police Department has partnered with the North Country Health Consortium in their applications for grant funds through the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services Opioid Abatement Program; and

WHEREAS, opioid sales and abuse continue to cause overdoses, deaths resulting from overdoses, and a rise in crime in our community; and

WHEREAS, there is a gap in the current State system as it relates to the needs of children, youth, adults, and families affected by mental illness and co-occurring mental illness and substance abuse disorders; and

WHEREAS, the population to be served by these funds may include, but are not limited to, individuals with, or at risk of developing, opioid use disorders and any co-occurring substance use disorder or mental health issues; individuals involved in the criminal justice system and in need of medications for substance use disorders; and/or children impacted by substance abuse.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH, that the sum of up to \$30,000.00 (Thirty-Thousand Dollars) is hereby appropriated to the Berlin Police Department Fiscal Year 2024 budget for the Opioid Abatement Program initiatives. Said funds granted to the City of Berlin will be used for the purpose of meeting the expenses directly included in the purpose of the grant, during Fiscal Year 2024.

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

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge, to remove this item from the table. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge, to read Resolution 2023-29 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge, to read Resolution 2023-29 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge, that Resolution 2023-29 be passed. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Robert Theberge – yes, Higbee – yes, Morency – recuse, Roland Theberge – yes, Grenier - yes

3. Resolution 2023-30 NHPWMA Membership (tabled 8/7/2023)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Three

A RESOLUTION authorizing the City's participation in the NH Public Works Mutual Aid Program.

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

WHEREAS, the NH Public Works Mutual Aid Program is a network of municipalities that assist one another during emergencies through partnering agreements and a protocol for requesting and receiving aid; and

WHEREAS, the Public Works Director / City Manager has found that the City's participation in the aforementioned Program would be advantageous to the City in emergency situations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH, that the City Council supports and endorses membership in the aforementioned program and hereby authorizes the Public Works Director / City Manager to take all actions necessary to complete this agreement.

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

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to remove this item from the table. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2023-30 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2023-30 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, that Resolution 2023-30 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution 2023-31 ARPA Funds Expenditure (1st read)

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for September 5, 2023. So moved, the motion carried.

When asked about the pickleball courts on Glen Avenue, City Manager Warren advised that they will be done with existing funds.

2. Resolution 2023-32 Waiver of Procurement Requirements (1st read)

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for September 5, 2023. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Roland Theberge asked about the total cost of the projects, and was advised they are being paid for with ARPA funds.

3. City Manager's Report

1. Attached is the July 2023 Real Estate Transfer Report.
2. Attached is the Fire Chief's July report, the Monthly Incident Report and the EMS call volume report.
3. The paving bids came back last week, one bid was received for approximately \$150 per ton. We are considering the funds available and the scope, our intention is to remain as close as possible to the "Pavement Preservation" list. That process will involve applying a ½ shim coat to approximately 12 roads and then returning early next year to apply an asphalt rubber treatment, thereby extending the life of those roads with the most economical treatment possible. There will be 2 or 3 roads that will have a 1 1/2" mill and overlay applied. Once calculations are complete the final list will be announced on the website, as well as the proposed schedule.
4. Public Works is still working to complete many of the paving repairs necessary around the City. Weather has been a limiting factor in scheduling and completing repairs.
5. The same conditions are having the same delaying effect on drainage and sewer repair issues. The goal is to complete said repairs prior to winter.
6. Memorial field water usage – no leaks were found, BWW contacted, there was an issue with the meter, which was corrected by BWW. Usage will be estimated at 22,000 CCF based on usage history.
7. This office will be ordering a couple of the bollard lights discussed at the last meeting – we have other uses for them – it will allow for a test of them.
8. 811 Sixth Avenue code issues – appears that some cleanup of items in the right of way is happening, a letter from this office will be going out in an attempt to address the other items in the yard.

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to accept the City Manager's Report and place it on file.

Councilor Robert Theberge asked about the ½ " mill and City Manager Warren advised that they will remove one-half inch of pavement with a grinding machine, and then replace that with a new layer of pavement. This makes a better base and saves the city from having to move any structures in the road, such as drains.

Councilor Robert Theberge asked about the new salt shed, and City Manager Warren advised that site work started today.

So moved, the motion passed.

4. Mayor's Report

a. Water Commission Resignation

To the Berlin Water Commission:

As I will no longer be able to fill the position of Berlin Water Works Commissioner, please accept this letter as my resignation. It has been my pleasure to work with all of you, and I wish you continued success.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Caron

Mayor Grenier advised that Mr. Caron will now be a Florida resident, so can no longer serve on the commission. Mayor Grenier noted that Mr. Caron has been a valuable community volunteer over a number of decades and will be sorely missed.

Councilor Morency moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to regrettably accept the resignation of Michael Caron from the Berlin Water Works Commission. So moved, the motion carried.

b. Appointment to Cemetery Trustees – A. Morrissette

Honorable Mayor Grenier and City Councilors:

Would you please extend my tenure as trustee for the Cemetery Trust Fund?

Thanking in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Albert R. Morrissette

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morency, to approve the nomination of Albert Morrissette as a Cemetery Trustee for a 3-year term to expire August 31, 2026. So moved, the motion carried.

c. Appointment to Berlin Water Commission – F. Treiss

Mayor Grenier,

I would like to express my interest in serving as a water commissioner in the City of Berlin.

Frederick "Rick" Treiss
473 Burgess St.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morency, to approve the nomination of Frederick Treiss as a Berlin Water Works Commissioner to fill the unexpired term of Michael Caron.

Councilor Roland Theberge asked about Mr. Treiss' credentials and Mayor Grenier advised that he worked for NHDES, with expertise in water and wastewater contamination. Councilor Higbee also noted that Mr. Treiss helped work on the ski trails at Milan Hill State Park.

So moved, the motion carried.

Mayor Grenier advised the Council that Governor Sununu vetoed HB142, which would have put Burgess Biopower in the path of independence. Mayor Grenier stated that the community should not panic, as motions are in place to make the plant sustainable. Although they will try to override the veto, Mayor Grenier noted that it might be a little tough for a while and asked the City Manager to identify \$500,000 to \$1 million of spending that could be deferred in the event it is needed. Mayor Grenier advised it is his intention to keep the Council fully informed on this issue.

5. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

6. Council Comments

There were no Council comments.

7. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Roland Theberge, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:42 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.