

City Council Work Session

August 1, 2016

Members present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, Rozek, Nelson and Theberge; absent was Councilor Remillard

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, Fire Chief Randall Trull, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Finance Director Patty Chase, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Chief Supervisor Bureau of Trails~Chris Gamache, and Barbara Tetreault from the *Berlin Daily Sun*

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

Mayor Grenier asked to put the appointment of Robert Theberge to the NH Rail Transit Authority Advisory Board on the agenda. Councilor Rozek so moved; Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried. The item will come under the Mayor's Report.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Otis to go into non-meeting per RSA 91-A:2, I(c) Legal Consultation. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Request for Waiver of Assessment Penalty on Tax Deeded Property

Returning to public session at 6:45 p.m. Councilor Rozek moved to deny the request for a waiver of assessment penalty on a property at 312 Madison Avenue; Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried.

Proposed Recreation Pass for Jericho Lake Park

Chris Gamache reported that when the State acquired Jericho Park through a donation from the City it was agreed that Berlin residents would not be charged to come to the beach. The State has put in over \$1 million at Jericho between the visitor center and the bath house. The beach area is used primarily by Berlin residents with 15% of users from elsewhere. Mr. Gamache asked if the city would entertain having passes available at City Hall for residents. There are currently a few who are causing problems on the beach and their permits could be revoked as a consequence. Anyone who does not bother to get a pass would then have to pay the day fee. He asked if such a pass could be implemented for next year.

Mr. Gamache reported that as of June 23, 2272 came through the park; 728 were campers and others were beach users. The most frequent campers are Berlin residents as well. With regard to fees, Mayor Grenier stated that he is all for regulating day use of the park. He asked the City Manager and Mr. Gamache come up with a plan to issue passes at City Hall. He added that he would support regulations of no alcohol at the beach. Councilor Nelson said that a \$10 season pass is not out of the question. She added that the beach area was primitive when the Park was first given to the State and access was free.

Councilor Rozek confirmed that a State Park season pass is typically \$85. He agreed that a \$10 fee is acceptable. Council members conceded that the City Manager and Mr. Gamache will come up with a solution for final approval by the Council.

Fire Department Request to Fill Two Positions

Chief Trull reported that there has been one retirement in July and there is another in December 2016. The two new positions will be covered under the SAFER grant. Councilor Rozek moved to hire two firefighter positions; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

PWD Fuel Distribution

Mr. Wheeler established that the City can have a fuel distribution system or not. Fuel could be put out for local bid. The WeX card is a credit card system which automates the purchase of fuel including having the taxes drop off at the time of purchase. If the existing fuel system is given up, the City would lose the system in an emergency event. CN Brown is currently under construction; Irving will be doing a similar project leaving only the Irving on Glen Avenue. In order for the City to change out its fuel farm, we need to use a private vendor. The bids also came in higher than expected and for those reasons, we will ask the State for an extension to continue to use our fuel farm. Mayor Grenier commented that we lose efficiency with employees when the fuel is obtained off site. He also questioned how many credit cards we issue. There is an

increased potential for theft. We are far better off controlling our own fuel system. Councilor Rozek added that it is not easy access for trucks and there could be a line that would take 45 to 50 minutes to get through.

Mayor Grenier noted that if an extension is not possible, the bid could be awarded. Mr. Perreault stated that the city has a grant in the amount of \$25,000 for tank removal; we would also need an extension of the grant for future use.

Health Department Full time Position

Angela Martin Giroux stated that the nurse supervisor at the Health Department is retiring October 31. There will be training involved for the new person. Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Nelson to hire a full time Nurse Supervisor. So moved, the motion carried.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to come out of nonpublic session. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to seal the minutes until August 15 as releasing them would render the proposed action ineffective. So moved, the motion carried.

There being no further business in work session, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted

Susan Tremblay

Administrative Assistant