

City Council Work Session

April 4, 2016

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Remillard, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, and Theberge; Councilors Rozek and Nelson were absent.

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, Fire Chief Randall Trull, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Public Works Director Mike Perreault, Berlin EMS Chris Dubey, Barbara Tetreault from the Berlin Daily Sun and public

BEMS Contract Renewal

Mr. Wheeler explained that the Council was provided with a copy of the proposed contract with BEMS. The contract reflects increases of \$500 per year and it increases the rates being charged to those who use the service. Mr. Dubey added that the new rates were proposed by their billing company who do business with dozens of ambulance services. The rates will capture the maximum that Medicare will allow and revenue will be generated from people who are using the services. Rates have not been increased since 2009. The other charge to be added is an optional charge \$200 for “no transport.” This will be charged when a patient receives meds and/or treatment and chooses not to go to the hospital.

Mr. Dubey reported that he has been working with Shelburne to provide ambulance service to them. They have approximately 31 calls per year and would pay \$18,000 annually for the service. They will have to work out a method for dispatch in order to go forward. The \$18,000 would be paid to the City to lower the ambulance contract fee. Mr. Dubey made it clear that an ambulance would be in Berlin at all times and the arrangement with Shelburne would not jeopardize Berlin’s service.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to approve the contract between BEMS and the City of Berlin as presented. All voted in favor.

Radio Frequency Donations

Chief Trull indicated that the Fire Department has been sharing a radio frequency with Berlin’s Emergency Response Team. The Marshall Insurance Company and CoOperative Insurance will donate \$500 each toward the cost of developing a frequency for the Fire Department. The Fire Department and Police Department will each put in \$750. There is a first read of a resolution to accept the donation.

Timber Sale Award

Kevin Evans was hired to manage a timber sale of the GP land that BIDPA owns and wants to have cleared. Mr. Evans has estimated the values of the timber and put together specs for bidding the job. Three logging contractors bid. Hicks was the high bidder at \$83,855; he is a good reputable contractor and there is no reason not to award the work to him. Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to award the timber sale of BIDPA land on East Milan Road for \$83,855 to Hicks Logging. So moved, the motion carried. The bid document specified that the work needs to be complete by May 7.

Bond Resolution

Mr. Wheeler explained that the estimate for Route 16 has been updated and the bond amount has increased to \$5.5 million. This resolution acknowledges the October \$3.5 million bond and this new resolution will add \$2 million. HEB believes that \$7 million will cover the entire cost of the project. The resolution will be read for first time, bids will be open on the 14th and the resolution can be revised if necessary on the 18th. Councilor Gentili confirmed that the PILOT agreement covers payments on the bond.

Forward NH Money for Northern Pass

Mayor Grenier stated that the Colebrook Board of Selectmen has changed their perspective on Northern Pass to a neutral position. In so doing, they asked that Forward NH money be spent in Coos County. The City of Berlin has gone on record in support of Northern Pass and we would want to see \$100 million for Coos County.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to authorize the City Manager to write a letter to FSEC reaffirming Berlin’s support for Northern Pass and that the City wants to have \$100 million of Forward NH money for Coos County. So moved, the motion carried.

Other

Ms. Laflamme informed the Council that in the sale of industrial park property, BIDPA has traditionally kept a 35 foot easement along the roadway. When it was a problem for the Presby property, BIDPA reduced the size of the easement to 10 feet and gave up the remainder. Capone Iron is asking for the same consideration. In checking with the City Attorney, he wanted the Council to ratify the decision since the City is technically giving something up. He asked that the Council vote on this request and on the previous request from Presby. Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Gentili to reduce the easement from 35 feet to 10 feet along the roadway of the Capone property at the Industrial Park. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Gentili moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to reduce the easement from 35 feet to 10 feet along the roadway of the Presby property at the Industrial Park. So moved, the motion carried.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (a) the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee. So moved the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Higbee moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried. Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Gentili to seal the minutes of the non-public session 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