

City Council Work Session August 2, 2021

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Eastman, Theberge, Rozek, Higbee, Berthiaume and Otis; Councilors Morgan and Remillard were absent.

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Community Development Director Pam Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Finance Director Holly Larsen, Library Director Ann Brungot and William Carroll Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Part Time Library Front Desk Attendant – Request to fill

Library Director Ann Brungot asked Council for permission to fill the part time library front desk attendant as she had an employee leave their position. Councilor Otis moved to authorize the Library Director to advertise and fill the position of part time library front desk attendant. Councilor Berthiaume seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor.

Public Works Supervisor – Request to fill

Mr. Wheeler advised Council the current Public Works Supervisor, Lucien Couture, is retiring at the beginning of September. He is requesting permission to fill this position. Councilor Berthiaume moved to authorize Mr. Wheeler to advertise and fill the position of Public Works Supervisor. Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor.

Great Northwoods Community Foundation Donation

Mr. Wheeler advise that Community Development Director Pam Laflamme is a board member of this foundation. Ms. Laflamme attended a meeting a few weeks back and advised the foundation made a decision to give the City a \$20,000 donation. The only string is it needs to be used for health and wellness. Councilor Otis questioned if this donation could be used towards the 5K for the Riverwalk. Ms. Laflamme advised that yes anything that is recreation related to health and wellness. Mr. Wheeler advised there is no action required from Council and a resolution will be on the next City Council agenda.

SCU Park Lease with AVCOC

Mr. Wheeler advised the renewed lease agreement was in the agenda packet. He commented that when this lease agreement was established it was unique, but worked extremely well and the Chamber has been an outstanding partner. The original lease has lapsed and this renewed lease will be effective until 2023. Councilor Rozek moved to authorize Mr. Wheeler to execute the term of the lease agreement with the Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce with the terms as provided in the documents. Councilor Eastman questioned if there were any changes from the previous lease agreement. Mr. Wheeler responded that the only changes are the dates. Councilor Otis seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor with one abstention from Councilor Berthiaume.

Town Hall Streams – On Demand Streaming Proposal & Discussion

Ms. Laflamme advised she has been working on streaming the Council meetings as many people, including Councilors, have shown interest. She stated she has explored different equipment options and processes. She commented that it's been difficult as there are multiple rooms used during meetings. She informed that SNS, our IT company, thought of using the same process as the Town of Gorham which is through a company called Town Hall Streams. She explained the set up includes a camera in the corner of the room which would stream heads and not faces. There would be a camera placed in

the conference room off the Council Chambers and one in the Council Chambers. She stated the secondary piece is the audio which she wants to discuss today with Council as it gets expensive. She explained that in most communities, they just dropped pendant microphones, but the Town of Gorham found that these didn't work well in their small space which is similar to ours. They received feedback from the Public that there were audio issues. Because of this, they invested \$6,000 from Covid funds to update their audio system. Ms. Laflamme explained that Town Hall Streams itself which does the video and keeps it on the City's website and charges a monthly fee for the service. She stated it would be a separate charge to do the audio which would more than likely be more expensive for the City as there are two rooms to service. She explained there are funds for this under the IT budget, but wanted to discuss with Council prior to moving forward. Mayor Grenier asked what would be the upfront cost to set this up and the annual maintenance fee. Ms. Laflamme responded that the monthly maintenance fee is \$300. The upfront cost would be to set up the better audio system which she figures would be around \$10,000-\$12,000. Councilor Rozek commented that he would like to get an update after the company comes and tests the acoustic to find out what works and what doesn't and then Ms. Laflamme can provide a complete pricing for the whole package. Ms. Laflamme stated she could do that. Councilor Eastman asked how the company would hook to the internet, if it was through our equipment. Ms. Laflamme explained they would hook to our network but the camera is streaming across our network to their server farm. Mayor Grenier commented he agrees with Councilor Rozek and feels we should figure out a design that works for us and then get pricing based on this. He also commented that a well-informed Public is the basis for a good democracy. Councilor Eastman questioned how the streaming would be on Facebook. Ms. Laflamme explained the link would be available on the City's Facebook page for the Public to view. Councilor Berthiaume asked about Facebook portal. Ms. Laflamme stated she could explore this option. Councilor Berthiaume stated she has Facebook portal if the City would like to test it.

Non-Public Session

At 6:49pm, Councilor Berthiaume moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II. (b) Hiring. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call. Hiring matters were discussed. Councilor Higbee moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Berthiaume seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote.

Councilor Rozek moved to seal the minutes as releasing them would render the action taken ineffective; Councilor Berthiaume seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor.

Non-Meeting

At 7:19pm, Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to enter into non-meeting per RSA 91-A:2, I. (b) Collective Bargaining. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

At 7:32pm, Mayor, Council and Staff came out of non-meeting.

There being no further business in Work Session, Mayor Grenier recessed before moving on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Rioux
Executive Assistant

*Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the City Council by motion.