

**City Council Work Session
November 8, 2021**

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

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Police Chief Peter Morency, Karen Collins, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:34pm.

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to add the Lavoie Property under Item #3 to the agenda. So moved, the motion carried.

Declaration of Election/Accepting the Results of the November 2, 2021 Election

Councilor Rozek moved to accept the results of the November 2, 2021 Municipal Election as presented; Councilor Morgan seconded. So moved, the motion carried.

| 2021 MUNICIPAL ELECTION | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Tuesday, November 2, 2021 | | | | |
| <u>Mayor - 2 Year</u> | <u>PRECINCT 1</u> | <u>PRECINCTS 2&3</u> | <u>PRECINCT 4</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
| PAUL GRENIER | 196 | 530 | 179 | 905 |
| ROBERT HAYNES | 188 | 415 | 168 | 771 |
| WRITE-INS | 5 | 8 | 2 | 15 |
| | | | | |
| <u>City Council - 4 Year</u> | | | | |
| LUCIE REMILLARD | 212 | 492 | 171 | 875 |
| ROBERT THEBERGE | 224 | 523 | 199 | 946 |
| KATHY TRUMBULL | 165 | 356 | 137 | 658 |
| DIANA BERTHIAUME | 172 | 460 | 174 | 806 |
| TIMOTHY DONOVAN, SR | 119 | 208 | 90 | 417 |
| STEVEN KORZEN | 151 | 373 | 151 | 675 |
| RICHARD LAFLAMME, JR | 64 | 134 | 49 | 247 |
| PETER MORENCY | 158 | 430 | 150 | 738 |
| HENRY NOEL | 149 | 391 | 162 | 702 |
| ELI CLEMMER | 10 | 37 | 10 | 57 |
| WRITE-INS | 1 | 6 | 2 | 9 |
| | | | | |
| <u>Moderator - 2 Year</u> | | | | |
| ROBERT DUMOULIN | 282 | 631 | 264 | 1177 |
| GISELE MCKENZIE | 231 | 572 | 204 | 1007 |
| LINDA PIVIN | 1 | 1 | 5 | 7 |
| WRITE-INS | 4 | 12 | 4 | 20 |
| | | | | |

Ward Clerk - 2 YearJEANINE MCKENZIE
OTHER WRITE-INS**Supervisors - 2 Year**NANCY DRAPEAU
STUART LIGHT
DINO AMATO
DONALD BISSON
JEANNE CHAREST
RALPH COLLINS
ROLAND CROTEAU
NANCY CUSSON
WRITE-INS**School Board - 4 Year**MARK EVANS
NATHAN MORIN
JESSTINA MURPHY
WRITE-INS**School Board - 2 Year**JEANNE CHAREST
EAMON KELLEY
LORI KORZEN
JESSTINA MURPHY
ANN NOLIN
MARK EVANS
WRITE-INS**Library - 4 Year**STEVEN GRIFFIN
STUART LIGHT
SHANNON LAVERTU
OTHER WRITE-INS**Library - 2 Year**STUART LIGHT
YVONNE THOMAS
DEBRA JANE
ACKERMAN
SHANNON LAVERTU
OTHER WRITE-INS

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|------|
| | | | |
| 322 | 786 | 299 | 1407 |
| 7 | 14 | 9 | 30 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 214 | 529 | 200 | 943 |
| 169 | 432 | 147 | 748 |
| 164 | 389 | 160 | 713 |
| 188 | 530 | 188 | 906 |
| 206 | 545 | 213 | 964 |
| 141 | 359 | 143 | 643 |
| 186 | 453 | 180 | 819 |
| 220 | 525 | 217 | 962 |
| 0 | 21 | 6 | 27 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 199 | 403 | 165 | 767 |
| 186 | 511 | 179 | 876 |
| 1 | 4 | 0 | 5 |
| 1 | 9 | 3 | 13 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 198 | 512 | 196 | 906 |
| 202 | 462 | 170 | 834 |
| 177 | 388 | 153 | 718 |
| 159 | 371 | 137 | 667 |
| 237 | 633 | 228 | 1098 |
| 0 | 8 | 4 | 12 |
| 1 | 5 | 2 | 8 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 284 | 648 | 263 | 1195 |
| 13 | 36 | 6 | 55 |
| 9 | 5 | 6 | 20 |
| 1 | 18 | 6 | 25 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| 114 | 257 | 100 | 471 |
| 207 | 544 | 208 | 959 |
| 45 | 98 | 37 | 180 |
| 5 | 7 | 2 | 14 |
| 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| | | | |

Building and Land Sale Fall 2021

Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme presented the Council with a list of multi-family properties and land that the City owns. Ms. Laflamme advised that the multi-family units have been city-owned for a number of years and all are in tough shape. Ms. Laflamme advised that these were properties that Linda White wanted to have torn down when she was in the Housing Department. These properties did not qualify for the I&I project. There has been abutter interest in three of the properties; 96-98 Hillside Avenue, 37-39 Cambridge Street, and 767 Second Avenue. However, the interest was in the land after the removal of the building by the City. Ms. Laflamme advised there are also three single family homes that were left after the last sale; 293 Burgess Street, 827 Western Avenue, and 212 Glen Avenue. The Burgess Street property has received two inquiries as to whether it is available, but the other two did not. There was interest from the abutter on Glen Avenue, however again only if the City was to remove the buildings.

The potential parcels for land sales were discussed. Ms. Laflamme advised that there are other parcels that are owned by the City that are not included on this list, however those are used for snow removal, drainage, or are topographically challenged. The first 6 properties on the list all had buildings on them at one time. The 7th property, on Jericho Road, was the former Hodgdon Oil site and the tanks were removed. This property runs next to the main line for water works, and the Council questioned whether there are any covenants on the property.

The buildings that are being removed as part of the I&I project must be maintained as open space until the SRF loan is paid off, then the City can sell those lots. Councilor Eastman asked about the amount of the SRF loan and City Manager Wheeler advised it is \$500,000, however there is 20% loan forgiveness. This project is being funded by the sewer fund, so it is not using tax dollars. Ms. Laflamme advised that the property at 592 Rockingham Street will cost \$12,000 just to remediate the lead and remove the garage. They just did an environmental study on the house, which also has lead contamination, so that will also be costly to remove. Mayor Grenier noted that the multi-family buildings are in extremely dense neighborhoods and it will not serve the public interest to put these out to bid, as the increased cost to education and emergency services will not be worth the minimal tax revenue received. Councilor Berthiaume suggested that the Council take time to look at the list of properties available, as some are not structurally sound, and discuss again at the next meeting.

Ms. Laflamme shared communications received from abutters in reference to properties on Maple Street and 7th Avenue. A letter was received from Celeste Borrayo with interest in Map 128, Lot 232, which abuts her property on Maple Street. An email was received from Christina Ciampa concerning Map 110, Lot 153, which is in the middle of her properties on 7th Avenue. Councilor Remillard asked about the Maple Street property, which abuts Highland Park, and if this would limit access to the parcel. Ms. Laflamme advised that there are a few different access points to Highland Park. Councilor Eastman asked about the process for putting parcels out to bid to just abutters, and was advised that this has been done by the Council many times before in the interest of improving properties. Councilor Remillard asked about the time frame, as both letters were received in September. Ms. Laflamme advised that they have been in contact with both taxpayers in reference to the properties. The Council discussed minimum bids for the lots, and it was suggested by Councilor Remillard that they be put out as highest and best offers.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second from Councilor Berthiaume, to offer the properties on Maple Street, Map 128, Lot 232, and 7th Avenue, Map 110, Lot 153, to the two adjoining abutters on each and to table the other properties until the next meeting. So moved, the motion carried.

Lavoie Property

Pamela Laflamme advised that as far as the EPA is concerned, they have done what they need to do at the Lavoie property on Hillside Avenue. The property is no longer considered a hazard to the

community or surrounding properties. According to NHDES, the property is considered available to redevelop, it is not clean but clean enough. The house is still there and debris has been piled neatly. Contaminated soil was removed along with one building which was contaminated. The executor of the estate, Sister Pauline, has passed away in Canada and has left her small estate to the convent that she was a member of. The property has not been tax deeded in the past due to the environmental issues, but they could tax deed now. Attorney Chris Boldt has suggested that they work with an attorney in Canada to deal with the probate issues, as they would benefit from Canadian counsel. There have been one or two interested parties in the three parcels, which have about \$70,000 due in back taxes. Councilor Remillard suggested contacting the convent to see what they would like to do with it and Ms. Laflamme advised that they do not want to discuss it. Councilor Eastman suggested that the interested parties contact the convent directly and remove the City from the process. Councilor Theberge asked about the paper street on the property, which Ms. Laflamme advised is not owned in fee by any one entity. Paper streets are still valid unless the Council takes a formal vote to give up interest. After 20 years, the City's right to develop the paper street as a public way is extinguished. Councilor Theberge asked about the tower near the property, which Ms. Laflamme advised is owned separately from the land it sits on.

Ms. Laflamme was asked to get an estimate of the cost to work with a Canadian attorney to deal with the probate issues and bring it back to the Council for their consideration.

Councilor Theberge moved, with a second from Councilor Remillard, to enter into Non-Meeting at 7:20 pm per RSA 91-A:2 I (b) Collective Bargaining. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Rozek- yes, Berthiaume – yes, Remillard – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Theberge – yes, Grenier – yes

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to enter Non-Public session at 7:34 pm per RSA 91-A:3 II (b) Hiring. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Rozek- yes, Berthiaume – yes, Remillard – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Theberge – yes, Grenier – yes

The Council discussed hiring.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Rozek, to leave Non-Public session at 7:37 pm. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Rozek- yes, Berthiaume – yes, Remillard – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Theberge – yes, Grenier – yes

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second by Councilor Berthiaume, to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm. So moved, the motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

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