

City Council Work Session

January 10, 2022

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

Others present: Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Robert Theberge, Lori Korzen, Steven Korzen, Stuart Light, Richard King, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:31pm.

Net Metering Discussion

Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme advised the Council that after speaking with the new Public Works Director, she realized there were other options available for net metering. Standard Power of America is another option and they work with Brookfield, while Freedom Energy Logistics works with Hull Street Properties. The Standard Power agreement is shorter and appears more flexible, it is a 2-year agreement as opposed to five years with Freedom Energy. The rate is 5/10 of a cent as opposed to 7/10 with Freedom, however they will take all of our accounts not just the three highest. Councilor Remillard asked if Standard Power would also be willing to make a presentation and Ms. Laflamme advised that she will check with them and schedule for the next work session on the 24th. Councilor Morgan asked about the time limits with Freedom Energy and Ms. Laflamme advised that if we signed with them tomorrow they would be all set, but that was all they could guarantee. Ms. Laflamme advised that Standard Power does not seem to have the same time limits. Councilor Remillard asked about the new energy group that met with the Planning Board. Ms. Laflamme advised that they will be meeting at City Hall on Thursday and is a more regional conversation, they would not be ready yet for an agreement such as this. Mayor Grenier advised that the issue is that they will run out of volume and asked Ms. Laflamme to check with Standard Power to see if they have the same level of expedience that Freedom has, if so it could be moved to the work session agenda for the 17th. Ms. Laflamme will check to see if the school will also be included. Mayor Grenier noted that BWW has its own program and is already net metering.

Fire Department Donations

Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme advised that Chief Watkins will be bringing Resolutions to Council next week to accept donations for the Fire Department from Jericho Power in the amount of \$5,000, and from Capone Iron in the amount of \$1,000. Chief Watkins taught a CPR education class for Capone Iron and they decided to donate to the department for that service.

Brown School Discussion

Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme spoke concerning the relationship, or lack thereof, between Councilor Remillard and Kevin Lacasse and provided the Council with a copy of the Ordinance covering Conflict of Interest. Councilor Remillard advised that her brother, Denis, married Pauline Leveille. Pauline has a sister, Arlene, who married Roger Lacasse. Arlene and Roger have a son, Kevin, who is a part of New England Family Housing. Ms. Laflamme advised that the relationship is not immediate family according to the definition in the ordinance, and Councilor Remillard has no direct personal or pecuniary interest as the ordinance states. Ms. Laflamme advised that it should not warrant any further discussion or involvement by the Council.

Other

Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme presented the Council with a change order for the Fire Department boiler project with Grafton Mechanical Services. During the project, it was discovered that the existing piping needs to be replaced. Since this will increase the cost by more than 10%, Council will

need to approve the change. The current contract was for \$74,470.00. The additional amount needed to replace the piping is \$13,145.00. The new total for the contract will be \$87,615.00.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Remillard, to approve the Change Order with Grafton Mechanical Services for an additional \$13,145.00 to replace piping, for a new total of \$87,615.00. So moved, the motion carried.

Ms. Laflamme provided the Council with the updated Covid19 guidelines for quarantine and isolation. The school put together a chart this morning, which should make it easier for those without symptoms to get back to work. Mayor Grenier asked how many City staff were currently out and Ms. Laflamme advised there are 6 in Public Works, a couple at the Fire Department, a couple at the Police Department, and one at City Hall.

Mayor Grenier asked about the maintenance agreement with Majestic Maintenance and requested a breakdown of how much was spent with this vendor per year for the last three years. Mayor Grenier would like to be sure the City's procurement policy is being followed.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 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.