

City Council Work Session

April 25, 2022

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Eastman, Roland Theberge, Morency, Berthiaume and Robert Theberge. Councilors Higbee, Morgan and Remillard were absent.

Others present: Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Holly Larsen, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Lori Korzen, Steven Korzen, Ralph Collins, Micah Bachner, Amber Bachner and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Sewer Rate Setting

Ms. Laflamme apologized to Council for not bringing this forward before, but it was just completed today. She presented to Council a [worksheet](#) which included three sewer rate percentage increase recommendations for 2022. The worksheet also included a narrative from the City's auditors explaining the \$811K loss in the unaudited trial balance. Councilor Eastman moved to keep the sewer rate increase at 0%, Councilor Robert Theberge seconded. In the vote that followed, the motion failed with Councilors Eastman and Robert Theberge voting in the affirmative and Mayor Grenier, Councilors Berthiaume, Roland Theberge and Morency voting against. Councilor Berthiaume moved to increase the sewer rate by 2.5%; Councilor Roland Theberge seconded. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Berthiaume – yes, Roland Theberge – yes, Eastman – no, Morency – yes, Robert Theberge – yes, Grenier – yes.

Land Sale – 1051 Main Street

Ms. Laflamme presented the bid documents for this property that was previously put out to bid to Council. She highlighted the changes in yellow. She did comment she omitted to remove “money order” from item 4 under the general requirements. Councilor Berthiaume suggested adding language stating construction must be underway within 18 months of purchase. Councilor Berthiaume moved to put this property out to bid with revising bid documents removing the “money order” language and adding language that construction must be underway within 18 months of purchase. Councilor Robert Theberge seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Consultant Selection – CDBG Grant Writing

Ms. Laflamme presented a memo to Council suggesting a motion to hire Donna Lane to write the grant for the North Woods Childcare Center's Community Development Block Grant for a sum not to exceed \$4,000, only to be paid to Ms. Lane upon the grant being successfully funded by NH CDFA. Councilor Roland Theberge moved, seconded by Councilor Morency to hire Donna Lane to write the grant for the North Woods Childcare Center's Community Development Block Grant for a sum not to exceed \$4,000. Councilor Eastman commented there should be a tax in lieu stipulation in the agreement. Councilor Berthiaume agreed. Mayor Grenier commented the City would be a conduit to helping a non-profit organization. He would like the organization to present to Council as the project plans are unknown and they are competing with tax paying businesses. Ms. Laflamme stated she would invite them to present at the next Council meeting. Councilor Roland Theberge rescind his motion, seconded by Councilor Morency.

Public Works Laborer Position

Ms. Laflamme advised a current Public Works Laborer who has been out with an illness has submitted his retirement notice which is effective May 31, 2022. She is asking for authorization to start advertising and fill the position. Councilor Berthiaume moved to approve advertising and filling the Public Works Laborer position. Councilor Morency seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

Other

Councilor Robert Theberge advised that SB271 and SB438 are being voted on tomorrow. He stated both bills are very important to the economic development of the City.

At 7:19 p.m., Councilor Roland Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Berthiaume to enter into Non - Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II; (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. So, moved, the motion carried by roll call with all in favor.

The acquisition and lease of property was discussed.

At 7:44p.m., Mayor, Council and Staff came out of Non-Public Session. Councilor Berthiaume moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session until the Council sees fit, as releasing them would render the action taken ineffective; Councilor Roland Theberge seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Councilor Berthiaume moved to adjourn; Councilor Robert Theberge seconded and the motion carried by all in favor. The meeting ended at 7:45p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Rioux
Executive Assistant

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