

City Council Work Session February 6, 2023

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

Others present: City Manager Phillip L. Warren Jr., Dir. Of Strategic Initiatives and Asst. City Manager Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Holly Larsen, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Chief of Police Dan Buteau, Deputy Chief of Police Nathan Roy, Jeffrey Quackenbush, Dan Whittet, Lori Korzen, Micah Bachner, Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun and Members of the Public. Henry Herndon and Melissa Elander via Teams.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:34p.m.

Mayor Grenier advised there is a Non-Public Session and a Non-Meeting this evening. He also commented the first item on the agenda for tax warrants will be postponed till the next meeting.

AV ATV Club - Request

Mayor Grenier discussed the letter received from the AV ATV Club requesting \$500 for signs. The goal is to open a new access route eliminating the ATV traffic on snowmobile trails preserving the hard work done to keep them smooth for their members and tourists. The signs will be to direct ATV traffic to the new entrance during snowmobile season. Mayor Grenier advised there are funds in the contingency account to support this request. Councilor Higbee moved to approve up to \$500 for signage to alleviate the ATV/Snowmobile traffic issues. Councilor Roland Theberge seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

CPCNH Membership

Mayor Grenier advised Council had a presentation during the last meeting about a possible membership of joining the CPCNH for group purchasing of electricity for our citizens with the understanding of perhaps getting a better wholesale price by grouping ourselves with other communities. There were legal questions asked and a communication was sent out to the City's Attorney Chris Boldt. His comments are included in this evening's agenda packet and were shared with our CPCNH members.

Mr. Warren thanked Mr. Henry Herndon, CPCNH consultant who was present via Teams for attending. A discussion was had about the advantages of joining CPCNH versus procuring electricity from a private company which included cost advantages. Mr. Herndon commented that membership with the coalition and adoption of the joint power agreement are not the decision to take the coalition's power supply services. They are just the first step to have a seat at the table and to gain access to some of the resources. Mr. Warren questioned if there are other interested communities. Mr. Quackenbush responded Shelburne, Randolph and Jefferson have shown interest. He commented this is just the preliminary steps. Before joining, it would be presented to Council, two public meetings would need to be held before the City can move forward and the Council would take a final vote. There will be a long public process before any decisions are made.

Capital Improvement Program

Mr. Warren presented the 2024-2029 Capital Improvement Program. He commented it's similar in format to plans presented in the past. No changes were made this year due to being too far along in the budgetary process. What is presented is a list of capital improvements submitted by departments and

reviewed by the City Manager. This is more of a planning list than a funding list. He feels this is a big missing piece. Most of the capital improvement plans he's done in other communities list the plan and have a financial plan behind it. The current plan includes every expenditure over \$10,000 which is not a capital plan. A capital improvement plan is to fund capital expenditures that are replaced on a periodic basis usually no less than 3-5 years and of a significant amount. He's worked in different communities where the threshold was \$90,000-\$100,000. Another piece missing in the current plan is the debt service. This is a huge amount that should be in the capital forecast. He would like to implement the changes after this year's budget as it will require some movement.

Mayor Grenier questioned if the \$3,400,000 for the Rte. 110 Sewer extension includes water and the pump station. Mr. Warren responded it doesn't include water and includes upgrades to the pump station. He commented the City still doesn't have the final plans from CMA. Ms. Laflamme commented CMA advised the plans should be ready by the end of the first quarter. Mayor Grenier is estimating the whole project including water, sewer and pump station to be around \$12,000,000. Ms. Laflamme commented she feels it would be more around \$8,500,000. Mayor Grenier commented he's had discussion with Senators Hassan and Shaheen in regards to this project and was made aware there are funds available.

Non-Public Session

At 7:17 p.m., Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Roland Theberge to enter into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II; (I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel. So, moved, the motion carried by roll call with all in favor.

A discussion was had on legal advice offered to the City by Counsel. No votes were taken.

At 7:30p.m., Councilor Morency moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to come out of Non-Public Session. So, moved the motion carried by roll call with all in favor.

Non-Meeting

At 7:31 p.m., Councilor Roland Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to enter into Non-Meeting per RSA 91-A:2, I. (a) Collective Bargaining. So, moved, the motion carried by roll call with all in favor.

At 7:50 p.m., 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.