

City Council Work Session
February 22, 2021

At 6:30 p.m. Mayor Grenier opened the meeting. Due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04 this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

- a) *Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;*

We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Council have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656, meeting ID 867 7285 4748; Passcode 910447, or by clicking on the City Council agenda on the City's website, www.berlinnh.gov.

- b) *Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting:*

We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. Instructions have been provided on the City of Berlin's website of the Council at City Council-agendas

- c) *Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access:*

If anybody has a problem, please call Pam Laflamme at 603-752-8587 or e-mail at: plaflamme@berlinnh.gov

- d) *Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting*

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote. By roll call, each member is to state their presence, and whether there is anyone in the room during this meeting, which is required under the Right to Know law.

Present were: Councilors Remillard, Higbee, Rozek, Eastman, Theberge, Berthiaume, Morgan, and Otis, all alone in their respective rooms; Mayor Grenier was present and at City Hall with City Manager Jim Wheeler.

Others present included City Manager Jim Wheeler, Community Development Director Pam Laflamme, Assistant Police Chief Dan Buteau, and Nathan Morin

Mayor Grenier noted that each Council member should have received a Certificate of Authority in their email. The NHDOJ needs documentation for amending a grant to add positions in the Drug Task Force. Councilor Remillard moved to add #6 Certificate of Authority to the agenda; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion passed unanimously by roll call.

School Board Appointment

Mayor Grenier stated that there was a resignation on the School Board and we advertised in the newspaper, Facebook, and the City web site for candidates. We have one respondent and luckily Mr. Nathan Morin has experience on the Board of Education. Mr. Morin added that he was on the Board from 2006 to 2012. He said that he knows how local and State governments work. Having attended the public hearing and having reviewed the School Budget, he will be ready to get to work on day 1. Mayor Grenier asked if there were questions and Councilor Remillard questioned whether Mr. Morin would be able to serve the term. Mr. Morin replied that he will fill the unexpired term and will run for the position in the municipal election. Councilor Berthiaume moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to add Nathan Morin to the Board of Education to fill the unexpired term of Louise Valliere. Roll call resulted in a unanimous affirmative vote. Mr. Morin left the meeting at this time.

Confirmation of Budget Process

Mr. Wheeler acknowledged that we are intending to make up the binders that the Council gets yearly. The budget will also be on the city web site. There is usually supplemental information that is given as handouts and to the degree possible, we will post and send those out by email. Mayor Grenier suggested that each councilor receive a ream of paper for printing the handouts. The paper will be included when binders are handed out. Mayor Grenier expressed hope that the Council could meet in person for the public hearing in late May.

Disbursement Report

The disbursement report covers the time from 2/9/2021 to 2/16/2021. Councilor Theberge moved to accept the disbursement report as presented and pay all bills. Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Street Numbering of Grandview Drive and Wood Street

Grandview Drive. Ms. Laflamme showed a map of the addressing on Grandview Drive saying that she is not sure how it ended up the way it is currently laid out. As lots are sold and people attempt to get an address established to get electricity, it is becoming very clear that standard addressing practices of odds on one side and evens on the other were not followed. It is time to re-address the entire area. All mailboxes are in a cluster at the entrance to Grandview making the addressing a safety issue. Police, fire and ambulance would have a hard time figuring out what address is what. The change will make some people unhappy but it seems necessary. Mayor Grenier agreed. He asked if a meeting could be organized of the property owners so that they can vent and ask questions.

Wood Street. Ms. Laflamme explained that she's been contacted by the people who live at 25.5 and they have had problems with UPS deliveries. There is also a 24.5 on the street and both have expressed an interest in having standard numbers. The half numbers were created when railroad property became available for residential. A meeting will be scheduled with them as well.

NHDOT Correspondence Regarding Route 110

Ms. Laflamme reported that we received a response to our letter to the DOT regarding the speed limit on Route 110. DOT responded by saying that this is not what they were expecting and safety is a concern for them and they would not support a change in the speed limit. Mayor Grenier confirmed that taking the section of Route 110 is in the best interest of the community; however if we take it now, we could lose the opportunity to have grant money pay for water and sewer lines. Councilor Eastman questioned whether engineering was done for water and sewer and Mr. Wheeler noted that the route was reviewed a few years ago and the Council at the time chose to wait, because grant money will usually pay for the engineering.

Ms. Laflamme added that the EDA needs more information. It is expected that there will be money coming from Northern Borders and we may be able to pair up with EDA. Mr. Wheeler stated that there is a pumping station that needs to be built as well. Wright Pierce looked at upgrading an existing pumping station and that has not been designed. Mayor Grenier confirmed that the working group will meet again soon.

Certificate of Authority

Assistant Chief Buteau explained that the Department of Justice is willing to amend an existing grant to fund additional drug task force positions. This will get additional members for the North Country team through June 30. Mayor Grenier established that the position is in conjunction with funding from the County as well. Councilor Remillard moved to approve the Certificate of Authority as presented; Councilor Berthiaume seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Other

There are no items under Other.

Adjournment

There being no further business, Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call. The meeting ended at 7:20 p.m..

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant

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