

## **City Council Work Session**

### **April 9, 2018**

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Theberge, Gentili, Remillard, Rozek, Morgan Allain, and Nelson; Councilor Higbee was absent

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Assessor Supervisor Bryan Chevarie, School Business Manager Bryan Lamirande, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun*.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

#### **Resurfacing High School Running Track**

Bryan Lamirande stated that the running track at the high school was installed in 2004 and the resurfacing project will give the track another 5 to 7 years of life. Maine Tennis and Track did the original installation. Their process for resurfacing with California Products Black Top Coat is proprietary and they are the only licensed installers. A complete new track would cost between \$265,000 and \$275,000. Mr. Wheeler added that the contractor is licensed and the project can't be bid because this is the only company in the area that is licensed.

Councilor Remillard confirmed that funding for the project is in the budget. Councilor Rozek questioned the warranty and asked Mr. Lamirande to call others who have used the process to be sure he is comfortable that it works in cold weather and that the long term durability is real. The Council is being asked to waive the City's bid process due to single source of supply. Councilor Rozek moved to waive the City's bid procedure due to Maine Tennis & Track being a sole source; Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried.

#### **DRA 2017 Sales Study**

Mr. Wheeler reported that the sales study gives us the flavor of what is happening in the City's housing market. The median ratio is 96.25% representing the midpoint of assessed values divided by arm's length sale values. Our values have fluctuated and it is good news that these are not way off. Every time there is a reval, the amount is calibrated to get to 100%. In 2014 the ratio was 142%. Mr. Wheeler asked Bryan Chevarie what he is seeing in terms of sales and if he can confirm that the market is strengthening. Mr. Chevarie stated that he's seen sales come in higher than the assessed value, some at double the assessed value. Mayor Grenier asked if multis are selling for more than the assessed value and Mr. Chevarie confirmed that they are.

Mr. Chevarie stated that every effort is made to discern sales from arm's length transactions and those sales that can be disqualified. Councilor Rozek questioned some of the language in the DRA letter asking if the ratio would change and Mr. Chevarie noted that the 99.4% mentioned in the DRA letter is final. Mayor Grenier asked how properties with a value of over \$200,000 are doing. Mr. Chevarie said those are not coming in vastly below assessment value. Mr. Chevarie noted that there are about 15-20 abatement applications.

#### **Council Works on Budget per Budget Schedule**

Mr. Wheeler stated that the Budget Schedule had April 9 as a review date for the budget. He asked if there were questions and there were none at this time.

#### **Other**

Mr. Wheeler noted that the NHMA staff attorney who presented the Right to Know Workshop is an available resource for the Council.

#### **Non-Public Session**

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II(d) land matters; so moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Mr. Wheeler noted that there have been people asking about tax deeded properties and these are coming to the Council for confirmation of minimum bids as well as for a motion to dispose of some of the properties.

- 767 Second Avenue, sell with a minimum bid of \$15,000 and stipulation that the property remains a single family dwelling.
- 399 Champlain Street, sell with a minimum bid of \$25,000
- 340 Church Street, sell with a minimum bid of \$20,000
- 723 Third Avenue, sell with a minimum bid of \$16,000
- 609 Hillsboro Street, Demo
- 88 Wight Street, sell with a minimum of \$18,000
- 153 Church Street, sell with a minimum of \$15,000

Councilor Rozek moved that the City Manager is hereby authorized, indefinitely until rescinded, to schedule demolition as funding allows and/or to offer for sale at the earliest appropriate opportunity, the properties listed above by sealed bid with conditions as indicated and other such conditions as he deems appropriate; Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Councilor Rozek moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn; Councilor Nelson seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan Tremblay  
Administrative Assistant

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