

City Council Work Session
February 10, 2020

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

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Health and Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Ralph Collins, Assistant Police Chief Dan Buteau, Adam Hammill, Police Chief Pete Morency, Barbara Tetreault, *Berlin Daily Sun* and public.

Special Meeting/Public Hearing

Downtown Tax Incentive Application Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 6:30 p.m. regarding an application for Downtown Tax Relief for rehabilitation work to be done at 161 Main Street pursuant to Chapter 19; Article II of the City of Berlin's Code of Ordinances.

Adam Hammill of 195 Howard Street, thanked the Council for hearing and considering his application. He hopes to be an asset to other businesses coming to Berlin and a help to them as well. He's been here for six years and finds there is potential in Berlin.

Councilor Eastman stated that he is happy that Mr. Hammill is taking advantage of a program that has been in place for quite a while. Mayor Grenier closed the public hearing at 6:35

PT Welfare/City Clerk Assessing

Mr. Wheeler explained that there is a position that was vacated in May of 2019 and it has not been filled. There are times when Angela is out in the field or on vacation. The part time position would predominantly work in welfare; however we would cross train for City Clerk and Assessing. Councilor Rozek expressed that instead of having a contractor for Assessing, it would make more sense to have a full time assessor. Councilor Remillard moved to approve and to advertise for a three days per week position for Welfare, Clerk and Assessing; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried.

Proposed Rules of Procedure

Mayor Grenier referred to the Public Comment Rules to be added as Section XX1 in the Council Rules and Policies. Mr. Wheeler added that NHMA reviewed and approved.

Councilor Otis moved with a second from Councilor Eastman to add Section XXI to the Council Rules and Policies. So moved, the motion carried.

Mayor Grenier mentioned that Councilor Theberge is attending the public hearing in Gorham re: a new ATV trailhead. He was asked to represent the City.

HB 1421

Mr. Wheeler presented a draft letter of support and noted that the Municipal and County Government Committee is meeting this Wednesday. Councilor Remillard moved to approve; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried.

Other

Application for Downtown Tax Relief

Ms. Laflamme noted that the Council can act on the application provided there is a 2/3 majority voting in favor; the Mayor and Council find public benefit; the public benefit is preserved; and the project is consistent with the master plan. The covenant will be signed and filed with Registry of Deeds.

The term for the tax relief can be up to 5 years and Councilor Eastman suggested two years. Councilor Higbee commented that he supports five years adding that would make it parallel with the commercial relief. In further discussion, Councilors agreed to five years saying that this is the time to support business growth. Anyone who wants to start a business on Main Street would have the same opportunity. Each application will be reviewed on its own merit.

Councilor Remillard moved, after a duly noticed public hearing, the City Council of the City of Berlin grants an incentive for five years in accordance with the City of Berlin's Code of Ordinances, Chapter 19, Article II, Section 19-19, known as the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive, Item 6, in an amount of \$31,800.00 to Adam Hammill, owner of a qualifying structure located at 161 Main Street (Map 119, Lot 54) for the rehabilitation activities that are to be completed at the existing structure on the condition that a covenant be signed by Mr. Hammill and the City Manager and filed at the Coos County Registry of Deeds. The value set on this property is currently \$121,400.00; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried unanimous thereby achieving the necessary 2/3 majority.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Morgan moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3II (a) the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Personnel issues were discussed.

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

Councilor Rozek moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session indefinitely, as releasing them would make the action taken ineffective; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant

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