

**CITY OF BERLIN**  
New Hampshire

**Minutes of Council School Budget Session of 3/13/2019**  
**Council Conference Room**  
**6:30 pm**

Members:

Mayor Grenier  
Councilor Morgan-Allain  
Councilor Rozek  
Councilor Gentilli  
Councilor Remillard  
Councilor Higbee  
Councilor Nelson

City Staff:

James Wheeler, City Manager  
Patricia Chase, Finance Director  
Pam Laflamme, City Planner

Paula Kinney, Androscoggin Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Jay Poulin Bidpa  
Mike Caron Bidpa  
Tara MacKillop, A.V. Home Care  
Brenda Gagne, Tri County Cap  
Kristy Letendre, Tri County Cap  
Matt Duclos, Tri County Cap

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**Bidpa Budget**

Mayor Grenier invited Mike Caron and Jay Poulin to present the FY20 Bidpa budget. Mr. Caron stated that Bidpa's FY20 budget called for level funding with the only source of revenue coming from investment income. Mr. Caron explained that Bidpa is in the process of closing down 121 Main Street in an effort to reduce expenses. Councilor Remillard asked if there were impending projects with Mr. Caron responding that Bidpa is still actively engaged with North Country Growers.

Mrs. Laflamme encouraged the Mayor and Council to attend the April 4 community workshop. Bidpa has hired Camoin Associates as a consultant to perform economic and development strategy and marketing work. Mr. Caron noted that this would be Phase 1 of a plan to promote growth in the City.

Mayor Grenier thanked Mr. Caron and Mr. Poulin for their time and attendance.

### Outside Agencies

Mr. Wheeler reviewed the request from North Country Council in the amount of \$8,890. Councilor Higbee noted that the requested amount is associated with an incorrect account number which Mr. Wheeler will correct.

Mayor Grenier invited Ms. Paula Kinney to present her requests. There were two requests made: one request of \$793 for dues and the other for \$3,000 for the Jericho ATV Festival. The ATV Festival is entering into its 10<sup>th</sup> year. The funding for the Festival is used for a matching grant which in turn is used for marketing purposes.

Mayor Grenier asked if the work performed by Berlin Public Works can be used for matching purposes. Councilor Nelson explained that it could be used for Camp Razr but not for the Jericho ATV Festival. Councilor Rozek asked if Milan contributed with Ms. Kinney replying that she has not requested it in the past but would consider doing so going forward. Mayor Grenier thanked Ms. Kinney for attending.

Mayor Grenier invited Ms. Tara MacKillop, Executive Director of A.V. Home Care Services, to speak on behalf of her agency. The requested amount of \$8,774.00 is unchanged from the previous fiscal year. Mayor Grenier asked how many Berlin residents have benefited from their services with Ms. MacKillop responding that it was about 100 during the previous year. Ms. MacKillop explained that Home Care agencies throughout the state are struggling and a discussion followed regarding state funding. Ms. MacKillop explained that they work collaboratively with other agencies to provide the best services available. Mayor Grenier asked who makes a decision regarding a patient that might require admittance into a nursing home with Ms. MacKillop responding that it's usually a physician.

Mayor Grenier asked how many full time employees AV Home care employs. Ms. MacKillop shared that there are forty one employees with approximately ten being full time. Councilor Remillard asked where in the agency there might be staffing needs with Ms. MacKillop explaining that the outskirts of Berlin would have the greater need. The agency covers all of Coos County so staffing in the remote areas can be challenging.

Councilor Higbee asked about the status of the Dorothy's Gift Fund. Ms. MacKillop replied that the fund has been sustaining itself through donations and fund raising. Mayor Grenier thanked Ms. MacKillop for attending.

Mayor Grenier invited Ms. Kristy Letendre and Ms. Brenda Gagne to discuss Tri County Cap's request for funding of \$16,600 for their various agencies. Ms. Letendre spoke on behalf of the Tyler Blaine House located in Lancaster, NH and does service Berlin residents. Ms. Letendre explained that The Tyler Blaine House is an emergency homeless shelter that has the ability to house up to eight individuals and one family daily. The residents have access to a kitchen, community food pantry and laundry facilities. In addition, the agency provides personal hygiene products and they have developed a relationship with the local thrift store. During fiscal year

2018 they provided a total of 5,610 bed nights to 65 individuals. Seven of these individuals spent 286 bed nights and were from Berlin. Ms. Letendre explained that they charge \$25 a night but for communities who contribute the fee is waived. This year's request is for \$1,800 which will be matched by state funding. A discussion followed regarding state funding.

Councilor Remillard asked if it is a "first come, first serve" facility. Ms. Letendre explained that yes it was and that in addition to the four bedrooms (and one family room) there are two emergency couches that can be used in dangerously cold weather. Councilor Rozek asked about the current staffing levels. Ms. Letendre explained that there is one staff member per shift with a case manager who overlaps some of these shifts. Ms. Letendre also shared that they were the recipients of a Tillotson Grant that taught individuals cooking skills and label reading. The goal was to enable individuals to prepare healthy meals.

Ms. Brenda Gagne, Director of Transportation, went on to explain the remaining requests. Ms. Gagne explained that the need for volunteer drivers to provide long distance travel for the elderly and disabled has significantly increased. That need has surpassed the ability of the agency to sustain requested travel and the agency will be actively recruiting additional volunteers. There are currently seven volunteer drivers who are receiving mileage only.

Councilor Rozek asked if Public Transportation operates six days a week. Ms. Gagne indicated that it does but that Saturdays are mostly by request. Councilor Rozek asked if the routes are routinely reviewed with Ms. Gagne saying that they are and that surveys are also conducted.

Ms. Gagne went on to discuss Senior Meal's request of \$4,800. During Fiscal Year 2018 there were 10,503 meals to the congregate and over 23,000 home deliveries. Next, Ms. Gagne reviewed the Energy Services Program which gave Berlin residents fuel assistance for 725 households and weatherization for 19 households. There was some discussion around state funding and it's administering of federal funds. Ms. Gagne briefly reviewed the Service Link Program which is requesting \$1,500. Service Link provides assistance by providing information and guidance for access to Medicare and Medicaid and care giver support. The program provides other types of assistance for those going through a difficult time.

Councilor Remillard spoke on behalf of CASA which is requesting \$1,000. Councilor Remillard explained that CASA is actively helping between 40 and 45 individuals with approximately 30 volunteers. Berlin has the highest percentage of individuals within Coos County. There are currently two full time employees in Berlin and the agency strives to keep the children in their home communities. This approach aids in reducing out of district placement of area students. Councilor Remillard discussed the difficulties in finding foster homes within the City and a discussion followed regarding a future review of the City's foster home requirements.

Motion to Adjourn by: Councilor Rozek  
Seconded by: Councilor Morgan Allain

Adjourned at: 7:55  
Respectfully submitted by Patricia A. Chase