

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, September 21, 2020

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 8:05 p.m. via Zoom, pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8 and Emergency Order #12, Section 3.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Otis, Morgan, Eastman, Higbee, Rozek, Berthiaume, and Theberge
Absent: None

Also present: James Wheeler, Pamela Laflamme, Susan Tremblay, Shelli Fortin, Erin Hennessey, and Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to accept the minutes of the September 9, 2020 Regular Meeting and Work Session. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1871 start date 09/04/2020 end date 09/18/2020 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,410,903.93. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Morgan to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

There were no Council Committee Reports.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Resolution 2020-18 NH Empowering Youth Grant for \$2,850 for Learn to Bowl

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for October 5, 2020. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

3. Resolution 2020-19 NH Empowering Youth Grant for \$2,750 for Bring the FUN

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Berthiaume to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for October 5, 2020. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

4. Resolution 2020-20 NH Empowering Youth Grant for \$2443.75 Weekend Workout

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for October 5, 2020. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

5. Resolution 2020-21 Capital Carryover Appropriations \$2,472,741.50 from FY20 to FY21

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for October 5, 2020. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

6. City Manager's Report

1. Bids were opened for 23 Norway Street on Thursday September 17, 2020. The high bid was \$29,250. We are moving forward with awarding the bid.
2. Outdoor burning is prohibited in the City until further notice. The fire danger is Very High (Orange). Fires can start easily and may spread faster than suppression efforts can contain.
3. The Berlin FD responded to a fire at 295 School St. on Monday Sept. 14th. The structure was a loss however, the structures on either side were saved.
4. Chris Dubey of BEMS reports that numbers are back up to where they were pre-covid and they have had the highest volume of the year this month. The BEMS monthly report of activity is attached.
5. BIDPA has issued a request for proposals for professional services for a Market Feasibility Study for Hotel/Lodgings Facilities. Responses are due by Tuesday October 6, 2020 at 2:00 PM
6. The Berlin Planning Department, will be accepting proposals through Thursday October 15, 2020 until 2:00 PM from qualified consultants for professional services relative to a revision and update to the City of Berlin's 2010 Master Plan. The City received a \$20,000.00 grant from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the NH Charitable Foundation to update the Master Plan.
7. The closing for 8 Main St. is scheduled for Friday September 25, 2020. We were able to arrange for asbestos and lead testing of the property in the interim. Work on the demolition project for 4 Main St. (Princess) and 8 Main St. is proceeding with the intent of completing the work before severe winter weather.
8. The Police Department Statistics as reported to the Police Commission at their September meeting are attached.

City Manager Wheeler also advised that they were not awarded the BUILD grant this year, but they do plan to submit it again. Mr. Wheeler advised that he has arranged for Bill Cass, the Assistant Commissioner of NHDOT to be part of next week's Council Work Session to discuss Route 110. Mr. Cass will also invite the Commissioner and the District 1 Engineer to participate. Mr. Wheeler requested that if the Council has any specific questions that they be sent to him before the meeting, so that they can be forwarded to the Assistant Commissioner.

City Manager Wheeler advised that they met with the VFW officers at Veteran's Park to discuss the possible transfer of ownership of the land. The group concluded that some practical measures could be taken to allow the City to retain ownership of the land, including putting up new signs and moving other signs. They will also create room for the Spanish-American Monument to be brought to the park. An Ordinance could also be considered, which would give the Police Department the ability to enforce the rules.

Councilor Morgan asked about the sale of 8 Main Street, and City Manager Wheeler advised that the total package is going out to bid for demolition, which they hope to have done before winter.

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Morgan, to accept the City Manager's Report and place it on file. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek- yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

7. Mayor's Report

There was no Mayor's Report.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no Public Comments.

9. Council Comments

Councilor Eastman advised that he spoke with Mike Stanley of Transit X, who was proposing a pod project for Jericho and the streets of Berlin. Mr. Stanley requested to make a presentation to the Council. Mayor Grenier advised that the Planning Board did sit in on a presentation and there were some legal issues with the property owner that had not been worked out. Pamela Laflamme advised that the Zoning Board ruled that deciding an issue between the company and the landowner was not their jurisdiction. It was decided that Transit X could make a presentation during the October 12 Work Session.

Councilor Rozek strongly urged that the Hutchins Street southbound travel lane be given a rubberized coating before winter to prevent groundwater penetration. City Manager Wheeler advised that when Eric Grenier was the Public Works Director, Route 16 was put out to bid for the same, and no bids were received. Mr. Wheeler suggested that other work should be added to get someone interested in bidding. City Manager Wheeler advised that Public Works had the equipment to do this work years ago, and will look into whether they still do.

6. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the Council voted to enter into non-meeting per RSA 91-A:2, I (b) at 8:37 pm. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

On a motion by Councilor Remillard, seconded by Councilor Higbee, the Council voted to enter into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) (e). So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Eastman, the Council voted to leave non-public session pat 9:35 pm. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Theberge, the Council voted to seal the minutes from the non-public session, as releasing them would make the action taken ineffective. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

On a motion by Councilor Rozek, seconded by Councilor Higbee, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 pm. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Higbee- yes, Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan- yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

A True Record, Attest:

Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

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