

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, June 21, 2021

Mayor Grenier thanked City Manager James Wheeler, Superintendent Julie King, Police Chief Peter Morency, and Fire Chief James Watkins for their hard work during Covid, and noted that community transmission was manageable despite having large institutions in the community.

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:18 pm for Resolution 2021-16 Adopting 2022 Budget.

Stuart Light of 213 High Street expressed concern over the City's dependence on education grants from the state, as enrollment is down, and grant money available will be less in the future. Light asked that the City not come to depend on education grants in future budgets.

Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm for Resolution 2021-17 Re-appropriating Loan Funds Mason Street Bridge. There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:20 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:20 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Otis, Morgan, Eastman, Rozek, Berthiaume, and Theberge

Absent: Councilor Higbee

Also present: City Manager James Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Holly Larsen, Police Chief Peter Morency, Deputy Chief Daniel Buteau, Captain Jeff Lemoine, Superintendent Julie King, Marion Moore, Library Director Ann Brungot, Nathan Morin, Jennifer Lazzaro, Stuart Light, Robert Haynes, William Carroll and Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to accept the minutes of the June 7, 2021 Regular Meeting and Work Session, and June 14, 2021 Work Session. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1889 start date 06/08/2021 end date 06/21/2021 for a total cash disbursement of \$2,036,564.43. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Berthiaume to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

There were no Council Committee Reports.

2. Resolution 2021-16R Adopting 2022 Budget (tabled 6/7/2021)

A RESOLUTION adopting a budget in the amount of Fifty-Two Million, Seven Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand, Six Hundred Fifty and Thirty-Three Cents (\$52,799,650.33) and appropriating such to defray the expenses of Berlin's City Government for the fiscal year 2022.

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Berlin as Follows:

That the following budget be adopted and accordingly, the sum of Fifty-Two Million, Seven Hundred Ninety-Nine Thousand, Six Hundred Fifty and Thirty-Three Cents (\$52,799,650.33) be appropriated to defray the expenses of Berlin's City Government for the period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022, less expected revenues, with the balance to be raised by taxation on real estate of the municipality.

Account Number	Description	FY 21 BUDGET	FY22 COUNCIL BUDGET
			PUBLIC HEARING
01-401	MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL Total	\$ 71,408.00	\$ 71,058.00
01-402	ADMINISTRATION Total	\$ 1,048,494.32	\$ 1,142,939.63
01-403	ELECTIONS Total	\$ 16,385.50	\$ 9,900.00
01-404	CITY HALL AND OTHER BUILDINGS Total	\$ 56,986.00	\$ 61,994.00
01-405	SPECIAL FUNDS Total	\$ 310.00	\$ 310.00
01-406	PROPERTY AND LIABILITY INS Total	\$ 76,573.00	\$ 80,723.00
01-408	CENTRAL SERVICES Total	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 28,000.00
01-409	DISCOUNTS/ ABATEMENTS/DEEDED P Total	\$ -	\$ -
01-410	PERSONNEL BENEFITS Total	\$ 419,446.77	\$ 388,286.00
01-411	CONTINGENCY Total	\$ 9,600.00	\$ 9,600.00
01-412	OUTSIDE AGENCIES Total	\$ 76,179.00	\$ 82,537.00
01-413	CEMETERY Total	\$ 21,814.00	\$ 21,100.00
01-416	IT DEPARTMENT Total	\$ 186,900.00	\$ 235,800.00
	TOTAL GENERAL GOVERNMENT	\$ 2,009,096.59	\$ 2,132,247.63
01-420	POLICE DEPARTMENT Total	\$ 3,344,940.00	\$ 3,527,750.00
01-421	FIRE DEPARTMENT Total	\$ 2,382,868.97	\$ 2,426,872.71
01-422	STREET LIGHTING Total	\$ 118,500.00	\$ 115,500.00
01-423	AMBULANCE SERVICE Total	\$ 359,004.00	\$ 359,004.00
01-424	SPECIAL PUBLIC SAFETY Total	\$ 167,430.00	\$ 137,130.00
	TOTAL PUBLIC SAFETY	\$ 6,372,742.97	\$ 6,566,256.71
01-425	HOUSING DIVISION Total	\$ 64,211.37	\$ 95,955.00
	TOTAL HOUSING DIVISION	\$ 64,211.37	\$ 95,955.00
01-426	CODE ENFORCEMENT Total	\$ 127,018.65	\$ 131,774.46
	TOTAL CODE DIVISION	\$ 127,018.65	\$ 131,774.46

01-430	PUBLIC WORKS Total	\$ 2,196,676.65	\$ 2,249,464.16
01-436	SOLID /PW Total	\$ 829,475.36	\$ 850,205.16
	TOTAL PUBLIC WORKS	\$ 3,026,152.01	\$ 3,099,669.32
01-441	WELFARE Total	\$ 116,041.75	\$ 115,998.00
01-449	PARKS Total	\$ 281,944.21	\$ 287,427.54
01-450	RECREATION DEPARTMENT Total	\$ 167,681.00	\$ 207,558.80
01-451	LIBRARY Total	\$ 201,764.08	\$ 211,842.12
	TOTAL COMMUNITY SERVICES	\$ 767,431.04	\$ 822,826.46
01-470	DEBT SERVICE Total	\$ 765,076.46	\$ 890,156.00
01-480	CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS Total	\$ 1,299,230.09	\$ 1,791,183.00
	TOTAL CITY DEBT AND CIP	\$ 2,064,306.55	\$ 2,681,339.00
01-460	SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET Total	\$ 18,850,507.14	\$ 20,054,378.14
01-461	SCHOOL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS Total	\$ 425,500.00	\$ 294,000.00
	TOTAL SCHOOL GENERAL FUND	\$ 19,276,007.14	\$ 20,348,378.14
01-407	COUNTY TAX Total	\$ 2,065,000.00	\$ 2,261,284.00
01-414	TRANSFER OUT Total	\$ 34,171.00	\$ 58,237.00
	TOTAL CITY GENERAL FUND	\$ 35,806,137.32	\$ 38,197,967.72
	OTHER CITY FUNDS		
FUND 10	SCHOOL EDUCATION GRANTS Total	\$ 2,515,716.00	\$ 9,586,275.00
11-464	SCHOOL FOOD SERVICES Total	\$ 747,243.99	\$ 747,243.99
19-438	RECREATION ACTIVITY FUND Total	\$ 40,000.00	\$ 40,000.00
21-402	BERLIN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT Total	\$ 370,184.00	\$ 361,444.00
FUND 30	GRANT FUND Total	\$ 325,100.00	\$ 194,600.00
60-432	SEWER FUND TOTAL w/ Capital and Debt Service	\$ 3,432,442.23	\$ 3,468,439.62
63-437	CATES HILL LANDFILL Total	\$ 6,075.00	\$ 7,200.00
65-490	BERLIN AIRPORT Total w/ Capital	\$ 190,971.00	\$ 196,480.00
	Total Other Funds	\$ 7,627,732.22	\$ 14,601,682.61
	TOTAL CITY BUDGETS - ALL FUNDS	\$ 43,433,869.54	\$ 52,799,650.33

This resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after passage.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to remove this item from the table. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis to amend Resolution 2021-16 as follows:

Total General Government \$2,132,247.63

Total Public Safety \$6,566,256.71

Total Housing Division \$95,955.00

Total Code Division 131,774.46
Total Public Works \$3,099,699.32
Total Community Services \$822,826.46
Total City Debt and CIP \$2,681,339.00
Total School General Fund \$20,348,378.14
County Tax Total \$2,261,284.00
Transfer Out Total \$58,237.00
Total City General Fund \$38,197,967.72
Total City Budgets – All Funds \$52,799,650.33

So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-16R by short title as amended for a second time. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-16R by short title as amended for a third time. So moved, the motion carried by roll call vote. Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis that Resolution 2021-16R be passed as amended. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Rozek – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Theberge – yes, Remillard – yes, Otis – yes, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier – yes

3. Resolution 2021-17 Re-appropriating Loan Funds Mason Street Bridge (tabled 6/7/2021)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty One

A RESOLUTION authorizing: the re-appropriation of funds in the amount of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) in order to fund rehabilitation work on the Mason Street Bridge.

Resolved by the City Council of the City of Berlin as Follows:

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council authorized the borrowing of One Million, One Hundred Thousand Dollars and No Cents (\$1,100,000.00) in Resolution 2020-16 for improvements to the Berlin Fire Station and resurfacing of a section of Hutchins St. ; and

WHEREAS, the work on Hutchins St. was completed under the estimated budget resulting in a surplus; and

WHEREAS, the City received a bid for construction on April 29, 2021 to complete a portion of needed rehabilitation work on the Mason St. Bridge in the amount of \$564,385 and construction administration is estimated to cost \$50,000.00 for a total estimated cost of \$614,385; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council intend to appropriate the balance of funds needed to do the bridge project in the FY22 Budget.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council hereby authorize and approve the re-appropriation of funds in the amount of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) in order to fund rehabilitation work on the Mason Street Bridge.

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after passage.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge, to remove this item from the table. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge, to read Resolution 2021-17 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge, to read Resolution 2021-17 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge that Resolution 2021-17 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Resolution 2021-18 NH Institute of Museums and Library Services Grant (1st read)

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for July 6, 2021. So moved, the motion carried.

5. City Manager's Report

1. The private property transfers for the month of May are attached.
2. The Fire Department Incident Report for the Month of May is attached.
3. Notification of 2021 Drawdown for Smith Hydro FERC project no. 2287 is attached.
4. We have begun the re-write of the grant application for the Downtown Reconstruction Project. The new name of the grant program under the Biden Administration is RAISE which stands for Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity. Applications are due in July.
5. I have spoken with the BWW Supt. about their pool filling policy. BWW will arrange to fill a resident's pool from a fire hydrant. The resident is responsible for the cost of the water plus labor. The filling noted on the corner of Norway and 10th St. over Memorial Day was that of a BWW employee. The water was metered such that the employee is paying for the water. BWW allowed the employee to do the work himself such that there was not labor charge.

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Morgan, to accept the City Manager's Report and place it on file.

Councilor Berthiaume asked about the ambulance reports. City Manager Wheeler will check with the ambulance service for these.

Councilor Remillard asked how long BWW has been filling pools, as she did not believe they used to offer this service. City Manager Wheeler will check with the BWW Superintendent.

Councilor Morgan asked about the properties that the City has tax deeded and Pam Laflamme advised she will have this list at the July 6 meeting.

So moved, the motion carried.

6. Mayor's Report

a. Letter from Michael Eastman re: Mt Jasper

Kwai Pam, I hope that this finds you and your family well and in good spirits, and that you have maneuvered through the Pandemic unharmed.

The reason I am writing Pam, and I am sorry to bother you with this, but someone has decided to put a cross atop Mt. Jasper. It is enough to say that it just isn't appropriate, but as a matter historical and cultural significance, I would simply like to point out that of the following ten locations, none of them have crosses at their locations.

I would also like to note that I have been to five of these locations, and that I was personally responsible for the restoration of one of these sites. These locations, as prominent as they are in United States history, none of them

are older than 4,000 years old. The mine at Mt. Jasper is 12,000 years old, making it unique, and very historically significant.

Ghost cave, Montana	Monks mound, Illinois
The Little Bighorn Battlefield, Montana	Cahokia, Illinois
Adena mound, Kentucky	Serpent mound, Ohio
Mesa Verde, Colorado	Newark earthworks, Ohio
Chaco Canyon, Arizona	America's Stonehenge, New Hampshire

It matters not what the persons intentions are, from an Indigenous perspective, it is seen as a fanatical display of ill perceived dominance/ conquering of an indigenous site, dismissing it's relevance to the original peoples, and it's true indigenous significance as one of the oldest sites in North America. No symbols are acceptable or appropriate.

The mine itself has been vandalized, and graffiti can be found on the walls. It is a shameful display of ignorance that cannot be overstated. When the EIS was being done, I had asked that the repelling anchors that were imbedded in the rock at the summit would be removed, returning the summit to it's natural state, and I was assured by Sally M. that they would be done.

Today there are two more locations of those anchors on the mountain. These could allow access to veins of Rhyolite, whose removal is strictly prohibited by the State of NH, and ultimately, it places the people in off trail locations, something that was again verbally agreed upon would not happen for cultural reasons, and all parties were aware of this.

I realize that many of you are not atop the mountain as much as some of us, and so I am alerting you to the deficiencies that are befalling the mountain, that require the City of Berlin's attention.

Sadly the dog situation has not improved. You need to know that last year two dogs were one inch from being shot. I was up the mountain, and having met two visitors from out of town and we were chatting about the history of the mountain when two of the dogs that had attacked me in the park in 2017 came up the mountain without their owners and when they got to us, (acting aggressive) I pulled out an air horn and scarred them off, but the man had a 9mm handgun, and he said "one more inch and I was going to shoot them both".

Six weeks later I was threatened by one of the owners of those dogs, while walking with my Mom. My Mom was with me that day and we both called the PD. What they don't realize is that I saved their dogs from being shot.

It's important that you know that the Berlin PD did help to get two signs up that say; DOGS NEED TO BE ON LEASH AT ALL TIMES AS PER CITY ORDINANCE. However, that has not changed the behavior of these folks, and one person was bit by one of these dogs, earlier this year, and then the male owner (the same one who threatened me) threatened the man who had been bit.

These dog owners have stated to me, my Mom and others, that the Mayor gave them permission to let their dogs off leash. But they don't walk with the owners, they run at large, and the owners can't control them. I don't understand how the mayor, if that is true, can circumvent NH. State law and Berlins own ordinance. Furthermore, the signs were put up because of these very people, and so according to them, these irresponsible dog owners, they can unleash their dogs that can't even follow basic commands, to the distress of other people who simply would like to walk in harmony with nature, and not be assaulted or threatened because they object.

Finally I am including two photos Pam, as I am asking you to share this correspondence with the City council, (they will be sent separately). One is a photo of where I fell when I was attacked in 2017. My right foot is where my head was when I woke up. I want everyone to understand that this is not a one off. I could have been killed, and to dismiss the situation is unacceptable. The other photo is of dog throw up, that has deer hide and hair in it that I took in the base parking lot, and I found a chipmunk that had been in a dogs mouth dead on the trail. There are state laws against dogs running at large and the killing wild life, which is another good reason to enforce the leash law.

I want to thank you Pam for wading down through this, and I would appreciate this correspondence reaching the City Council. I'm not blaming anyone for where we are, I am just hoping that we can adequately address the deficiencies that exist in a meaningful and timely manner.

Mtosa Michael Eastman

b. Letter from Angela Collins re: Street Sign

Hello,

My name is Angela Collins and I live on High Street in Berlin. I have 2 autistic sons; one is nonverbal and the other has some language skills. They are ages 8 and 6. My youngest has been known to get out and run down the street or sometimes in the street itself. This is a high traffic area with vehicles driving by at times with an accelerated speed. I am writing this email asking that a street sign that says "autistic child area" be put up on our street. I do believe this will help people driving by to at least slow down and with the hopes of it making the community more aware of a child in the neighborhood who may not understand that being in the middle of the street is dangerous or beeping your horn for them to move may not work.

Please let me know what I can do to help. I appreciate your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you,
Angela

c. BIDPA Appointments

Honorable Mayor Grenier & City Councilors:
City Hall
168 Main Street
Berlin, NH 03570

RE: BIDPA Board Membership

Mayor Grenier & City Council:

The terms of four BIDPA board members will expire at the end of July. Three of these board members wish to serve another three year term. BIDPA has a solid group of board members and these individuals are an integral part of the board. The board supports their continued involvement with the BIDPA if the Mayor & Council agree.

- **Chairman Mike Caron** – Three-year term to run until July 31, 2024.
- **Steve Halle** – Three-year term to run until July 31, 2024.
- **Roland Olivier** – Three-year term to run from until July 31, 2024.

We would like to acknowledge and thank Jay Poulin for his time and service to the BIDPA board. He has been with the board since 2008 and has been a valued member with many contributions appreciated by both the board and the staff. Mr. Poulin has decided it is time for him to step back and focus on other projects and his family.

Sincerely,

Pamela E Laflamme
Community Development Director

cc: Mike Caron, Chairman

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second from Councilor Theberge, to accept the Mayor's nominations of Mike Caron, Steve Halle, and Roland Olivier as members of BIDPA for three-year terms to expire July 31, 2024. So moved, the motion carried.

d. Proclamation – Barbara Tetreault Day

Whereas, long-time reporter and editor of the Berlin Sun, Barbara Tetreault, will retire at the end of this month,

Whereas, Barbara Tetreault has worked for the Berlin Daily Sun, now the Berlin Sun, since 1993,

Whereas, Barbara Tetreault has diligently and expertly covered the news in our community in a fair and impartial manner,

Whereas, Barbara Tetreault has compiled almost every important story in our valley, becoming the voice of the North Country,

Whereas, Barbara Tetreault has been a first-hand witness, documenting the history of the area, and especially the City of Berlin,

Whereas, Barbara Tetreault has attended the City Council meetings, as well as other City Boards, for upwards of three decades, and another decade covering Coos County,

On behalf of the Citizens of Berlin, we thank Barbara for her dedication and hard work on behalf of the residents of the City of Berlin and the Androscoggin Valley and we wish her a fulfilling and well-deserved retirement.

NOW THEREFORE, I, Paul Grenier, Mayor of the City of Berlin do hereby proclaim June 30, 2021, to be recognized as Barbara Tetreault Day, and urge each individual in the community to take time on this day and throughout the year to stay informed on issues concerning the local area.

Those in attendance gave Tetreault a standing ovation. Barbara Tetreault noted the hard work and dedication of city employees and elected officials, and mentioned that in 20 years the Council did not have a quorum only two times.

Councilor Morgan moved, with a second from Councilor Remillard to accept the communications from Michael Eastman and Angela Collins and to remand them to the Traffic Safety Committee for review, with a copy to the Police Department. So moved, the motion carried.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chief Morency thanked everyone for their efforts, and stated that he does not think the public sees the time that staff and officials put in to make this community work.

8. Council Comments

Councilor Remillard thanked the Mayor and City Manager for the hours of work they spent on the budget, as they had to dig hard and deep to analyze every figure.

Councilor Rozek noted that he accompanies Councilor Remillard's statement, and noted the extra hours spent to find the funding needed to make it work.

9. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Rozek, seconded by Councilor Berthiaume, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm. So moved, the motion carried.

A True Record, Attest:

Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

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