

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, March 4, 2019

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:33 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

PUBLIC HEARING

CDBG Completed Feasibility Study for the Proposed Health and Wellness Center at 121 Main Street in Berlin

Mayor Grenier Opened the Public Hearing on the CDBG Completed Feasibility Study for the Proposed Health and Wellness Center at 121 Main Street in Berlin at 7:33 pm.

(Informational packets were available)

Pamela Laflamme, Community Development Director, made the following presentation:

Community Development Block Grant funds are available to municipalities through the NH Community Development Finance Authority. Up to \$500,000 annually is available on a competitive basis for public facility and housing projects, up to \$500,000 for economic development projects and up to \$500,000 for emergency activities. All projects must directly benefit low and moderate income persons. Up to \$12,000 per study is available for Feasibility/Planning Grants.

The purpose of the hearing is to present the completed feasibility study on a proposed Community Health and Wellness Center at 121 Main Street in Berlin, and to request public comment on the study.

White & Burke was hired to conduct the feasibility study to determine whether there was a need for a Community Health & Wellness Center, likely tenants, costs and potential funding sources.

The study determined there was a need for such a center. Potential main tenants could include Androscoggin Valley Hospital, Coos County Family Health Services, North Country Health Consortium and Family Resource Center. The cost of a 32,000 square foot building would be approximately \$9 million. Potential funding sources could include New Market Tax Credits, Northern Borders, CDBG, bank loan.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were no public comments.

Mayor Grenier Closed the Public Hearing at 7:36 pm.

Regular Meeting

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Gentili, Remillard, Berthiaume, Rozek, and Theberge.

Absent: Councilors Morgan Allain and Higbee

Also present: Jim Wheeler, Susan Tremblay, Pamela Laflamme, Shelli Fortin, Claire Stiles, and Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun

c. Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to accept the minutes of the February 18, 2019 Work Session and Regular Meeting, and the February 25, 2019 Work Session. So moved, the motion carried.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1833 start date 02/19/2019 end date 03/04/2019 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,069,239.66. 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 carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports – Councilor Rozek advised the Council that the Traffic Safety Committee met on February 25, 2019. The committee considered ground rules for ADA parking provided by the City Engineer. Councilor Rozek advised that the City Manager checked with the city attorney about this issue, which is not clearly defined. The city must be careful in allowing handicapped parking, as ADA parking must meet strict standards, and many of the streets and sidewalks are not compatible which presents a liability for the city. Councilor Rozek advised that the committee will eventually bring the standards to Council for adoption. Councilor Rozek advised that the committee denied requests for ADA parking at 345 Willard Street and 159 Oak Street. The committee also denied a request for additional lighting on Hampshire Street. Councilor Theberge did review the lighting, and found it to be adequate and similar to other streets in the area.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to accept the report of the Traffic Safety Committee.

Councilor Theberge mentioned that when ADA parking spaces are approved, they cannot be for the private use of the homeowner, they would be open to anyone. Councilor Theberge also mentioned that homeowners can contact Eversource about additional lighting in their neighborhoods.

So moved, the motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Ordinance 2019-01 Rescinding No Parking on Western Avenue (1st read)

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge to table the Ordinance and schedule a public hearing for March 18, 2019. So moved, the motion carried.

3. Resolution 2019-06 Accepting Donation of Snowmobile for Fire Department (1st read)

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for March 18, 2019. So moved, the motion carried.

4. City Manager's Report

1. Timber cutting at the Airport has been underway for several weeks. This project will bring some revenue into the current Airport budget. There may also be opportunity to generate some revenue in the FY20 budget from logging.

2. Chief Lacasse reports that Berlin will take part in a POD (Point of Dispensing) exercise on Saturday, April 13th from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm at Berlin High School. The exercise is being planned and will run in conjunction with the Health Consortium. Fire, State Police and EMS will participate. There will be state officials present to observe and assess the response. If any Council member would like to observe, we can arrange for this with the Fire Chief.

3. The Wastewater Treatment Plant is advertising a Laborer/Wastewater Operator Apprentice position. This is a great opportunity for on the job training. The application period is open until March 15.

4. The PWD February 2019 Activity Report is attached.

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

Councilor Theberge asked about the position at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and if it was an apprentice program. City Manager Wheeler advised that they will be hiring a laborer, under the condition that they obtain certification within a certain time frame. Councilor Gentili suggested that the city reach out to NH Works or the college for interested applicants. Mayor Grenier suggested that if the city is providing training, that they be required to work for a minimum time. City Manager Wheeler stated that they could look into this, but the condition would be to work for a minimum time or pay the city back for the training. However training will not cost a lot of money and they may be able to access training programs for funds. Councilor Berthiaume advised that providing on the job training will be a benefit for the city, as they have had a hard time finding licensed operators. Councilor Rozek advised that the Level 1 operator is fairly easy to obtain, however the Level 2 is more complicated, and suggested that the city consider hiring someone with the capability to pass the Level 2 exam.

So moved, the motion carried.

4. Mayor's Report

Mayor Grenier advised the Council that John DeChamplain, who spent many years volunteering in various positions for the City, passed away at his home Sunday night. Mayor Grenier advised that Paul Croteau presented DeChamplain a plaque from the city for his service last week. Mayor Grenier requested that the Council send flowers for the services.

Councilor Rozek moved, with a second from Councilor Theberge, to allow the City Manager to spend up to \$100 from the Council Contingency Fund for flowers to be sent to the service for John DeChamplain on behalf of the City. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Berthiaume to accept the Mayor's Report and place it on file. So moved, the motion carried.

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS – There were none.

8. Council Comments – Councilor Rozek shared concerns about the quality and cost for the services that Spectrum provides. City Manager Wheeler will check to see when their franchise agreement ends. Mayor Grenier suggested that a representative from Spectrum attend a work session to discuss the franchise agreement. Councilor Theberge also advised that he had received a complaint about Spectrum.

9. Adjournment

At approximately 8:02 p.m. Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Gentili to adjourn the regular meeting. 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.