

## **CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION MARCH 21, 2016**

Mayor Grenier called the Work Session to order in the City Hall Executive Council Chambers at approximately 6:30 p.m. Present: Mayor Grenier and Councilors Remillard, Otis, Gentili, Higbee, Rozek, Nelson and Theberge. Councilor Morgan Allain was absent. Also Present: City Manager James Wheeler, Development Director Pam Laflamme, Housing Coordinator Linda White, Fire Chief Randall Trull, Deputy Fire Chief Thad Solstys, Roland Berthiaume, Finance Director Patty Chase, PW Director Michael Perreault, Deputy Police Chief Dan Buteau, Christopher Dubey and BEMS members and Barbara Tetreault.

### **Budget: Ambulance**

Christopher Dubey, BEMS owner came to Council tonight because their contract is up in July. The business side is similar to previous years but since his brother left, it has been difficult to find a paramedic. A new contract would give people a better sense of security. Health care is not easy with their fees going down and the private sector is up due to prison employees. Call volume is stable and have gone up from last year for service not so much for transport calls. Their rates are below average and they try to pass the savings on to the City. Mr. Dubey informed Council that there is the potential for Shelburne to use their service too. It would be a situation similar to Milan and Dummer. They would pay for service and it would not affect the City of Berlin. They would have a back-up crew if they went to a call in Shelburne and Shelburne would get mutual aid from Bethel Maine. The City of Berlin would still be their primary concern.

Councilor Theberge inquired if there was a major auto accident in the area, who would be the first on call? Mr. Dubey replied that BEMS would be the first responder for the service call but if there is no personal injury involved, they don't go. Gorham's policy however is they go to each and every call.

Mayor Grenier asked what Medicaid pays per dollar for service. Chris replied it is pennies on the dollar. He is looking to add charges right now but if they don't transport there is no fee, the \$200 fee is optional.

Councilor Theberge asked about a flat rate for service. According to Mr. Dubey, currently if a paramedic responds, they must charge for paramedic level skills at an advanced life support rate.

Councilor Nelson asked how they are reimbursed for Narcan. Chris said they do not get reimbursed per drug, they do get reimbursed for oxygen. If it is an advanced life support situation they would get reimbursed.

Mayor Grenier asked if they can refuse service for a person who does not take personal responsibility for their own well-being. Chris replied no matter the situation, they need to focus on the job not only legally but also do whatever is medically ethical.

The City Manager explained there is a small increase in the renewed contract budget line item for a total of \$328,999.92 which breaks down to roughly \$28,000 per month.

There were no further questions.

### **Budget: Fire Department**

Fire Chief Trull reported that the Fire Department has good news due to an exceptional year. They were awarded the SAFER Grant, got a new utility pickup truck with a plow, a rescue boat, a rescue UTV and are in the final stages of getting a trailer too. They are currently working on another grant for a vehicle extraction system that would be a huge win for the City. They were also able to replace 3,000-4,000 feet fire hose at no charge to the City so big things are happening there.

The current budget reflects \$100,000 insurance savings in that line item. The overtime budget is down \$70,000 due to the SAFER Grant including overtime for other drive outside details and revenue is up for outside details.

Councilor Remillard inquired what outside details included. The Chief replied it is a third party contract to do standby for things such as hydros. They also charge if they need to use the pickup truck and they will do the same with the UTV.

Councilor Theberge asked if outside detail included confined space for outside detail and the Chief concurred that is correct and they also charge \$40 if they need to use the pickup truck. They are getting more calls for rescue on the ATV Park and at Success.

Mayor Grenier added that the Fire Department needs to bill the County for Success calls and also for services provided to unincorporated areas. After the budget is done, Mayor Grenier asked the Chief to provide him with detailed non-fire services rendered in Success or unincorporated areas.

Councilor Rozek wanted to know how the new contract with the computer service provider is working for the Fire Department. Chief Trull is happy it is no longer a line item in the Fire Department budget. He is having issues with his email and it needs more fine tuning. He has been working with SNS to fix this ongoing issue.

The City Manager does not know why the Chief has this particular problem but it seems like it is departmental but they are working on a solution. Networking the departments has been a great benefit. A good example is a City Hall employee is assisting the Fire Department due to a job vacancy and the person has access to the Fire Department files so the person does not need to leave City Hall to do the work.

Councilor Rozek would like to know if staff is available to come up when we have computer issues to resolve that issue for the Chief. We pay lots of money for that service.

Councilor Theberge inquired if phone communication is an issue between depts. It was confirmed that is not an issue.

Mayor Grenier noticed there was \$28,000 in the Fire Department Capital Improvement line item and stated that if it is not capital specific it should not be there. The Chief explained it is there for window replacement.

Councilor Remillard noticed reduced fuel oil and propane. The Chief said they have switched to LED bulbs in their fixtures and they turn off lights when not in use to name a few cost effective efforts not to mention the energy efficient furnace purchased through grant money. The Chief plans to apply for 2 more grants but he will come to Council prior to that. One grant is for protective clothing and a Fire Act Grant for a gear extractor and dryer to help protect the crew.

#### **Request to fill Public Works Position**

Public Works Director Michael Perreault informed the Mayor and Council that a Public Works employee was selected to fill the City's vacant Building Inspector position. He is requesting Council permission to hire another PWD employee to fill his vacant position and added it is a budget neutral position since it already exists in the budget.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Nelson to allow the Public Works Director to fill the vacant position to remain fully staffed. So moved, the motion carried.

**Proposed Changes to Ordinance 2016-04 Continue Liquor Sales until 2:00 a.m.**

City Manager Wheeler explained that per request of the Police Commission Chair, new language was added so the Police could be more of an appeals board. Council would need to make the following change on the floor in the form of an amendment.

Delete: "Once in violation, the licensee's infraction(s) shall be reviewed by the Berlin Police Commission, and said licensee's ability to sell alcohol for the extended hour shall be subject to revocation. The hour extension shall sunset after one year".

Add: The Chief of Police may also suspend or revoke the extended hour of sales privilege if at any time he deems it to be in the best interest of public safety.

**Rt. 16 Financing**

City Manager Wheeler handed out an update of the financing plan for the Rte. 16 project including a time line he plans to follow. Certain elements may change slightly from the plan. He also provided Council with a revised projected cash flow for bond repayment and included the projected bond repayment schedule.

Councilor Nelson asked when the Hutchins Street bids are due. The City Manager replied they are due tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. to select the low bidder tomorrow and the bids for Rt. 16 will be due April 14

Councilor Remillard asked if the work will begin on schedule and the City Manager said it would.

Councilor Nelson commented it would be an advantage to both projects if one contractor would be awarded both contracts.

**Other:** BIDPA

City Manager Wheeler updated the Mayor and Council about the progress BIDPA is making on the land they recently purchased from Georgia Pacific. The plan is to cut 30-40 acres of timber on the property using professional foresters. Moving ahead and working on that plan, they will hire a forester to develop a timber sale contract to hopefully get bids from multiple contractors.

Councilor Nelson asked if they need a DES permit to do that work. According to the Community Development Director, they plan to stay out of wetlands on the property so they only need to file an Intent-to-Cut with the City. They also plan to send letters to abutters living in that area to keep people informed.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business in the Work Session, Mayor Grenier declared the Work Session adjourned at approximately 7:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debra A. Patrick, CMC  
City Clerk

## **PUBLIC HEARING – MARCH 21, 2016**

Mayor Grenier opened the duly scheduled and advertised Public Hearing at approximately 7:45 p.m. to hear comments on the following subject matters:

- CDBG Progress Public Hearing for \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant, Berlin Neighborhood Revitalization Program City of Berlin

Linda White, Housing Coordinator for the City of Berlin presented the following:

As a requirement of our \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant known as the Berlin Neighborhood Revitalization Program, a formal public progress hearing must be held to answer any question or receive any public comment associated with the project.

These funds have been used to assist low to moderate income households make necessary repairs and/or improvements to their home, and to insure that their households meet federal Housing Quality Standards. Repairs often include new roofs, energy efficient windows, furnaces & hot water heaters, electrical upgrades and other miscellaneous repairs. We often find that due to our aging housing stock in the City, the need for this program is often greater than anticipated. Many homeowners are in a type of “catch 22”, where they are overspending on heating inefficient space but are unable to afford the repairs to make their home safer and more energy efficient.

The Berlin Neighborhood Revitalization Program for this grant period is coming to a close at the end of June 2016 and we are pleased to report the following successes. To date we have expended and contracted over \$365,972 in our local community and are currently on target to utilize all of the funds allocated for rehabilitation (\$443,000) with the current homeowner list. The revitalization of 29 homes / affecting 38 living units, has exceeded our original goal of servicing 35 living units. Our efforts to engage more local contractors in the rehabilitation process through advertised “Requests for Qualifications”, direct email and personal solicitation have benefited both the homeowners and local tradesmen.

There are 2 handouts available that include the project guidelines and applicant qualifications and the second one is an overview of some statistics related to the program.

To date, the City of Berlin has received three CDBG grants for the Berlin Neighborhood Revitalization Project. In 2006, the City received \$350,000 and completed 23 homes/31 units. In 2009, the City received \$500,000 and completed 29 homes/34 units. In 2014, the City received our current grant of \$500,000 and we project that we will close out the program servicing 29 homes/38 units - a total of 81 homes/103 living units in the past 3 grant rounds.

This work could not have been done without the project management efforts of Eric Mortenson of Tri-County CAP and an excellent group of local subcontractors who make the work happen. I also would like to thank former TCCAP CEO, Michael Coughlin and division director, Andrea Gagne, who, although they were unfamiliar with the program, were willing to throw their hat in the ring to oversee this sometimes challenging project. Additionally through the ongoing partnerships with TCCAP and Janice Daniels of USDA-Rural Development, their organizations have contributed \$48,640 to date, in matching funds to benefit qualified homeowners participating in the BNRP. (representing a 16% match from our partners to date)

I want to also thank the Neighborhood Revitalization Committee who meets monthly and helps to guide this program through the maze of issues encountered in managing multiple homes & projects. The members include Dave Morin (Chairman), Mary-Jo Landry (Berlin Housing Authority), Andre Caron, (former Housing Coordinator) Janice Daniels (Rural Development), Bryan Chevarie (Assessor), and Jen Chevarie. Many of these members have guided this committee and associated projects for over 10 years, including key past members: Dave Wood, (Ahead) Joe Dupuis and Cimbria Badenhausen (Better Buildings)

Does anyone in the public have any comment or questions? Does the Mayor or any of the Councilors have any questions? There were no questions.

- Ordinance 2016-04 Continue with Liquor Sales Until 2:00 a.m. – No comments

There being no one wishing to speak for or against the subject matter at this time, Mayor Grenier declared the Public Hearing portion of the meeting closed at approximately 7:50 p.m.

## **CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, March 21, 2016**

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:50 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers. The pledge of allegiance to the flag preceded roll call. Present: Councilors Remillard, Otis, Gentili, Higbee, Rozek, Nelson and Theberge. Councilor Morgan Allain was absent. Also present: City Manager Wheeler, Deputy Police Chief Dan Buteau, Eileen Rooney, Elaine Riendeau and Barbara Tetreault.

### **Minutes, Previous Meeting**

Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Higbee to accept the minutes of the March 7 Regular Meeting/Work Session; March 9 Budget Meeting; March 14 Work Session/Budget. So moved, the motion carried.

**Disbursements:** Disbursement Summary Draft #1761 start date 3/8/2016 end date 3/21/2016 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,304,807.87. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Nelson to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS** – No comments

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

1. Council Committee Reports – No reports
2. Ordinance 2016-04 amending the Code of Ordinances Chapter 9 License and Regulation of Occupations and Businesses Article VI Restaurants by amending Division 3 Alcoholic Beverages Sec. 9-236 Hours of Sales (tabled 3/7/2016)

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of Berlin, as follows:

Sec. 9-223 – 9-235 Reserved. Division 3. Alcoholic Beverages

Sec. 9-236 Hours of Sales. Pursuant to RSA 179:17 II(b) On-premises licensees may sell alcohol until 2:00 a.m. according to State law, until such time that the licensee violates State law and/or Liquor Enforcement rules or regulations. The Chief of Police may also suspend or revoke the extended hour of sales privilege if at any time he deems it to be in the best interest of public safety. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after passage.

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

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to amend the ordinance by removing the phrase “Once in violation, the licensee’s infraction(s) shall be reviewed by the Berlin Police Commission, and said licensee’s ability to sell alcohol for the extended hour shall be subject to revocation. The hour extension shall sunset after one year” and add the phrase “The Chief of Police May also suspend or revoke the extended hour of sales privilege if at any time he deems it to be in the best interest of public safety.” So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to read the ordinance, as amended, a second time by title only. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to read the ordinance, as amended, a third time by title only. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to pass the ordinance, as amended. So moved, the motion carried and Mayor Grenier declared the ordinance as amended now passed.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

3. Communication from Eileen Rooney request for directional signs to Berlin High School.  
Ms. Rooney is requesting to have two Berlin High School signs be installed: one on the new road before entering Hillside Avenue and the other on the corner of Hillside Avenue and Willard Street. Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to accept the communication, place it on file and to remand the matter to the Safety Committee with a request for immediate action.

City Manager Wheeler explained since this was not a traffic issue, it could be given to the Public Works Department with Council's directive. Councilor Remillard retracted her original motion and made the following motion: Councilor Remillard moved with a second by Councilor Otis to have the Public Works Department erect the signs as requested. So moved, the motion carried.

4. City Manager's Report

1. A mandatory pre bid meeting for Route 16 was held on March 17<sup>th</sup>. There were six contractors present. The bid opening for this project is April 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 p.m. The bid opening for Hutchins Street is tomorrow at 2:00 p.m. In addition, attached are progress reports from HEB for both projects.
2. Bids for 56 Iceland Street were open March 10, 2016. The property had a minimum bid of \$5,000 and it was sold to Kris Saunders for \$5,225.
3. We welcome Michel Salek to the Building Inspector position. Michel has been with working in the Public Works Department since October of 2014. He comes with a solid technical background in engineering and practical experience in construction.
4. Attached is a letter from the NH Department of Safety notifying officials that Bounce Houses used at a private residence are not regulated; however if an inflatable Bounce House is to be used at an event then it needs to be registered per RSA 321-A. A registered bounce house will have a NH Decal with the current year and a number. The operator should also have registration documents and an insurance certificate on hand. There is more information and there are contact numbers in the letter.
5. Attached is a flyer from the Local Government Center announcing the Local Officials Workshops for this year. The closest event location to Berlin is the workshop to be held Thursday May 19 in Whitefield.
6. A copy of the City's 2016 Dog License Fees is attached along with a notice of the April 9, 2016 Rabies Clinic to be held at the Recreation Center from 1:00 to 4:00 pm.
7. This is to notify you that we are working on behalf of BIDPA to have a tree clearing and timber sale project on approximately 30 to 40 acres of the land recently purchased on East Milan Road. BIDPA will be leaving a buffer trees around the perimeter of the property that will be approximately 100 feet deep along properties where there are residences.

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

5. Mayor's Report – Board of Assessors Appointment.

Mayor Grenier nominated Mark Eastman for another three year term set to expire March 31, 2019. Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Theberge to accept the Mayor's nomination of Mark Eastman. So moved, the motion carried.

Mayor Grenier spoke on behalf of the Mayor and Council congratulating Berlin's three athletic teams on their recent victories. The BHS boys' team won the State Championship for the first time in forty years, the girls' hockey team made it to the finals and the Unified Basketball team was successful. Those athletes left a positive mark on the City of Berlin. They are proud of the athletes and their parents.

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

6. Public Comments – No comments

7. Council Comments - No comments

8. Adjournment:

There being no further business before the Mayor and Council, Councilor Rozek moved with a second by Councilor Theberge to adjourn the regular meeting. So moved, the motion carried and Mayor Grenier declared the regular meeting adjourned at approximately 8:05 P.M.

A True Record, Attest:  
Debra A. Patrick, CMC  
City Clerk