

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, November 1, 2021

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:44 pm for Resolution 2021-21 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative Grant. There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:45 pm.

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:45 pm for Resolution 2021-22 Accepting ARPA Funds from Coos County Delegation.

Cam Bradshaw of 813 Sixth Avenue advised that she believes the funds should be used for Capital Projects that are already on the list to be done in Berlin, as the funds can be used for anything.

Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:47 pm.

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:47 pm for Resolution 2021-23 Route 110 Urban Compact Line.

Cam Bradshaw spoke in opposition to the Resolution, citing numbers that she received from City Manager Wheeler that it would need \$600,000 in taxable revenue to maintain this stretch of road. Mayor Grenier advised that it is \$600,000 in taxable property, not revenue. Ms. Bradshaw suggested that the extension of Route 110, the TIF district, and the water and sewer projects should be taken one step at a time. Ms. Bradshaw stated that investors should be stepping up before we rush into taking over this section of the highway, as it will raise taxes. Mayor Grenier noted the written communication received from Ms. Bradshaw, which was shared with the Council. Ms. Bradshaw stated that she hoped the Council would reconsider.

Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:51 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:51 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

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

Absent: Councilors Rozek and Theberge

Also present: City Manager James Wheeler, Finance Director Holly Larsen, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Captain Jeff Lemoine, Chief Peter Morency, Deputy Chief Dan Buteau, Janet Tremblay, Cam Bradshaw, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to accept the minutes of the October 18, 2021 Regular Meeting and Work Session, and the Public Hearing and Special Meeting and Work Session of October 25, 2021. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1899 start date 10/19/2021 end date 11/01/2021 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,132,890.02. Councilor Berthiaume moved with a second by Councilor Higbee to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cam Bradshaw spoke again to clarify information about the Route 110 Urban Compact Line. It was clarified by City Manager Wheeler that \$600,000 in new property value would be needed to cover the cost of winter and pavement maintenance of the roadway. Ms. Bradshaw noted that this amount would not include the 20% match the City would have to provide if the roadway was included in the NHDOT 10-year plan, however Mayor Grenier advised that the City would have to provide that match either way. Ms. Bradshaw advised that she did listen to some of the investors

at the Public Hearing, in which Mr. Berthiaume requested assistance with building a roadway on his property. Mayor Grenier clarified that Mr. Berthiaume was inquiring if any Federal funds were available to assist with housing development, but did not ask the City for any money to build the road. Mayor Grenier advised that many projects, such as the stadium in Foxboro, MA, are done as a private-public partnership. Mayor Grenier advised that developers have wanted this extension of the urban compact for some time, but NHDOT did not offer a good deal until now.

Janet Tremblay of 812 Second Avenue advised that she spoke with a member of the Council to ask for assistance with a complaint to the Police Department about vehicles parked in her neighborhood and the Councilor told her that Rome was not built in a day. Ms. Tremblay advised that the cars are gone now, but she is still having problems. Ms. Tremblay advised she believes they are renting the building, that something is going on in the garage, and there is garbage and cars everywhere. Ms. Tremblay would like her neighborhood to look good and feels there are always problems and nobody can help. Chief Morency advised that the Police Department has responded there several times, and issues are similar to other areas in town, but that the rights of property owners also need to be respected.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

There were no Council committee reports.

2. Resolution 2021-21 Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative Grant (tabled 10-18-2021)

In the Year of our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-one

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Berlin Police Commission to apply for and receive grant funds from the NH Department of Safety for the ongoing Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative for Fiscal Year 2022.

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

WHEREAS the Berlin Police Department participates in the ongoing opioid grant program; and

WHEREAS opioid sales and abuse continue to cause overdoses, deaths, and a rise in serious crimes; and

WHEREAS Berlin is not immune to the opioid epidemic, and the Berlin Police Department has confirmed opioid trafficking in Berlin;

WHEREAS the opioid epidemic has not only caused an increase in drug offenses but has affected an increase in property crimes and other non-drug related crimes which are taxing on the Police Department's and City's resources; and

WHEREAS the New Hampshire Department of Safety recognizes the severity of the opioid crisis and has grant funding available to support the continuation and expansion of successful partnership patrols and joint narcotics enforcement operations,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH, that the Berlin Police Commission is authorized to apply for and receive grant funds from the NH Department of Safety for the ongoing Substance Abuse Reduction Initiative. Said funds granted to the City of Berlin will be used for the purpose of meeting the expenses directly included in the purpose of the grant during Fiscal Year 2022. Be it further resolved that the Chief of Police is authorized to sign the grant documents and execute all things necessary to effectuate the grant.

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

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

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2021-21 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2021-21 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, that Resolution 2021-21 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

3. Resolution 2021-22 Accepting ARPA Funds from Coos County Delegation (tabled 10-18-2021)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-One

A RESOLUTION authorizing the acceptance of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds from the Coos County Delegation in the amount of \$250,000.00 to be used for the engineering and design of water & sewer infrastructure on NH Route 110 and, upon approval, appropriated to Fund 30 for use by the City of Berlin as described herein to the FY2022 City Budget.

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

Whereas, the Coos County Delegation has allocated funds to Coos County town for eligible projects; and

Whereas, investment in water and sewer infrastructure is an eligible use of funding; and

Whereas, water and sewer infrastructure does not currently extend beyond the City's pumping station at 200 Jericho Road; and

Whereas, extending water and sewer infrastructure in this area will open up the corridor for both commercial and residential development, which first needs to be designed and these funds are critical to getting the work done quickly.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH that funding from American Rescue Plan Act is accepted from the Coos County Delegation in the amount of \$250,000.00 for the purpose of developing engineering and design plans for the extension of water & sewer infrastructure on NH Route 110 and upon approval to be appropriated to Fund 30 for use by the City of Berlin in FY2022 City Budget.

Be it further resolved that the City of Berlin accepts the terms of the grant and grant agreement as presented and that the City Manager is authorized to do all things necessary to effectuate the grant.

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 read Resolution 2021-22 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-22 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, that Resolution 2021-22 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

4. Resolution 2021-23 Route 110 Urban Compact Line (tabled 10-18-2021)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-One

A RESOLUTION authorizing the City Manager to enter into a five-year extended maintenance agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, NHDOT and said implementation of the maintenance agreement shall coincide with the reclassification of a section of Route 110, by the Commissioner of the NHDOT, such that the Urban Compact line will be relocated to the west side of Jericho Lake Road at the intersection of Rte. 110.

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

WHEREAS, the CITY, wishes to extend the Urban Compact from its current location at approximately 2 miles east of Jericho Lake Road to the west side of Jericho Lake Road at the intersection of Rte. 110 resulting in jurisdictional control over that section of road to better support and align economic development and the City's vision for that area; and

WHEREAS, it is the prerogative of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (DEPARTMENT), through the authority of the Commissioner in accordance with RSA 229:5 to reclassify portions of State highways; and

WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT would typically perform a certain level of maintenance upgrades to provide a serviceable maintenance condition in advance of a roadway reclassification; and

WHEREAS, the DEPARTMENT desires to cooperate with the CITY in accomplishing the extension of the Urban Compact sooner rather than later and in doing the DEPARTMENT is willing to enter into an extended maintenance agreement with the CITY to facilitate this;

WHEREAS, the effective date of the extended maintenance agreement and reclassification will be February 1, 2022.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH that it authorizes the City Manager to enter into a five-year extended maintenance agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Transportation and said implementation of the maintenance agreement shall coincide with the reclassification of a section of Route 110 such that the Urban Compact line will be relocated to the west side of Jericho Lake Road at the intersection of Rte. 110.

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 read Resolution 2021-23 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, to read Resolution 2021-23 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Otis, that Resolution 2021-23 be passed.

Councilor Higbee noted that he would not be voting in favor of the Resolution, as he feels a lot of trust has been put into the numbers for potential development, but feels it would take more than \$600,000 in taxable property value to maintain the roadway. Councilor Higbee noted that many folks have spoken against the extension and he will be representing them.

So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Higbee- no, Berthiaume – abstain, Remillard – yes, Otis – no, Morgan – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

NEW BUSINESS

5. Resolution 2021-24 Authorizing the Issuance of Refunding Bonds (first read)

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for November 15, 2021. So moved, the motion carried.

6. City Manager's Report

1. The winter parking ban goes into effect as of today, November 1st.
2. [Attached is the October Fire Dept. Incident Report.](#)
3. [Attached is today's "AVH Morning Report" prepared by Mr. Mike Peterson, President & CEO.](#)
4. With the help of CMA Engineers, we have been submitting monthly status reports to the NHDES on the East Milan Landfill gas monitoring. We will be scheduling a meeting with NHDES within the next few weeks to review the City's proposed gas mitigation plan.
5. Cross Excavation is substantially complete on the I&I Project. The local paving plant is scheduled to close this week.
6. The Fire Dept. boiler has been replaced. The installer is working through some trouble shooting start-up issues and is expected to have the new boiler running this week.
7. As I typically take vacation time in November and my last work day approaches at the beginning of December, I will be taking additional time off as the days allow over the next month.

City Manager Wheeler read the report from AVH into the record:

Context: The NH DHHS reporting system is back up and running, but it's uncertain if the cases from last week made it into the national reporting databases, which could be skewing our infection rates and case rates per 100K for the State, and thusly Coos County. That said, the case rates per 100K for Coos County are on an extremely favorable trend if they are actually included. We're now classified as "High" risk category (down from Extreme and Critical just two weeks ago). The other hopeful trend we're seeing is a nearly 10% uptick in initial dose of vaccinations in the County since September 1st.

There are roughly 50% of the number of active cases in the B/G area as there were just 2 weeks ago. Hospitalizations across the State remain high, with Friday's report posting the highest inpatient Covid census since January at 235 patients statewide. Weeks' Covid volume is relatively higher compared to normal (5 inpatient today), but UCVH is back down to 1 Covid inpatient.

At AVH: The ED was busy with overall volume this weekend. Covid traffic was down though. Saturday, we treated 2 Covid positive patients, including one who was intubated and unfortunately expired due to the severity of his illness.

Sunday, we treated and released 1 Covid positive patient.

Inpatient: Total Covid positive patients = 5

4 on Med/Surg (50% unvaccinated). 1 expected to be discharged today.

1 on ICU (100% unvaccinated). Nobody on ventilators.

0 monoclonal outpatients scheduled for today. 3 treated over the weekend.

Oxygen use is stable. Delivery came on Friday as scheduled.

The OR resumed elective outpatient cases today, with relatively low volumes scheduled for early this week; high volumes later in the week.

Testing volumes Friday were moderate. 50 swabs performed. Still awaiting PCR results from Friday, however 3 of 22 rapid tests were positive (15%; down from a peak of 56% two weeks ago).
9 tests scheduled so far today (low volume), but the phone is ringing so more expected today.
Booster clinics and flu shots scheduled for all this week. 62% of staff have been vaccinated for the flu so far. (no flu activity reported in the State).
Our goal this year is 100% vaccination (or medical exemption) by Dec. 1st.

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Staffing on Med/Surg is tight due to still short one nurse.
1 lab staff out awaiting Covid test results. Otherwise, staffing stable throughout the house.

AVH is status Green, with 3 med/surg and 1 ICU bed available.

Have a good day!

Michael D. Peterson, FACHE President & CEO

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

Councilor Berthiaume asked if cases were going down and City Manager Wheeler advised that the trend is going down. They were concerned about a second spike, which they have seen in other areas across the country, but they seem to be past the time that this would occur. Councilor Berthiaume noted that they are now 16 days past RiverFire.

Councilor Remillard noted that paving has been done on High Street, and asked if Kent Street has also been done. City Manager Wheeler advised that it should be, as the project is substantially complete.

Councilor Remillard asked what the pre-buy price was for the City for fuel oil. City Manager Wheeler will get this information to the Council.

Mayor Grenier noted that there are two manholes that were worked on by BPW which need a final cover of pavement. City Manager Wheeler will make sure this gets done.

So moved, the motion carried.

7. Mayor's Report

a. Proclamation – Extra Mile Day

WHEREAS, Berlin is a community which acknowledges that a special vibrancy exists with the entire community when its individual citizens collectively “go the extra mile” in personal effort, volunteerism, and service; and

WHEREAS, Berlin is a community which encourages its citizens to maximize their personal contribution to the community by giving of themselves wholeheartedly and with total effort, commitment, and conviction to their individual ambitions, family, friends and community; and

WHEREAS, Berlin is a community which chooses to shine a light on and celebrate individuals and organizations within its community who “go the extra mile” in order to make a difference and lift up fellow members of their community; and

WHEREAS, Berlin acknowledges the mission of the Extra Mile America Foundation to create 300 Extra Mile cities in America and is proud to support “Extra Mile Day” on November 1, 2021.

NOW THEREFORE I, Mayor of Berlin, New Hampshire do hereby proclaim November 1, 2021 to be Extra Mile Day. I urge each individual in the community to take time on this day to not only “go the extra mile” in his or her own life, but to also acknowledge all those around who are inspirational in their efforts and commitment to make their organizations, families, community, country or world a better place.

The City of Berlin thanks the following individuals, and organizations who go the extra mile to make Berlin a better place:

Berlin & Coos County Historical Society- President Renney Morneau and his board and volunteers have been extremely active and hard at work with acquiring a new building, helping the City with our I&I mitigation project by agreeing to a new permanent neighborhood installation, continuing work on restoring the Brown Company Barns, and holding barn sales to raise revenues...all while providing quality historical information for anyone who asks them. They are truly unsung heroes in our community

All of the City's boards & committees – Planning, Zoning, BIDPA, Berlin Water Works, Police Commission, Library Trustees, Cemetery Trustees, School Board, Council & Council Committees, ad-hoc committees such as the Master Plan Committee – all of these groups volunteer countless hours and time to the City of Berlin often quietly and without recognition but these individuals are critical to the work of the City and for that we thank all of them who serve!

b. Letter from Berlin Main Street Program

Dear Mayor Grenier and Berlin City Council,

I have received the information that the City is looking to rename the PSNH Park in Berlin.

In view of the sadness of the passing of Guy Lopez, and his constant volunteering every year as we would coordinate our Day of Caring and other beautification projects in our city, I would like to have the City rename the PSNH Park in Berlin to Guy Lopez!

It was wonderful that the City in 2018 had named Guy Lopez as a Volunteer of the year. Guy has always assisted in many projects in our community, and also had the Rotary Club create major renovations in the Dead River Park as well as serving on many organizations and events in our community.

As coordinator of the Downtown Day of Caring, I would definitely support the renaming of the PSNH Park to the Guy Lopez Volunteer Park!

Sincerely,
Sylvia M. Poulin
Berlin Main Street Program

Mayor Grenier suggested that the Council discuss this a future work session as to how they will handle requests such as these. Mayor Grenier noted that the City does not own the land, it is owned by Central Rivers Power, and they would have to be sure they had approval. Mayor Grenier suggested naming it as a volunteer park and having plaques to honor special volunteers. When the work session is scheduled, those spearheading the effort to recognize Mr. Lopez will be invited to attend.

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

8. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

9. Council Comments

Councilor Remillard noted that she was the Councilor that Ms. Tremblay spoke to and advised that she did talk with Chief Morency about the problem, but that it takes time to deal with legalities. Councilor Remillard advised that she

did not mean to be insulting to Ms. Tremblay, and apologized. Councilor Remillard advised that there has been progress, but unfortunately the process is slow.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Morgan, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 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.