

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, February 7, 2022

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:35 pm for Resolution 2022-04 Fire Department Donations.

Richard King of 107 Jericho Road stated that the Fire Department did provide those services and if the companies want to give money, they should be able to choose where they give.

Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:37 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:37 p.m.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Morgan, Eastman, Roland Theberge, Robert Theberge, Higbee and Berthiaume

Absent: Councilor Morency

Also present: Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Fire Chief James Watkins, Chief Daniel Buteau, Micah Bachner, Amber Bachner, Stuart Light, Lori Korzen, Steven Korzen, Richard King, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. City Clerk Shelli Fortin pointed out that the Public Hearing and motions on the Brown School Resolutions on January 17, 2022 were incorrectly noted as Ordinances in the meeting minutes. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan to amend the minutes of January 17, 2022 by changing Ordinance to Resolution in the Public Hearing and motions.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to accept the minutes of the January 17, 2022 Regular Meeting as amended, and Work Sessions of January 17, 2022, and January 24, 2022. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1905 start date 01/18/2022 end date 02/07/2022 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,229,189.67. Councilor Roland Theberge 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

Richard King of 107 Jericho Road asked if the Brown School sale was still going through. Mr. King also read a letter he had prepared, informing the City that he would no longer be doing work for them as a contractor, as he felt singled out by the Mayor who had asked the Interim Manager to check on his earnings for the last several years at the meeting on January 10, 2022. Mr. King stated that other names had not been brought up.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

There were no Council committee reports.

2. Resolution 2022-04 Fire Department Donations (tabled 1/17/2022)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Two

A RESOLUTION accepting a \$5,000.00 donation from Jericho Power LLC and a \$1,000.00 donation from

Capone Iron Corporation-Northwoods (CIC-Northwoods) to purchase equipment for the Fire Department.

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

Whereas, Jericho Wind Power wishes to make a donation to the Berlin Fire Department in the amount of \$5,000.00; and

Whereas, CIC-Northwoods wishes to make a donation to the Berlin Fire Department in the amount of \$1,000.00; and

Whereas, The Berlin Fire Department will use these funds to replace and upgrade equipment for staff and the department; and

Whereas, any remaining funds will be used for additional Fire Department equipment needs.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Berlin, NH that a donation of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) is accepted from Jericho Power, LLC and a donation of One Thousand Dollars (1,000.00) is accepted from CIC-Northwoods and the funds are hereby appropriated to the Fire Department for their equipment needs.

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

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

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to read Resolution 2022-04 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to read Resolution 2022-04 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, that Resolution 2022-04 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

3. Resolution 2022-05 Fire Department Grant Zoll X (first reading)

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for February 21, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

4. Resolution 2022-06 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Engine 3 (first reading)

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for February 21, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

5. Resolution 2022-07 Assistance to Firefighters Grant SCBA Compressor (first reading)

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for February 21, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

6. Resolution 2022-08 Recreation Department Donation from Vail Resorts/Wildcat (first reading)

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for February 21, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

7. City Manager's Report

1. Attached is the property transfer list for December 2021.
2. North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency has sent along their 2021 Annual Report for the Council's review which is attached.
3. Sharon Gauthier has sent the Mayor & Council AVRDD's 2021 Annual Report, this is also attached.
4. Economic Revitalization Zones (EZR) Certification Renewal, I renewed this very last minute so I didn't make any changes to the zones we've had on the books with the NH office of Business & Economic Affairs. This would allow someone who starts a business in one of these zones a short-term business tax credit for projects that improve infrastructure and create jobs. The zones have to meet certain criteria set by the BEA.
5. In Mid-January Fire Chief Watkins advised Engines 1 & 4 were out of service and Ladder 1 was to be used for absolute emergencies only as it has brake issues for which Public Works ordered parts. Because of this, Gorham has graciously allowed us to use their Engine 4. This is a benefit of joining Mutual Aid.
6. Attached please find the BWW – Municipal Water Usage from October 1, 2021 to January 2, 2022 (February 2022 Billing Quarter).
7. Berlin Recreation Department Article attached – DJ has been working hard to bring new life and interest to the Recreation Department. He has hired a new assistant director and jumped into building projects and ideas for new programming.
8. Attached is the Fire Chief's January report, the Monthly Incident Report and the EMS call volume report.
9. I sent along a letter of support for the continued funding of HB 398, Funding for Eligible Wastewater Projects through the State Aid Grant program at NHDES. SAG is an after-the-fact grant program that reimburses communities for projects completed, so we are due reimbursement through this program. My support letter and the information from the New Hampshire Water Pollution Control Association Legislative Committee is attached.
10. The City received its signed final agreement with US EPA for the mitigation of the work that will be done in demolishing properties through the I&I project this spring. We will be working with the Berlin & Coos County Historical Society to install a permanent exhibit related to our historic neighborhoods. This has to be done to very specific standards and approved by the NH State Historic Preservation Office. We have three years to do this work which was estimated by NH Division of Historic Resources to cost approximately \$15-20K dollars. On a different note but related to the I&I project, we had a pre-bid conference last week that was not mandatory but had about six potential bidders participate which was very promising. Bids for the demolition portion of the project are due Tuesday, February 15th at 2pm.

Interim Manager Pamela Laflamme also advised that NHDOT has been granted permission from the Governor and Council to sign over control of Route 110 from the Urban Compact to the City of Berlin. Ms. Laflamme also advised that the Purchase and Sales agreement for Brown School was signed by TKB Properties, LLC on Friday, and she will be signing for the City tomorrow morning. The agreement will then be sent to the Charter School Administration.

Councilor Robert Theberge advised that the vote was unanimous for HB 398 in the House Finance Committee, and will crossover on March 21. Councilor Robert Theberge advised that he will testify in the Senate in favor of the bill.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second from Councilor Robert Theberge, to accept the Interim City Manager's Report and place it on file. So moved, the motion carried.

8. Mayor's Report

- a. Mayor Grenier thanked the employees of the Public Works Department for a job well done on the last two storms. Mayor Grenier noted that the department has been shorthanded, with two employees out now, and 4 during the first storm. Mayor Grenier also noted that the department had 72 employees in

the 1960's and is now operating with only 26. Mayor Grenier stated that the community should be grateful for their work ethic.

9. Public Comments

Richard King of 107 Jericho Road asked about the Brown School deal and if it had fallen through. Mr. King stated he had heard that it did. Mayor Grenier advised Mr. King that TKB Properties has executed the Purchase and Sales agreement and the Interim City Manager will be signing the agreement tomorrow. This will begin the 60-day window for the Charter School Administration to purchase with the same conditions set forth in the sales agreement. The agreement does stipulate that the CDBG funding will need to be in place before the deed changes hands. Mayor Grenier stated that the Council is not allowed to share confidential items that are discussed in non-public session, and noted that if someone does they could be removed from office and/or prosecuted.

10. Council Comments

Councilor Roland Theberge stated that he was appointed to the Berlin Airport Authority but was not listed as a member. Interim City Manager Pamela Laflamme advised this will be updated on the website.

Councilor Berthiaume asked about snow removal around the schools and Ms. Laflamme advised that the Assistant Public Works Director is planning to remove the snow tonight. They are trying to not burn staff out. Ms. Laflamme also advised that both sidewalk tractors are down and they are using the loaders. Ms. Laflamme stated they are trying to get the equipment back out as soon as possible and are doing a good job with what they have. Ms. Laflamme advised that some of the Healthtrust Wellness grant money was used to provide lunch to all city departments last Friday to thank them for their hard work.

Councilor Higbee noted that his name was absent from the list of Council members on the website, although his phone number is there. Ms. Laflamme stated that this is an issue that they have been working on, and for some reason even though he is added, his name disappears. A work order has been submitted to website support to correct this issue.

11. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Berthiaume, seconded by Councilor Higbee, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 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.