

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, May 16, 2022

Public Hearing

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:32 pm for Resolution 2022-18 Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant. There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:33 pm.

Mayor Grenier opened the Public Hearing at 7:33 pm for Resolution 2022-19 Speed Limit Change Route 110. There were no public comments. Mayor Grenier closed the Public Hearing at 7:33 pm.

Regular Meeting

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 7:33 pm.

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Eastman, Higbee, Berthiaume and Morency

Absent: Councilors Morgan, Roland Theberge, and Robert Theberge

Also present: City Manager Phillip Warren, Jr, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Police Chief Daniel Buteau, Lori Korzen, Steven Korzen, Micah Bachner, Amber Bachner, David Connelly, Stuart Light, and William Carroll, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to accept the minutes of the May 2, 2022 Regular Meeting and Work Session, and the Work Session of May 9, 2022. So moved, the motion passed.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1912 start date 05/03/2022 end date 05/16/2022 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,073,003.12. Councilor Remillard 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

David Connelly, who stated he is currently homeless and living in his camper, advised that he sold his home and moved to Lincoln, and has since moved back to the area. Mr. Connelly advised that he has worked on plumbing and heating here his whole life. Mr. Connelly advised that he has been trying to buy a tax deeded house from the City, as that is his only option considering the current price of real estate. Mr. Connelly stated that he has been checking on the sale of the city owned properties since January, and keeps getting excuses as to why they have not been auctioned. Mr. Connelly noted that he is not trying to cast blame, just asking the City to get the ball rolling. Mr. Connelly advised that he needs to have a home in order to have a place to store his tools so that he can get back to work. Mayor Grenier advised Mr. Connelly that there is a process the City needs to follow when putting properties out to bid, Mayor Grenier also advised that the City would be tax deeding more properties this year and encouraged Mr. Connelly to stick with the process and bid when they are available.

Stuart Light of 213 High Street noted a procedural issue when there is a recusal or abstention from a vote, and stated he believes it should be stated before the vote is taken, as it should not affect the outcome of the vote. Mr. Light also noted that election season is coming soon and noted that we should send out the call now so that we have the people we need to make it happen. Mr. Light also suggested that each ballot should be hand counted if we are able to.

Theodore Bosen of 13 Bisson Road stated that he was taken aback by the comments made at the last Council meeting by Councilor Robert Theberge about Mr. Henry Noel, who will be his opponent in the next election. Mr. Bosen noted that Councilor Robert Theberge should not be using his platform on the City Council to score campaign points in advance of the election. Mr. Bosen asked the Mayor and Council to not let that happen, as any question about Mr. Noel's service during the Vietnam War should be done in public during the election. Mr. Bosen noted that he is a member of the Democratic committee and he will address issues such as this, and will not let them happen without a response.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports

Councilor Eastman noted that the Berlin Airport Authority recently met and they have a new citizen who will be purchasing a hangar at the airport.

2. Resolution 2022-18 Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant (tabled 5/2/2022)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Two

A RESOLUTION authorizing the Berlin Police Commission to apply for and receive grant funds from the Bureau of Justice Assistance through the U.S. Department of Justice, for the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Grant.

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

WHEREAS it is the mission of the Berlin Police Department to provide community-oriented law enforcement, designed to protect life, property and maintain order, while assuring fair and equal treatment for all and to continually enhance the training and expertise of each member of the police force; and

WHEREAS the PSN Grant is designed to create and foster safer neighborhoods through a sustained reduction in violent crime; and

WHEREAS an increased police presence has been proven to reduce violent crime; and

WHEREAS the PSN Grant provides the critical funding to allow our agency to dedicate resources to increase officer presence in areas of our community where statistics show violent crime is more prevalent.

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 Bureau of Justice Assistance through the US Department of Justice for the Project Safe Neighborhoods Grant. 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 and 2023. Be it further resolved that the City Manager 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 2022-18 by short title for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2022-18 by short title for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, that Resolution 2022-18 be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

3. Resolution 2022-19 Speed Limit Change Route 110 (tabled 5/2/2022)

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty-Two

A RESOLUTION amending the City of Berlin's speed limit map by lowering the speed limit from 50 miles per hour to 40 miles per hour on West Milan /NH Route 110 as depicted on the attached map pursuant to the City of Berlin's Code of Ordinances Sec. 15-41

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

Whereas, the City Council has long discussed wanting to allow OHRV traffic to continue along NH Route 110 all the way to the entrance of Jericho Mountain State Park at Jericho Lake Road; and

Whereas, the Traffic Safety Committee reviewed and discussed this request at their meeting of April 25, 2022; and

Whereas, the City Council has the ability to adjust the speed limit in this area now that this part of NH Route 110 is part of the City's Urban Compact and not controlled by NHDOT; and

Whereas, this change will allow for the City to have OHRV traffic travel directly to Jericho Mountain State Park, but recognizes that the public will need to be educated about the change and the public will need to respect the all the rules of the road in this area as this change will take time for everyone to get used to; and

Whereas, pursuant to the City of Berlin's Code of Ordinances Sec. 15-41 speed limit zones are amended by resolution.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

That City Council of the City of Berlin hereby amends the City of Berlin's Official Speed Limit Map by lowering the speed limit from 50 miles per hour to 40 miles per hour on West Milan Road/NH Route 110 as depicted on the attached map pursuant to the City of Berlin's Code of Ordinances Sec. 15-41

This Resolution shall be in full force and effect on June 10, 2022.

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

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to amend Resolution 2022-19 by replacing the last sentence with "on June 10, 2022" instead of "from and after passage". So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2022-19 by short title as amended for a second time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to read Resolution 2022-19 by short title as amended for a third time. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, that Resolution 2022-19 as amended be passed. So moved, the motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Resolution 2022-20 Sale of 121 Main Street (first read)

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for June 6, 2022. So moved, the motion carried.

5. Ratification of Labor Agreements

Mayor Grenier read the cost items into the record for the agreement with AFSCME 1444 and 3421, for Public Works and Office Staff.

Public Works Salaries

Year 1	\$ 68,370.36
Year 2	\$104,686.92
Year 3	\$159,105.30

Savings from Healthcare

Year 1	\$ 88,829.52
Year 2	\$106,611.48
Year 3	\$116,696.90

Mayor Grenier noted that the City will save \$20,459.60 in year 1, will save \$1,924.55 in year 2, and the cost for year 3 will be \$42,408.40.

Office Staff Salaries

Year 1	\$ 72,433.30
Year 2	\$ 96,293.74
Year 3	\$122,929.83

Savings from Healthcare

Year 1	\$50,187.48
Year 2	\$54,935.24
Year 3	\$58,484.75

Mayor Grenier advised that the cost for the Office Staff after the savings from healthcare are factored in will be about \$127,000.00. Mayor Grenier noted that it is hard to retain employees, as they can make more in the private sector. Mayor Grenier also noted that the employees work hard and they should get the rate they deserve.

Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Higbee, to approve the cost items as presented with AFSCME 1444 and 3421. So moved, the motion passed by roll call vote. Higbee – yes, Berthiaume – yes, Morency – yes, Remillard – yes, Eastman – yes, Grenier - yes

6. City Manager's Report

1. Attached please find the BWW – Municipal Water Usage from January 2, 2022 to April 1, 2022 (May 2022 Billing Quarter).
2. The bid opening for bid **2022-08 Land Sale – 1051 Main Street** was on Thursday May 12th. The bid was awarded to Kevin Clifford from Silver Lake, NH in the amount of \$15,750.
3. Attached is an email from Julie King, School Superintendent regarding the conditions at the tennis courts located across from Berlin Marketplace. City Council direction is requested to see how much of a priority should be placed on this item. At this time there is no cost estimate to offer.
4. Also attached is the Monthly revaluation progress report.

City Manager Phillip Warren, Jr. advised the Council that the cost to reconstruct the tennis courts would probably be in the \$200,000 range, as they are not able to be rehabilitated. Mayor Grenier suggested applying for a grant from the Tillotson Fund. It was suggested that the courts at Horne Field should be considered, as there is area for parking and bleachers there, which Glen Avenue does not offer.

Mayor Grenier asked if the revaluation work will be done by September 1 and City Manager Phillip Warren, Jr. advised that it should be. Mayor Grenier asked if there were any preliminary figures on utilities from Sansoucy and Mr. Warren advised there are not, but he will look into it.

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

7. Mayor's Report

Mayor Grenier noted that Public Works has been out repairing the streets and sweeping. Mayor Grenier stated they are doing a pretty good job with the equipment they have. Mayor Grenier suggested that when the Public Works office is fielding calls, priority should be based on the severity of the issue rather than first come, first served.

8. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

9. Council Comments

Councilor Remillard asked about the list of properties going out to bid. Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme advised that she hopes to get to this within the next couple of weeks, as it is at the top of her to-do pile.

10. Adjournment

On a motion by Councilor Higbee, seconded by Councilor Berthiaume, the Council voted to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 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.