

City Council Work Session September 19, 2016

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Remillard, Gentili, Morgan Allain, Higbee, Rozek, Nelson and Theberge.

Also present were City Manager James Wheeler, Police Chief Pete Morency, Assistant Chief Dan Buteau, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Building Inspector Michel Salek, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, Fire Chief Randall Trull, and Barbara Tetreault, *Berlin Daily Sun*

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

Zoning Ordinance Change- Electronic Signs

Ms. Laflamme reported that the Planning Board looked at allowing electronic signs, and regulating them so that they are not a safety hazard or an eyesore. Ordinances from other communities were reviewed. The Board also had a demonstration from a sign designer who brought a sign to the Tondreau lot to show the sign's capabilities. The sign can be regulated manually, by computer or through an app on a smart phone. The sign designer had regulations in simplified language that made sense to the Board.

The Board felt that it is necessary to put perimeters on what is allowed on the sign and how it will move during the day and night. With the new ordinance in place, anyone who wants an electronic sign can have it.

Councilor Rozek asked who made the original complaint about the electronic sign. Ms. Laflamme clarified that businesses have asked for an electronic sign and by the City's current ordinance, they are not allowed. It was understood that the sign that has been in operation is counter to the city's ordinances. Mayor Grenier agreed that electronic signs should be allowed and regulated so they are not a safety issue.

Mayor Grenier suggested removing the part about scrolling from the first reading of the ordinance. Councilor Remillard confirmed that public service announcements are allowed; however selling space on the sign to other businesses is not allowed. Councilor Nelson confirmed that a plaza with several businesses could advertise for all in the plaza on one sign. Ms. Laflamme noted that eventually the entire sign ordinance will be rewritten.

811 Sixth Avenue

Mr. Wheeler reported that 811 Sixth Avenue was found to be a hazardous building and the City Council has the authority to issue a 155 b order. The Building Inspector will also be doing a Cease and Desist order. Chief Trull added that there is a mass of combustibles stuffed into the building. Mayor Grenier asked if the property owners will walk away from the building leaving the City to clean it up. Chief Trull noted that if the owner has other property in NH, it can be deeded. Councilor Remillard suggested checking to see if there is a mortgage deed where the mortgagee could be brought in as well.

A motion was made by Councilor Rozek to authorize the City Manager to sign the 155-B Order, as presented, on a property at 811 Sixth Avenue on behalf of the City Council; Councilor Nelson seconded and the motion carried.

Mr. Salek noted that the cease and desist order targeted three violations including public nuisance, motor vehicles used as storage, and junkyard. The Sheriff will be serving both orders to the owners of the property. Mayor Grenier suggested getting DES involved. Councilor Nelson affirmed that only one unregistered vehicle is allowed on a property.

Airport Bid Award

Mr. Wheeler referred to the bid results for replacing the rotating beacon and wind cone assembly at the Berlin Airport. The project is 95% funded by the FAA and the State with 5% being the responsibility of the City/Airport. There were two bidders with Moulisin being the low bidder; however there were several items that made the bid non-responsive. Forms required were not submitted and the recommendation is to award the bid to Kobo. Affirmation is being sought from the Council. Mayor Grenier suggested authorizing subject to the approval of the Berlin Airport Authority. The NHDOT has reviewed the recommendation and concurred with the decision.

Councilor Remillard moved to authorize going forward with awarding a contract to Kobo as recommended by the Airport's engineer, conditional upon the approval of the Berlin Airport Authority; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried.

The next Airport Authority meeting will be Tuesday September 27, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the Airport

PWD Work Order

Mr. Perreault reported that Public Works is a maintenance crew that works with a work order system. All calls are received at the Public Works office and a service request is developed. From there, a work order is created and assigned to planning for ordering materials or to the crew to get the work done. The system allows for existing information such as sewer ties, signs, drawings and documentation to be available to the employees on a tablet.

Mr. Perreault demonstrated the system by entering a service request. He indicated that it's in the City's best interest to plan work so that it is done efficiently.

There being no further business in work session, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant