

City Council Work Session August 1, 2022

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Morgan, Higbee, Morency, Berthiaume, Robert Theberge, Eastman and Roland Theberge. Councilor Remillard was absent.

Others present: City Manager Phillip L. Warren Jr., Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Assessing Coordinator Lise Barrette, Lt. Zachary Howry, Monica Hurley, Vice-President/Regional Manager – Corcoran Consulting Associates, Inc., Steven Korzen, Lori Korzen, Micah Bachner, Amber Bachner, Jan Zicha and Paul Robitaille, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Corcoran Consulting Associates – Property Revaluation Update

Monica Hurley, Vice-President/Regional Manager of Corcoran Consulting Associates Inc., presented an update to Council in regards to the 2022 Revaluation. The [presentation](#) included; prior statistics compared to current statistics, 2022 sales analysis, the revaluation process for Berlin, notices to taxpayers and actions that can be taken after the revaluation. Questions from the Mayor and Council in regards to the property revaluation were asked and answered by Ms. Hurley. She advised she is looking for approval from Council to move forward with the revaluation process. Councilor Berthiaume moved to authorize Corcoran Consulting Associates to continue with the revaluation process as laid out by their timeframe, Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Notice to Municipalities – La Casita Berlin LLC

Mayor Grenier discussed the letter received from the State of NH Liquor Commission stating La Casita Berlin LLC, Jesus Guzman Jr. has made an application for a Restaurant beverage/wine/liquor license for the establishment located at 4 Hillside Avenue. Councilor Higbee moved to send a communication to the NH Liquor Commissioner on behalf of the City Council supporting the application as presented; Councilor Roland Theberge seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Setting Polling Hours for September Primary

City Clerk Shelli Fortin requested that the Council set by motion the polling hours of 8:00 am to 7:00 pm for the September Primary and the polling locations of St Anne's Hall, Berlin Recreation Center, and Community Bible Church. Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge, to approve the polling hours and locations for the September 13, 2022 State Primary. So moved, the motion carried with all in favor.

Geese Discussion

Ms. Laflamme gave an update in regards to the Council's decision at their last meeting to reduce the geese population this year. She advised that after discussing further with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service it was determined there is a time frame to do a culling and it is too late this year as their primary feathers are in. In talking with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NH Fish and Game, they would be happy to work with us to come up with a plan or a multilayered approach to figure out how to disrupt the patterns that have been set in by the geese. She commented a lot of communities all over the State and Country are dealing with this.

At this point, it's human behaviors that have caused these conditions for the geese. Things like feeding them which leads to the very first thing that U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommends, which is in your packet's tonight, an ordinance against feeding them and fining people for it. By doing so, the feeling is this may start creating a mindset amongst our residents who traditionally like to feed them quite a bit.

Stopping an easy food source helps disrupt their patterns. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working on some better signage, they will further investigate the contraceptive option as they weren't familiar with it. She commented U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NH Fish and Game, Berlin PD and Residents will all have to work together in order to see improvement. Councilor Eastman questioned what the cost was to do a culling. Ms. Laflamme advised they did not provide a cost as they couldn't do it this year, however, they did indicate their prices increased significantly since the last time. Councilor Higbee commented he's done research and the contraceptive method is difficult and takes many years to be effective. Ms. Laflamme commented there is also goose addling which is a popular control method and is a common way to deal with the issues. Councilor Morency commented he is curious to see if the contraceptive method affects other wildlife. Ms. Laflamme advised she would ask U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Councilor Berthiaume commented she doesn't feel like a \$50.00 fine is enough. Councilor Morency agreed with Councilor Berthiaume. Mayor Grenier commented the first read of the resolution updating the ordinance is tonight and Councilors will be able to modify the resolution at the public hearing scheduled for August 15, 2022. Councilor Berthiaume requested a list of other fine amounts included in the current ordinances. Mr. Warren advised he would send the information requested.

Disc Golf Update

Ms. Laflamme advised there's been quite a bit of progress in regards to the disc golf project and it's all thanks to Micah's determination to see this through. He has done most of the leg work. She commented Primex was contacted on liability questions and the baskets that will be placed on non-City property will be covered. She is still waiting on a call back from Central Rivers to discuss their requirements. She commented Micah worked on the signage and received most of the sponsorships at this point. She advised the City had extra segregated downtown funds and will be sponsoring two of the disc baskets. Councilor Berthiaume questioned what is the sponsorship cost. Micah responded it was \$528 and includes the cost of the basket, signage and installation. Councilor Higbee commented this will bring people to the area.

Non-Public Session

At 7:33 p.m., Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to enter into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II; (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community. So, moved, the motion carried by roll call with all in favor.

The sale of properties was discussed.

At 7:51p.m., Mayor, Council and Staff came out of Non-Public Session. Councilor Berthiaume moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session until the sale matters have been resolved; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

At 7:52 p.m., there being no further business in Work Session, Mayor Grenier recessed before moving on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Danielle Rioux
Executive Assistant

*Minutes are unofficial until they have been accepted by the City Council by motion.