

**City Council Work Session**  
**September 19, 2022**

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

Others present: City Manager Phillip L. Warren Jr., Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Finance Director Holly Larsen, Jan Zicha, Lori Korzen, and Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

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

**Notice to Municipalities – Liquor License for Family Dollar**

Mr. Warren advised Family Dollar, located at 145 Main Street, applied to the State of NH Liquor Commission for a Combination Beverage/Wine/Tobacco liquor license. Councilor Remillard moved to send a letter to the NH Liquor Commission supporting Family Dollar's application for a Combination Beverage/Wine/Tobacco liquor license. Councilor Morency seconded and the motion carried by all in favor.

**Abatement Recommendation**

Mr. Warren presented a settlement agreement proposal from Corcoran Consulting Associates in regards to Bristol Central Square, LLC v. City of Berlin for the commercial property located at 1327 Main Street. They are recommending the assessed value for 2021 be reduced to \$112,500 (from \$260,000). A refund of \$5,390 plus statutory interest and the 2022 assessed value be \$135,100. No refund, value moving forward. Fall bill will be self-correcting from any overpayment in the Spring. Councilor Berthiaume moved to accept the recommended abatement from Corcoran Consulting Associates. Councilor Roland Theberge seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor with one recusal from Councilor Eastman.

**Tax Deeded Properties**

Ms. Larsen distributed a list of tax lien properties and a tax lien history by year to Council. There are 74 properties on the list. She reported the notices of impending tax deed were mailed to the property owners on August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022 by certified mail. She confirmed that some payments will come in prior to going forward with a tax deed. Tax deeding will occur on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. She advised the 7 properties listed at the end of the list were not sent impending deed notices as there are contamination problems with the properties and DES and EPA are involved.

She asked for guidance on several properties that have the potential for environmental issues. There are also mobile homes in the mobile home park that are slated to be deeded. Some owners have chosen to pay their lot fees but not their taxes. There was discussion regarding the mobile homes at the mobile home park that are up for tax deed. Ms. Larsen advised she contacted the Mobile Home Park Association, but has yet to receive feedback. There was some question about whether it is worth tax deeding the trailers because they are not valuable. Councilor Remillard commented she recalls having this discussion in past years in regards to mobile homes. She feels the City should take the trailers because if word gets out that we are allowing taxes to go unpaid, there will be more that will not pay. There was some discussion about lot fees and if the City would be liable to pay them. Two properties on Hutchins Street were discussed as there has been many complaints from neighboring citizens concerning the use of dump trucks during early morning hours and the loud noise from the slamming tailgate. Councilor Remillard mentioned this is code compliance violation. Mr. Warren advised he would further investigate.

Mr. Warren recommended that Council waive the tax deeding for the 7 properties not sent notices and the 3 mobile homes on the list. Mayor Grenier requested more information on past negotiations in regards to mobile homes from past years before moving forward. Staff will do further research. Mr. Warren commented Council is meeting again on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and Tax Deeding is not occurring till October 4<sup>th</sup> so they could decide how to move forward at that time and Ms. Larsen will have an updated list. Council agreed to discuss further at that time. Councilor Morency questioned why the dollar amount is significantly higher for 2021 on the tax lien history report. Ms. Larsen advised this is due to Covid as restrictions prevented from tax deeding during that time. The amount is higher for 2021 as it includes three years (2017, 2018 and 2019) instead of one year.

#### **Boston Post Cane (Cane of Wisdom)**

Ms. Fortin advised she received a call from the son of a Resident in Berlin who resides at a local nursing home and just turned 104 last Sunday. He was inquiring if the City of Berlin would present his mother with the Cane of Wisdom. Ms. Fortin did contact the nursing homes to confirm she is the oldest resident. Mayor Grenier commented if there is no objection from the Council, he will make arrangements with the family and present this lady with the Cane of Wisdom on behalf of the City of Berlin. Council had no objection and were all in agreement.

#### **Non-Public Session**

At 7:05 p.m., Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Berthiaume to enter into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3 II; (I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel. The motion carried unanimously by roll call.

A legal matter was discussed. No votes were taken. The matter will be discussed during regular Council meeting.

At 7:17 p.m., Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Berthiaume to come out of Non-Public Session. The motion carried unanimously by roll call.

At 7:18 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.