

Work Session
April 10, 2017

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

Others present: City Manager James Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Patty Chase, Destination Imagination Supervisor Dave Griffin, DI Participant Briana Bergeron; School Superintendent Corinne Cascadden, School Business Administrator Bryan Lamirande, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Fire Chief Randall Trull, Assistant Fire Chief Thad Soltys, Assistant Police Chief Dan Buteau, Public Works Director Mike Perreault, Businessmen Bob Chapman, Mike Sterling, Steve Binette, Mike Couch, Roland Berthiaume; and Barbara Tetreault, *Berlin Daily Sun*

Destination Imagination

Mr. Griffin explained that a team of seven students was chosen to go to the global Destination Imagination competition in Tennessee. There are 40 teams in the state that will go. In a short amount of time, flights have been booked, room and board has been secured and fundraising efforts have begun to pay for the five day trip that will cost over \$13,000.

Fundraising includes raffling Red Sox tickets, selling baked goods, selling Krispy Kream donuts and coffee, as well as a road toll and a spaghetti supper. Ms. Bergeron said that the club encourages creative thinkers. Her group did their presentation in the science category. The competition in Tennessee offers the opportunity meet people and to think outside the box. Mayor Grenier noted that the Council's contingency account is for such items.

Councilor Nelson moved to give \$2,000 to the Destination Imagination trip to Tennessee; Councilor Rozek seconded. Councilor Theberge moved to amend the motion to add \$500 for a total of \$2,500; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion, as amended, carried with all in favor. Mr. Griffin thanked the Council and said that the group would report on the conference when they get back.

Medical Resource Agreement

Mr. Wheeler reported that the Fire Department is looking at signing a Medical Resource Agreement with AVH. Chief Trull added that firefighters have been working toward achieving their medical training. They cannot legally touch a patient until a licensed provider gets to the scene. A non-transport license will allow them to provide assistance. The hospital agreement is key to the success of an EMS program. There is no cost to the agreement and it has to be renewed every two years.

The department currently has one paramedic; there are 11 that have medical training and all others are trained to the first responder level. Any technical rescues have to have medically trained people as part of the team. Councilor Higbee confirmed that the Fire Department will make sure they do not do anything that is beyond their licensure.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to authorize the City Manager and Fire Chief to sign the Medical Resource Agreement with AVH. So moved, the motion carried.

Extending the Urban Compact North on Route 110

Councilor Rozek proposed that the City take over 1.6 miles on Route 110 so that there is local control of the road. With growth and OHRVs becoming a main tourist attraction, the city needs to control the road access to the trail system which will be good for business along the route. Councilor Nelson added that the trail is open in November; however OHRVs have to be trailered because the State road is closed to ATV's.

Mr. Wheeler reported that taking over the road represents a huge liability. Councilors conceded to having Bob Chapman speak. Mr. Chapman stated that he wants to see the City take over up to Jericho Lake Road adding that it is in the best interest of development.

Mr. Wheeler said that the Council needs to hear the financial liabilities. It is about 1.6 miles and would cost \$325,000 to cold plane and overlay. When we do pave, there is 1.6 miles in a neighborhood that will not get paved. There are culverts, drainage issues and bridges on the property. Replacing culverts will cost approximately \$50,000. The additional length of highway costs about \$800 to \$1000 per storm to plow.

Mayor Grenier asked if some agreement could be made with the State. Mr. Wheeler suggested that the State could repave the older section and make the culvert repairs. Mayor Grenier added that an agreement could be made that the State would take on the repairs when they are needed, as opposed to facing the budget impact all at once.

Councilor Rozek moved to authorize the City Manager to negotiate with the Department of Transportation for the possible transfer of 1.6 miles of Route 110 to city maintenance; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried.

Budget Discussion

Mayor Grenier noted that the Board of Education has historically had a second meeting with the Council regarding their budget. The School Department was asked to cut their budget by \$900,000. Ms. Cascadden reported that they are not quite at the \$900,000 yet; however significant progress has been made.

Explaining that there are several unknowns, Mr. Lamirande indicated that \$868,773 of the \$900,000 has been identified. Mayor Grenier established that the budget is not set until the 3rd week in June and he acknowledged that the School Department is doing its share.

Mayor Grenier stated that the Council is not likely to approve any tax increase over \$1 and there are some who want even less. Ms. Cascadden commented that the schools have increased federal projects and 28 people were hired with those grants. She added that two teachers resigned mid-year and though it was a scramble to get people in place, there was a savings in benefits.

Councilor Theberge asked about the fire alarm system that is being cut from the school budget. Ms. Cascadden reported that the School Board is looking at enrollment and how best to use their space.

With that in mind, they recommended where to put capital investment. The existing fire alarm is inspected every year and is adequate for now.

Councilor Higbee asked what impact Head Start coming into the elementary schools will have next year. Ms. Cascadden reported that the plan had to be put on hold because, rather than having the expected 70 students, there were 100 that registered. Mayor Grenier confirmed that full day kindergarten is included in this budget.

Mayor Grenier said that he will propose a budget on May 8th; however he asked that each Council member have something to bring to the table. Councilor Rozek expressed the need to find \$1 million. Councilor Nelson questioned whether we should be seeking additional revenues such as a fee for non-profits for garbage collections. Mr. Perreault will be reviewing.

Mayor Grenier added that, rather than having only city staff review the budget, the Council will be asked to consider whether a position is critical to the operation of the city for a year or two. Mr. Wheeler stated that he needed to hear from the schools and he clearly understands what it means to get to the end of this budget. Mayor Grenier stated that it is his goal to have a unanimous vote of the Council for the budget.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3II(d) Land Matters. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Council members had asked to review the lease with Senator Hasaan's office before it becomes final.

Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to come out of non-public session. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Remillard moved to authorize the City Manager to sign a lease with Senator Maggie Hasaan's Office to lease the Mayor's Office and adjoining office space at City Hall for \$3,645.85 per year for 68 months. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn with a second from Councilor Higbee. So moved, the motion carried and the meeting ended at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant