

City Council Work Session January 17, 2023

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

Others present: City Manager Phillip L. Warren Jr., Dir. Of Strategic Initiatives and Asst. City Manager Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Holly Larsen, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Jeffrey Quackenbush, Dan Whittet, Jan Zicha, Dammon Frecker, Ruth Heintz, Corinne Cascadden, Mike Shaink, Bob Labrecque and Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

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

NH Housing – New Hampshire Homeowner Assistance Fund

Ms. Ruth Heintz of NH Legal Assistance was present tonight to discuss the New Hampshire Homeowner Assistance Fund. She distributed a [power point presentation](#) to Council along with a few handouts. The presentation included information about the federally funded program providing \$40 million in direct benefit to struggling homeowners. The presentation also included; homeowner eligibility, application process, figures of what has been disbursed from the fund as of January 6, 2023, mortgage loan reinstatement, property charges default resolution and utility/internet payment assistance. Questions from the Mayor and Council were asked and answered by Ms. Heintz. Mr. Warren advised there are at least five homeowners that have benefited from this program. He commented this is a great program and thanked Ms. Heintz for providing the assistance. She advised her office is located at 38 Glen Avenue, Berlin and is available to assist. Ms. Laflamme shared that NH Housing indicated they would like to come to Berlin and hold an in-person workshop to assist residents with the application process.

Non-Public Sessions – Release of Minutes

Mr. Warren presented a list of Non-Public minutes with items that have concluded. He commented this list will be reviewed once a year. He is requesting Council takes a vote to release the Non -Public minutes as detailed on the list presented. Councilor Remillard moved to release the Non -Public minutes presented. Councilor Morency seconded and the motion carried with all in favor. Mayor Grenier commented this was past in last year's legislature. As a result, minutes are reviewed yearly and the items that are no longer active, need to be released.

Tax Warrant

Mr. Warren advised the tax warrant is for a repurchased tax deeded property. It is for Gary Laroche of 591 King street in the amount of \$2,007. Councilor Higbee moved to approve the tax warrant as presented. Councilor Roland Theberge seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Other

Mr. Warren discussed resolution 2023-1 Aerial Ladder and Pumper Lease Purchase which will have it's first read during regular meeting this evening. He commented the cost of the ladder is 1.4 million and the cost of the engine is \$813,626. The Fire Dept. received a grant for \$620,000 for the engine and \$80,000 from segregated funds. The proposal is the grant pays the \$620,000 and the \$80,000 go towards the balance of the engine which is \$700,000. The balance of the \$113,626 adds to the lease purchase of the ladder for 1.4 million. The City will finance 1.5 million. The financing proposal received

states that in January of 2025, an interest payment of approximately \$138,000, then January 2026 and eight payments (yearly) thereafter in the amount of approximately \$238,000. This covers the \$113,626 for the engine and the full amount for the ladder. He expressed the importance of rolling this amount and purchased these two vehicles for two main reasons. We don't want to lose the grant funding and the vehicles are in desperate need to be replaced with one currently out of service. Mayor Grenier commented 2026 is when the Route 110 bond is complete so this funding will have no impact to the community and will still give \$350,000 annually to put back in the streets.

At 7:09p.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.