

City Council Work Session

April 17, 2023

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

Others present: City Manager Phillip Warren, Jr., Director of Strategic Initiatives Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Finance Director Holly Larsen, Chief Daniel Buteau, Lori Korzen, Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:33pm.

Mayor Grenier advised that they would need to add one item to the agenda under Other, Certification of Vote. Councilor Roland Theberge moved to add the Certification of Vote to the agenda under Other, Councilor Robert Theberge seconded, and the motion carried with all in favor.

FY24 Budget

City Manager Warren advised that there is nothing to add at this time, as no information has been received from the state. Mr. Warren advised that there should not be an issue with the additional disparity aid, however he is not confident in saying what will happen in the legislature. Information should be received from the state concerning funding before the Council meeting on May 8.

Excavation Tax

Councilor Roland Theberge moved, with a second by Councilor Morency, to levy the gravel tax in the amount of \$119.32 for Map 407 Lot 3.20 to Albert and Mary Guay. So moved, the motion carried with all in favor.

Abatement Recommendations

1. **18 Peavey Lane (Map 128 Lot 173)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$107,400 to \$56,600.
2. **351 Coos Street (Map 130 Lot 59)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$176,900 to \$138,000.
3. **526 Old Glen Avenue (Map 116, Lot 5)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$79,200 to \$78,700.
4. **264 First Avenue (Map 112 Lot 29)** Ms. Hurley recommends denying the abatement application for the 2022 tax year.
5. **99 Hillside Avenue (Map 119 Lot 279)** Ms. Hurley recommends denying the abatement application for the 2022 tax year.
6. **292 Prospect Street (Map 120 Lot 396)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$176,500 to \$157,600.
7. **75 Williams Street (Map 114 Lot 30)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$172,300 to \$153,100.
8. **628 Hillsboro Street (Map 129 Lot 118)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$140,300 to \$108,800.
9. **657 Beaudoin Street (Map 130 Lot 76)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$161,200 to \$125,500.
10. **110 Jasper Street (Map 120 Lot 238)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$282,800 to \$273,700.
11. **396 Coos Street (Map 130 Lot 79)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$155,000 to \$134,000.

- 12. 109 State Street (Map 120 Lot 45)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$130,200 to \$116,000.
- 13. 12 Adams Street (Map 121 Lot 120)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$195,700 to \$175,100.
- 14. 152 Bridge Street (Map 135 Lot 187)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$74,200 to \$73,800.
- 15. 655 First Avenue (Map 119 Lot 329)** Ms. Hurley recommends denying the abatement application for the 2022 tax year.
- 16. 231 Wight Street (Map 109 Lot 56)** Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$66,800 to \$33,400.

Councilor Morency moved, with a second by Councilor Roland Theberge to approve the property abatements as recommended by Corcoran Consulting Associates. So moved, the motion carried.

Other

Director of Strategic Initiatives Pamela Laflamme advised the Council that CDFA ARPA funds are available for building conservation for community centers for up to \$1 million, and they are planning to submit a grant application for the Public Library. The grant would require a 15% match, of which \$35,000 is already set aside for the Library, and in-kind services can be used toward the match. Ms. Laflamme advised that energy upgrades would also count toward the match. A certification of vote is required to show that the Council has knowledge and approval.

Councilor Robert Theberge asked how much the work on the Library would cost. Ms. Laflamme advised the estimate was \$500,000-\$600,000 when the architectural study was done several years ago, but the updated figures as of last August were around \$850,000. With an energy audit, the figure would be close to the \$1 million.

Councilor Morency moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to approve the Certification of Vote for the CDFA grant application. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call vote. Roland Theberge – yes, Morency – yes, Morgan – yes, Robert Theberge – yes, Grenier – yes, Higbee - yes

Non-Public Session

At 7:07 pm, Councilor Roland Theberge 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. The motion carried unanimously by roll call.

A land matter was discussed.

The Council added an item to New Business on the Council Agenda, number 1A, for the sale of land.

At 7:13 pm, Councilor Morgan moved with a second from Councilor Roland Theberge to come out of Non-Public Session. The motion carried unanimously by roll call.

There being no further business, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

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