

City Council Work Session

September 5, 2023

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

Others present: City Manager Phillip L. Warren Jr., Dir. Of Strat. Initiatives and Asst. City Mgr. Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Jan Zicha, Robert Cone and Lisa Connell, Berlin Daily Sun.

Mayor Grenier opened up the meeting at 6:33 p.m. He requested to add an item to the work session agenda so Councilor Morency can discuss his training in DC regarding the opioid crisis. Councilor Remillard moved to add the item to the work session agenda. Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Tax Deferral Discharge

Mr. Warren presented a tax deferral discharge to Council. It is for Carmen Morency, 196 Glen Avenue (Map 117 Lot 50) in the amount of \$10,247.12. He recommends that Council accept the tax deferral as presented.

Councilor Higbee moved to approve the tax deferral discharge as presented. Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor with one recusal from Councilor Morency.

Abatement Recommendation

Mr. Warren discussed an abatement recommendation received from Ms. Monica Hurley of Corcoran Consulting Associates. This abatement request was originally denied as the assessor was not granted entry into the home which is required in the abatement process. The taxpayers filed an appeal and the assessor was granted entry to the home. It is for 52 Bemis Street (Map 135 Lot 86). Ms. Hurley recommends approving the abatement application for the 2022 tax year and reduce the assessment from \$229,400 to \$201,800.

Councilor Roland Theberge moved to approve the property abatement as recommended by Corcoran Consulting Associates. Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried by majority in favor with one recusal from Councilor Eastman.

Other

Councilor Morency discussed his week of training in Washington, DC in regards to the opioid crisis. The training welcomed over 1200 individuals from different communities across the United States who are addressing opioid issues and best practices. The finding is that it's not necessarily when someone gets arrested they're in trouble. It's to recognize the signs early on and offer opportunity prior to getting arrested. He advised the first step is to open a recovery center which is needed in our community. Because of funding and resources available, a recovery center will open October 1st in Berlin. Mr. Warren commented the goals of these efforts being made are to benefit the users not the distributors or suppliers. Councilor Morency advised he would update as the efforts move forward. Mayor Grenier thanked Councilor Morency for all his work addressing the opioid crisis.

At 6:48 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.