

City Council Work Session
August 21, 2017

Volunteer Tree Award

Mayor Grenier presented John Frechette with the Volunteer Tree Award. He was recognized for volunteering at the Marie Rivier Food Pantry.

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

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, School Superintendent Corinne Cascadden, School Board Chair Nicole Plourde, School Board members: Louise Valliere, Scott Losier, Lynn Moore, CTE Director Steve Foster, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, Lottery Director Charlie McIntyre, Edith Tucker *Berlin Daily Sun*

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. He asked to add two items to the agenda: Tribute to Maurice Wheeler and naming a section of Route 110 in the area of Green Street "*Anthony B Urban Memorial Highway*" Councilor Rozek so moved, Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

Keno & Legislative Approval

Charlie McIntyre introduced himself as the Executive Director of the NH Lottery. He explained that the Legislature is allowing Keno to fund full day kindergarten. When the lottery was first introduced in 1963, each city and town voted to participate. Legislation leaves it up to the governing body to vote to put the question on the November ballot in a referendum. Mayor Grenier voiced that he is in full support of Keno.

Councilor Remillard asked what percentage of the game will go to Kindergarten funding and Mr. McIntyre replied that 70% goes to prizes; the bar makes 8 cents on the dollar; 1% goes to compulsive gambling; 2% goes to administration; and 19 cents on the dollar will go to Kindergarten. Councilor Higbee asked what assurances are in place to be sure the money is not spent on something else. Mr. McIntyre noted that 6b of the Constitution indicates that revenue minus expenses has to go to the Education Trust Fund.

Edith Tucker asked what it is like to play Keno. Mr. McIntyre stated that the game is played in a bar or tavern on a machine that is located in the "pour" area. Customers choose numbers and the winning numbers, which are the same throughout the State, are displayed on a monitor and any winners are paid immediately. Councilor Rozek moved to put Keno on the ballot for the November election; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried. Mr. McIntyre noted that there will need to be a public hearing 15 days but not more than 30 days before the question is to be voted on.

Governance and School Regionalization

Ms. Cascadden presented a summary of the discussion regarding regionalizing schools saying that we want to move in one direction or the other if there is support. In 2011-12 there were community

forums in all the communities and they all wanted to do something but did not know what it was. Governance among city vs town was viewed as one of the barriers. In June boards met to see what their thoughts were and they wanted to continue the conversation about regionalization. Ms. Cascadden indicated that there is an opportunity for grant money to look for options; however there needs to be a consensus on going forward.

There will be a meeting for the school administrative team where Steve Norton will do a presentation on the demographics of the area for the future. He estimates that we will lose another 65 students in population. The meeting will take place Monday, August 28 at 1:30 p.m. at the Middle School auditorium. Ms. Cascadden invited all council members to come to the meeting. These demographics impact the entire North Country.

Councilor Remillard asked what the Tillotson money would be used for and Ms. Cascadden stated that it is primarily to do the leg work to get the information to make a decision. They would gather the options and constraints of legislation. Concord has a model and we don't know if it would work for us. More information is needed.

Mayor Grenier said that the stumbling block is the difference between city and town governments. The rights of towns and cities have to be protected. He said that he supports the process and he is not throwing cold water on it. Ms. Plourde said that it won't be easy or fast. Support is needed for looking at options and being open to the process. Ms. Cascadden asked for a formalized statement that shows support to move forward. Councilor Rozek stated that this discussion has been ongoing for over 20 years and he applauds the School Board for persevering. The door cannot be closed and all interested parties will end up finding something that will draw all together. Mr. Wheeler noted that he and Ms. Cascadden will draft a vote or resolution for the Council's consideration.

Route 110 Urban Compact

Mr. Wheeler explained that he spoke with Phil Beaulieu, the local DOT Principal Engineer about extending the urban compact on Jericho Road. DOT would not do a full reconstruction but would reconstruct drainage to include six culverts and they would do a grind and one inch overlay on the road. The city would be faced with a more significant upgrade in the future. Funds provided for projects on the ten year plan receive 80% funding and the City would be responsible for 20%. The City would be taking on a section of roadway that we do not currently plow or maintain drainage. That section of road has had inherent drainage problems where the water runs in the road and we would have to respond.

Councilor Remillard asked how long culverts can be expected to last and Mr. Wheeler replied that typically it would be a 20 year life and road repair would be about ten years. Councilor Nelson advocated for the City to move the urban compact to Jericho Outdoors. Noting the expense of taking on the additional highway, Mr. Wheeler recommended not to do it. Councilor Remillard asked if the State would withdraw the offer if the City doesn't act and Mr. Wheeler felt certain that the State would give up the road. He said that there is no rush to take on the road since all the businesses currently have access to the trails. He suggested waiting until there is a need. Councilor Nelson stated that she would prefer not to wait since we would lose the economic benefit from November to May.

Councilor Remillard asked for clarification and Councilor Nelson stated that Jericho Park and city streets are still open November through May; they are only closed in mud season. Councilor Rozek indicated that OHRV's are not allowed on city streets when trails are closed. Mayor Grenier suggested having another discussion with the Police Chief present to get further clarification.

Mayor Grenier asked if the State would change culverts as needed or will it need to be an immediate project. Councilor Rozek asked if there is a time limit and do we want to do this year or next year. Mayor Grenier stated that the issue could be discussed further at a future meeting.

Labor Day Schedule

Council conceded to Tuesday, September 5 at 6:30 p.m.

Other

Mayor Grenier reported that he was approached by Bob Lord who wanted to recognize Maurice Wheeler for the integral part he played putting the BHS running track together. In recognition, at this year's Homecoming on September 30, the flag ceremony will be dedicated to Maurice and a marble bench will be placed under the scoreboard. All expenses will be paid for through private donations.

Mayor Grenier also reported that he wants to pay tribute to Tony Urban who was Chair of the NHIAA Hockey Committee and a Police Commissioner for many years. He suggested a dedication of the roadway at Green Street being named the "Anthony B Urban Memorial Highway. In order to move forward with the dedication, Senator Woodburn needs a resolution from the City Council. There were no objections and a resolution will be presented at the next meeting.

Councilor Rozek asked if the parking across from Brown School is adequate and Mr. Wheeler stated that it is as planned.

There being no further business in Work Session, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant