

Work Session

November 14, 2016

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

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Finance Director Patty Chase, Superintendent of Schools Corinne Cascadden, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, North Country Council Executive Director Barbara Robinson, and Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun*

In the absence of Mayor Grenier, Councilor Remillard chaired the meeting.

North Country Council – On Road OHRV Safety Report for Coos County

Executive Director of the North Country Council Barbara Robinson reported that the North Country Council looked at the trails in the region, as well as on road use of off road vehicles. They looked at regulations, usage and municipal regulations and found that there are variations among communities and the State. The goal of the study is to help decision makers look at the issues and increase awareness.

She went on to say that this is the beginning of a process to see how all can work together. The NCC is requesting the appointment of a Council member to work with a group to discuss and manage a comprehensive way of getting the benefits of OHRV use. Councilor Remillard stated that Councilor Theberge has been the Council's liaison among OHRV groups and she suggested that he would best represent the Council.

Councilor Rozek asked if the intention of the group is to allow more access or restrict access to OHRV's. Ms. Robinson replied that safety and consistency of regulations was at the forefront of the study. The next phase is to bring parties together for conversation. The NCC did not take a position on access. The next phase is to come to agreement on the best way to move forward.

NH Families and Systems Together Forward for Children and Youth 2020 Grant

Ms. Cascadden reported that she has been working with Project Aware to receive grant monies from NH FAST Forward 2020. The project is aimed at creating regional management teams in three areas of the state: the North Country, the Lakes Region and the Claremont area. The City will be working with Colebrook and White Mountain Regional to offer an expanded array of services to the highest need children and youth with behavioral health challenges. Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Rozek to go forward with a resolution to be read at the next meeting; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried.

Councilor Remillard asked to have street lighting for Route 16 added under "Other" to the agenda. Councilor Rozek so moved; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Tax Rate Discussion

Mr. Wheeler explained that by using \$800,000 of Undesignated Fund Balance, the City can maintain no change in the tax rate. We would still retain \$1,269,188.00 which is 5.89%, just a little over the DRA's recommendation of not less than 5%. Overlay is the fund to pay for abatements and it is now at \$107,000; the recommendation is to adjust to \$118,000.00 which will result in a tax rate of \$39.19. Councilor Higbee clarified that overlay is separate from the ufb. Councilor Higbee moved to accept the tax rate as recommended; Councilor Nelson seconded and the motion carried.

Other - Street Lighting on Route 16

Mr. Wheeler explained that the Route 16 project envisioned upgrading the lighting on Route 16. The utility corridor where new poles will be installed has been created. Eversource will install new lighting as they install the poles if the City purchases the fixtures. There are three options:

Option 1 is to purchase new led lights sized to give the same lighting as what is there now and they would be in the same locations at a cost of about \$15,000;

Option 2 uses 108 watt fixtures for cost savings; however there would be dark spots.

Option 3 would have a 108 watt fixtures on every pole which would take care of the dark spots and save 50% on energy consumption. The lights would have dimmer switches and shields. Councilor Rozek confirmed that shields on lights can be used so that lighting does not reflect into people's homes. There will be a \$100 rebate on each fixture. There are currently 35 poles with lights and the new plan will have 64 poles with lights.

Councilor Rozek asked if any of this can be incorporated into the Hutchins Street project. Ms. Laflamme confirmed that Eversource is willing to do that work as well.

Councilor Rozek moved to go with Option 3; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

There being no further business in Work Session, Councilor Rozek moved to adjourn; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried. The meeting ended at 6:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant