

City Council Work Session June 7, 2021

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Eastman, Theberge, Higbee, Remillard, Rozek and Morgan; Councilors Berthiaume and Otis were absent.

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, Community Development Director Pam Laflamme, Finance Director Holly Larsen, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Assessing Coordinator Lise Barrette, Chief of Police Peter Morency, Deputy Chief of Police Dan Buteau, Barbara Tetreault & William Carroll Berlin Daily Sun, Aspen Langlois member of Empower Coos Youth, George McDonough from Verizon and Members of the Public.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:31pm. He asked to add an item to the agenda under other to discuss the Veteran's Park. Councilor Rozek moved to add the Veteran's Park discussion to the agenda under other; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Property Abatements

City Manager Jim Wheeler presented twenty six property abatement recommendations received from Monica Hurley, Assessing Agent from Corcoran Consulting Associates and four abatement recommendations received from Kevin Leen, Contract Assessor's Agent from KRT Appraisal. Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to accept the recommendations from Corcoran Consulting Associates, as well as the recommendations from KRT and authorize City Manager Jim Wheeler to sign. So moved, the motion carried with all in favor.

Tax Deferral Discharge

City Manager Jim Wheeler discussed the notice of discharge in regards to the tax deferrals granted on real property and pursuant to RSA 72:38-a for John M & Lycia D Morley, 258 School Street, Berlin, New Hampshire. Currently identified as Map 119 Lot 70. Mr. Wheeler advised the tax deferral application for FY2018 was filed in February 2019, granted by the Board of Assessors in May 2019, the deferral was registered with the Registry of Deeds in May 2019, the tax bill was paid in full in November 2019, but was never properly discharged with the Registry. He is looking for approval from Council to proceed with the Tax Deferral Discharge. Councilor Remillard moved to proceed with the Tax Deferral Discharge; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

Timber Tax Cut Warrant

Mr. Wheeler asked Council for authorization to execute the Yield Tax Levy Warrant for Timber Cut to U.S. National Forest – T.R. Dillon Logging/Ted Tichy, Agent in the amount of \$14,397.29. Councilor Higbee moved to authorize City Manager, James Wheeler to execute the Yield Tax Levy; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

BPD Distracted Driving Patrols – Aspen Langlois

Chief of Police Peter Morency acknowledged Aspen Langlois, a Berlin High School 9th grade student who is an active member of Empower Coos Youth, a program of the Neil & Louise Tillotson fund of the NH Charitable Foundation. As a member, Ms. Langlois is required to do something positive for her community and she has chosen the Berlin Police Department to be her recipient. Ms. Langlois has chosen as her project to bring awareness to the dangers of texting and driving. She was able to donate \$250.00 from Empower Coos Youth Grants Program to the Berlin Police Commission for this project.

Mr. Morency advised he met with Ms. Langlois to discuss what could be done for this. Ms. Langlois came up with the idea of obtaining Bluetooth headsets to offer residents of Berlin who do not have any. Ms. Langlois met with George McDonough at Verizon who was able to offer a discount and made it possible to purchase a total of forty Bluetooth headsets. Mr. Morency advised there will be an application on the website to distribute the headsets to individuals who need them. Mr. Morency presented Ms. Langlois with a coin from the Berlin Police Department to thank her for her dedication to the community. Mayor Grenier commented he is very proud of her effort and congratulated Ms. Langlois.

Notice from NH Liquor Commission re: Mountainside LLC

Mayor Grenier read the letter from the State of NH Liquor Commission stating Mountainside LLC has made an application for a Combination Beverage/Wine/Tobacco liquor license for the establishment located at 83 Main St. Councilor Remillard moved to send a communication to the NH Liquor Commissioner on behalf of the City Council supporting the application as presented; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried with all in favor.

190 Glen Avenue

City Manager Jim Wheeler advised Councilor Remillard asked to add this item to the agenda. He commented that this was one of the properties that was an I&I contributor. Councilor Remillard explained she looked at the property and stated it's a nice two family property and feels it should go back on the market. Mayor Grenier advised the only concern he has from an economic standpoint is the cost of the I&I. Mr. Wheeler advised the cost to remove the I&I would be about \$15,000-\$20,000 versus the cost to tear it down which would be about \$10,000-\$15,000. Mayor Grenier commented that if the property stands, the I&I will need to be done and that will cost \$15,000-\$20,000. He asked Mr. Wheeler what the back taxes were on this and Mr. Wheeler responded between \$33,000-\$35,000. Mayor Grenier suggested that if it does go back on the market to hold the bidder responsible for the I&I. Councilor Remillard commented she doesn't agree with tearing it down. Councilor Theberge requested a report from the building inspector before making a decision. Council agreed to discuss this further at the next work session.

Other – Veteran's Park

Mayor Grenier advised he represented the City on Memorial Day at the Veteran's Park. He commented he took a walk at the southern end of the property and noticed the existing soil is not conducive to growing rich green grass. He explained the Veterans took a lot of pride in the work they did and he thinks the City should finish the job by loaming and reseeding the grounds to honor our Veterans and make it look nice. Mayor Grenier advised there is \$9,200 in the contingency fund. He is suggesting the City Manager Jim Wheeler to put out proposals to local companies to obtain quotes and would like this done this summer. Council agreed to the City Manager obtaining quotes and will discuss further when the City Manager has obtained quotes.

Non-Public Session

At 7:03pm, Mayor Grenier requested to enter in 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. Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to go 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. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Land matters were discussed.

At 7:21pm, Councilor Rozek moved with a seconded from Councilor Morgan to come out of Non-Public Session. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

At 7:22 Mayor Grenier proposed adding item 4A. - 218 Blanchard Street to the regular meeting agenda. Councilor Remillard moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to add item 4A.- 218 Blanchard Street to the regular meeting agenda. So moved, the motion carried with all in favor. Being no further business in Work Session, Mayor Grenier recessed for a few minutes 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.