

**City Council Work Session**  
**February 5, 2018**

Present were: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Otis, Rozek, Theberge, Gentili, Nelson, Higbee, Remillard; Councilor Morgan Allain was excused.

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Public Works Director Michael Perreault, Assistant Police Chief Dan Buteau, Police Chief Pete Morency, Health & Welfare Director Angela Martin Giroux, Fire Chief John Lacasse, and Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun*.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Communication Henry & Rose Fortin**

Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Gentili to add the communication under 3a in new business. So moved, the motion carried.

**PWD Winter Budget Review**

Mr. Perreault distributed a memo that outlined winter accounts that have gone over budget. The winter overtime budget is 45% overspent; sand is 82% spent and salt is 74% spent. The overall budget is 2% ahead of projections. If the weather cooperates and there are few storms, the Public Works budget should come in near projections. Crews were brought in on overtime 38 times so far this year.

**Fire Chief John Lacasse**

Mayor Grenier introduced the new fire chief adding that this is his first official day. Chief Lacasse looks forward to working with everyone here. Mr. Wheeler noted that Chief Lacasse is working on two grants, one for a fire truck and another for protective gear. There is a focus at the Fire Department on EMS. Chief Lacasse stated that he has the support of the firefighters and he looks forward to the work ahead.

**City of Greenfield MA v. Amerisourcebergen, etal**

Mayor Grenier reported that he was contacted by Jim Bianco, an attorney who works for a lobbying firm in Concord. The firm has taken on the opioid epidemic fight by assisting municipalities who want to participate in a Mass Tort litigation. The State Attorney General will file suit; however that is only for the State, not the communities. Chief Morency stated that some of the larger cities are on board. He wanted to know what we would have to show for damages as it would be tough to measure.

Mayor Grenier clarified that it would not be doctors and medical practices being sued, but the pharmaceutical companies. There is no upfront cost to the municipality; however the legal team would take ¼ of any settlement. Mr. Wheeler noted that most of the initial effort will be resolved in a court in Ohio. Councilor Rozek asked that the Police Chief research the effort to make sure there are no other options out there. Once this has been reviewed, he said he could commit. Chief Morency indicated that he would talk with other cities as well and report back next week.

**HB 1485 Allowable Security Deposit**

Ms. Martin Giroux explained that the proposed increase was likely brought on by landlords. She worried that people can barely afford the first month rent and security deposit as it stands. The increase will

downshift to the municipality. She noted that the City does not typically pay security; we will assist with other expenses so that the tenant can pay the deposit. She asked that the Council support opposing the bill. Councilor Remillard noted that a landlord has the right to work with a tenant if they so choose. Opposing the bill is the right thing to do as it will affect the city and the nonprofits. Councilor Nelson moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to oppose House Bill 1485 and to send a communication to the House Judiciary Committee, Senator Woodburn and the Senate President. So moved, the motion carried.

#### **Proposed Sansoucy Contract**

Mr. Wheeler stated that he included the most recent contract for utility appraisals from George Sansoucy. The DRA has to approve the contract. Essentially this is presented for the Council's information as the contract is for \$9,000 and does not require a motion.

#### **Other**

Councilor Remillard asked if properties that were not sold would come back to the Council for reconsideration. Mr. Wheeler said he could put the item on next week's agenda.

#### **Non-Meeting**

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to enter into non-meeting per RSA 91-A:2 I (c) legal consultation. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan Tremblay  
Administrative Assistant

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