

City Council Work Session
March 19, 2018

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

Others present: City Manager Jim Wheeler, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Public Works Director Mike Perreault, Jean Chaloux, public and Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun*.

Mayor Grenier called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Auditor Contract Recommendation

Mr. Wheeler explained that the City put out a Request for Proposals for auditing services and there were four responses. Of the four, there were only two who had municipal experience, Vachon, Clukay & Company as well as Roberts and Greene. All of Graham & Graham's experience is in the State of Vermont. Proposals were reviewed by the Finance Director and City Manager and though Vachon Clukay was second in pricing, the recommendation is to remain with them. They have a lot of experience with our software that another firm would have to learn.

Mr. Wheeler confirmed that there are auditors in the State that do this work; however they did not submit a proposal. Councilor Remillard commented that it has been recommended to switch auditors and she asked what other communities do. Mr. Wheeler noted that Vachon, Clukay have been focusing on different aspects of the audit each year. He added that other communities likely put out an RFP like we did.

Councilor Rozek moved to accept a proposal for audit services for three years from the firm Vachon, Clukay & Company, PC at a cost of \$39,500 per year for three years; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried.

Hawker Peddler Licensing Ordinance

Ms. Riendeau presented a proposal for amending the Hawker Peddler ordinance in such a way that it would not take away from the events and festivals that occur each year. The proposal is to issue a license to the hosting entity and they would allow vendors on the event grounds and limits of the event. An individual license for a onetime event would be \$25; the annual license for a single vendor to sell at multiple events would be \$100.

A hosting entity/organization license would have a onetime fee of \$100; 2 to 3 times \$250; 4 to 6 times \$500 and 7 to 10 events \$750. Ms. Riendeau also noted that she did some clean-up of the ordinance to make it easier to follow. Mayor Grenier confirmed that if the Chamber buys a license as a hosting entity, it would then be up to them to license the vendors within the event.

Mayor Grenier also questioned whether vendors along Route 110 during the ATV Festival would be licensed. Mr. Wheeler stated that they would have to get a license. Councilor Theberge confirmed that the City Attorney has reviewed the proposed ordinance. He asked about vendors on Main Street and

Ms. Riendeau indicated that when the vendor is on City property, they need a license. She added that Chief Morency was apprised of the proposed changes and he approved.

Bridge Projects and State Bridge Inspections

Mr. Wheeler reported that bridge inspection reports were included in the Council packet for three bridges that are red listed. Red listed bridges are inspected yearly due to poor conditions and/or weight limit postings. Our red listed bridges are: Hillside Avenue, Mason Street over canal and Cole Street. The Cole St Bridge has been red listed due to a weight posting; however it still services the City well.

The Mason St Bridge needs work on the abutments and the most recent estimate for the repairs is \$150,000. Mr. Wheeler suggested that funding for the project could come from the State Bridge Program where the State would pay 80%. The Hillside Avenue Bridge will be replaced this summer.

The bid for Hillside Avenue came in higher than the estimate of \$548,000; the low bid was from Rays Electric at \$617,000. We are now going through the due diligence and the low bid will need to be approved by State DOT. The project may not be awarded for a few weeks.

Mr. Wheeler reviewed upcoming projects: Mason Street Bridge \$150,000; LED Project \$140,000; Storm Damage \$150,000. He added that match is needed for the Riverwalk Project; however it can likely be appropriated over two budget years.

The other project is the Hutchins/Bridge Street overlay. Since the alignment at Hutchins Street is not getting done with city funds, it would be put in the 10 year plan. Councilor Rozek stated that we would have to acquire the property and Mr. Wheeler confirmed that the EPA feels we can do it without taking the liability for the chlor alkali site. Councilor Remillard affirmed that resurfacing and overlay would last about ten years at a cost of approximately \$100,000.

Mayor Grenier suggested putting the Mason St Bridge in Bridge Aid and using that money to resurface Hutchins Street and to put aside \$50,000 for the Riverwalk match. Mr. Wheeler noted that we need to confirm that the substructure on Mason St can wait. Mayor Grenier noted that we will definitely do the LED project because that will result in electricity savings. He said he would like to see the Hutchins Street overlay in the plan for FY19. Mr. Wheeler thought that we may be able to get it done under the Route 16 contract.

Councilor Higbee confirmed that the LED project could still be done in installments if funding gets tight.

Other

Jean Chaloux stated that he wants to help the youth in Berlin by offering training in the martial arts at the Recreation Center for free. He would like to occupy the Recreation Center from 3:00 to 4:00 to teach Karate. Mayor Grenier suggested talking with the Recreation Director, Terry Letarte and the City Manager to arrange.

There being no further business in Work Session, at 7:25 p.m., Mayor Grenier called for a short recess and the Council went on to the Regular Meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay

Administrative Assistant

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

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