

City Council Work Session
February 6, 2017

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

Others present included City Manager James Wheeler, School Superintendent Corinne Cascadden, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, City Clerk Elaine Riendeau, Finance Director Patty Chase, Fire Chief Randall Trull, Assistant Fire Chief Thad Soltys, Barbara Tetreault *Berlin Daily Sun*.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Morgan Allain to add an item under land matters in non-public session. So moved, the motion carried.

Donation of \$5,000 for UTV Trailer

Assistant Chief Soltys reported that, with the \$5,000 from LS Power and \$8,500 of capital improvement funds, there will be enough for a trailer for the Fire Department's rescue vehicle. This will be an enclosed trailer that will serve as a command post as well. LS Power has been very good to the Fire Department; they are a good partner to work with. Councilor Rozek wanted to be sure that the company received a proper thank you and Assistant Chief Soltys acknowledged that he sent thanks.

Fuel Distribution System Bid Results

Mr. Wheeler reported that the fuel distribution project was put out to bid last fall and prices came in high. It was a bad time to do the project because other fuel stations in the city were changing out tanks and there was a demand for the work and a short supply of fueling stations. It was decided last fall to rebid the project to get a better price. Tanner Hill Milling out of Shelburne is the low bidder and the price is within the allocated budget for the project.

Councilor Rozek reasoned that when the Council originally discussed doing the project, they were not faced with as many budget constraints as today. He urged the Council to consider not funding the new fuel farm. He made the point that in another seven years, the fuel farm will be dated again and need to be upgraded. Using a card system to purchase fuel from local vendors will establish a baseline of fuel use for each piece of equipment so that it can be tracked over time. We currently have money tied up in fuel in the ground and that would be averted with a card system.

Councilor Theberge mentioned that construction vehicles can be fueled with a truck that goes on site. If the local vendors provide this service, we would not have to pay the employees to go and fill up. Mr. Wheeler stated that we need to do the card system regardless of whether a new fuel system is put in because the city's current fuel tanks need to be removed from the ground. Staff will work out the details of a tracking system that will provide accountability.

Ms. Chase indicated that we currently verify gallons and run reports to bill various departments for fuel. Councilor Rozek asked if Water Works could remove the tanks with their excavator indicating that much

of the regulatory work is done by a certified firm such as Clean Harbors. Mr. Wheeler stated that there is DES grant money for the removal of the tanks and whatever the rules are to get the grant money is what we will need to do.

Councilor Rozek moved to send a letter to bidders indicating that the City will not be replacing the fuel farm at this time; Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Analysis of 1/25 Snow Event

Mr. Wheeler reported that the City received many complaints about snow conditions after the January 25 snow event. He found that there was a communication breakdown. The current system for notification of roads getting slippery during the night is to have the Police Department call Public Works in. On the 25th there was a complete communication breakdown between the PD and the PW foreman. The foreman understood that the PD was notifying him of cars that may be in the way when plowing and the PD assumed they were telling Public Work to come in.

Councilor Theberge questioned whether the parking ban should be extended beyond 7:00 a.m. since in this case, there were cars parked that impeded the plowing. He added the weather forecasts are very accurate and he questioned why those tools are not used. Mr. Wheeler confirmed that Public Works knows how to do their jobs.

Councilor Nelson commented that plows in the areas of the schools when children are out on foot is not acceptable. Councilor Remillard acknowledged that we need to pay for a foreman to make the call at night. It's nice to say that the PD will make the call; however they could be otherwise occupied. Mr. Wheeler noted that the policy will need to be changed.

HB413

Mayor Grenier noted that Claremont has been vocal about supporting HB413 which would reinstate a 15% contribution to State retirement costs. He added that at one time, to get communities to join the NHRS, the State was paying 35% of the employer's share of retirement cost. These costs were shifted to municipalities and by 2010, the State pulled all of the funding. This bill would restore 15% and would add about \$350,000 of revenue for the City. Councilor Theberge moved to send a letter of support for HB413; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried unanimously

President's Day Holiday

The consensus of the Council was to meet on February 20, President's Day.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Rozek moved with a second from Councilor Theberge to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 li(d) Land Matters and (e) Consideration or negotiation of pending claims. So moved, the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Rozek moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Councilor Rozek moved to seal the minutes until the issue has been disposed of, as releasing them would render the action taken ineffective; Councilor Morgan Allain seconded and the motion carried.

There being no further business in work session, Mayor Grenier moved on to the Regular Meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Tremblay
Administrative Assistant