

CITY COUNCIL MEETING – Monday, August 5, 2019

Mayor Grenier called the Regular City Council Meeting to order at approximately 8:02 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Regular Meeting

a. Pledge of Allegiance

b. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Grenier, Councilors Remillard, Morgan, Gentili, Higbee, Berthiaume, and Theberge

Absent: Councilors Rozek and Otis

Also present: James Wheeler, Shelli Fortin, Pam Laflamme, Gina Welch, Peter Estabrooks, Esther Leiper, Julie King, and Barbara Tetreault, Berlin Daily Sun.

c. Councilor Remillard moved, with a second by Councilor Morgan, to accept the minutes of the July 15, 2019 Regular Meeting and Work Session. So moved, the motion carried.

Disbursements:

Disbursement Summary Draft #1844 start date 07/16/2019 end date 08/05/2019 for a total cash disbursement of \$1,848,960.00. Councilor Theberge moved with a second by Councilor Berthiaume to accept the disbursement summary and pay all bills as recommended by the Committee on Accounts/Claims. So moved, the motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Peter Estabrooks of 15 Potter Street in Gorham introduced his wife, Esther Leiper, who is a poet extraordinaire. Estabrooks advised that they are hoping to have Leiper appointed as Poet Laureate for the State of New Hampshire. Estabrooks stated that they have never had a poet in this position from northern NH. Estabrooks asked for the Council's support and Mayor Grenier agreed to send a letter to the Governor expressing support for Esther Leiper in her bid to become the next NH State Poet Laureate.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Council Committee Reports – There were no Council Committee Reports.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Resolution 2019-26 Appropriating \$153,496.09 of Deferred Grant Revenue (1st read)

Councilor Higbee moved, with a second by Councilor Berthiaume, to table the Resolution and schedule a public hearing for August 19, 2019. So moved, the motion carried.

3. BHS Backers - Homecoming Parade Request

Dear Mrs. Shelli,

The Berlin High School Backers are writing to request permission to hold the annual BHS Homecoming Parade and Bonfire on Friday, September 27, 2018, beginning at 5:00 p.m. as part of the BHS Homecoming festivities.

We are requesting permission to utilize the same parade route as last year. The parade would begin at the 12th Street Bridge and proceed South down Main Street exiting Main Street at Iceland Street across from the Northern Forest Heritage Park. This is same route that we used the last 4 years and is an established route that all departments of the city are familiar with.

We would ask that the route be closed from 5:00 to 8:00 from the start of staging to the end of the parade. This would allow for parade participants to safely prepare for the parade and line up with the floats and proceed down Main Street. The actual parade would start to proceed south down Main Street at 7:00 p.m. The parade would end with a bonfire event at Northern Forest Heritage Park. As in past years we would ask that the corner of Norway to Iceland and the Southern end of Norway from Brown School to the corner of Iceland be no parking to accommodate the redirected traffic.

As part of the planning process we have met with the city departments for coordinating this event. We continue to receive positive feedback about the BHS Parade and Homecoming event and hope to make 2019 even better by working together again this year.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our request. We appreciate your continued support of the BHS Backers and our school. Please let us know if you have any questions or concerns by calling our President, Kristy True at 603-545-8308 or by sending an e-mail to the Backers at berlinbackers@gmail.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Kristy True, President

Berlin High School Backers, 2018-2019

City Manager Wheeler suggested that accommodations be included to allow people to travel to River's Edge so they can continue to receive business.

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second from Councilor Theberge, to approve the request of the BHS Backers for the Homecoming Parade and Bonfire and to send a letter to the BHS Backers, and the department heads involved, advising them of the same. So moved, the motion carried.

4. Letter from Michelle Meader – “Blind Driveway” Sign

Residence: 21 Grandview Drive

I am requesting to have a “blind driveway” or something of the sort posted prior to my residence to alert drivers to our blind driveway. I have 3 teenage drivers, live on a straight way- and have had “almost” accidents from our blind drive so many times I cannot count. Please advise me on how to proceed to have this happen.

Thank you for your time,
Michelle Meader

Councilor Berthiaume moved, with a second by Councilor Theberge, to send a letter to Michelle Meader acknowledging receipt of her letter, to forward the letter to Public Works and the Police Department, and remand the letter to the Traffic Safety Committee for review. So moved, the motion carried.

5. Letter from White Mountain Ridge Runners – Jericho State Park

NH Trails Bureau
Trails Chief Chris Gamache

Dear Chris,

The White Mountain Ridge Runners snowmobile club in Berlin would like to share some concerns with you that we experience all winter long while grooming trails in Jericho State Park. The trails that are shared by sled and ohv's pose a serious safety concern for sleds trying to navigate the deep rutted surface created by ohv tires on mild days which are preferred by the ohv riders. After the rough and rutted trail situation occurs, our club is heavily criticized for poor trail conditions which is pretty discouraging for a group of volunteer operators doing their best in adverse conditions. Another concern we have is someday witnessing a 4 seater or any other side by side colliding with a

sled in a blind corner at a high rate of speed, given the size and weight ratio of these two vehicles there would be no contest for the sled occupant. We also want to point out the frequent confrontations our operators are seeing between sleds and ohrv riders for damaging the snowmobile trails or taken up the whole trails pushing sleds off. There also have been many incidences where our volunteer operators come face to face with side by side or wheelers on the trail while grooming and the ohrv's refuse to move over to yield the right of way to (snowmobile) trail groomers and this is when our operators have to absorb verbal abuse and universal hand gestures in pretty vulgar forms. While our operators receive many thumbs up and thank you while serving the snowmobile community, These winter sport riders shall not have to tolerate the nasty confrontation's that occur only in Jericho Park.

The White Mountain Ridge Runners are respectfully requesting that the NH Trails Bureau close Jericho Park to OHRV use on December 15 with a reopen date of May 23 (Weather Permitting). We realize that certain land transfer conditions exist between the State and City of Berlin for Jericho Park, but the safety and peaceful co-existence between both motorized recreation communities would better be served with a proposed restriction we are requesting. We offer our assistance in any way we can help to make this a better place to work, volunteer and play. We look forward to hearing from you in regards to this situation.

Sincerely,
The Directors of the White Mountain Ridge Runners

cc: Clint Savage
cc: City of Berlin Mayor & Council

Councilor Theberge moved to send a letter supporting the White Mountain Ridge Runners proposal.

Councilor Berthiaume suggested that a letter be sent to acknowledge receipt of their proposal, but the State should be making the decision about the trails in Jericho Park.

There was no second to the motion.

Councilor Berthiaume moved that a letter be sent to acknowledge receipt of their communication and that it will be placed on file, Councilor Higbee seconded the motion. So moved, the motion carried.

6. City Manager's Report

1. The Laura Viger Botanical Gardens will be one of the sites for the Second Annual Hospice Memorial Butterfly Release scheduled for Saturday, September 14th at 1:00 pm. Butterflies may be purchased ahead of the event and are released to honor the lives of loved ones that have passed. Additional information is attached.
2. Eversource has informed the City that they will be replacing existing wood structures which support electrical infrastructure on Shelby St with steel structures. We have been assured that there will be no interruption of service to the wastewater treatment facility. The full project is underway and is expected to continue until the spring of 2020.
3. Central Rivers Power NH has submitted a Notice of Intent and Pre Application for the relicensing of the J Brodie Smith Hydroelectric Project. Likewise Great Lakes Hydro America has taken the same action for the Sawmill and Cross Power facilities. Great Lakes Hydro is also seeking the acceleration of the expiration of the license for Riverside Hydro so that they can bring it in alignment with their other Berlin facilities.
4. The Nansen Ski Club acknowledged a \$100 donation in memory of Ray Lacasse made by the City.
5. The NH Division of Forests and Lands has provided the City with a "Notice to Municipalities" to inform us that the NH Department of Corrections is planning a timber cut to convert 18 acres of existing woods to lawn area at the Northern NH Correctional Facility in Berlin. A notice and map are attached. We have the notice posted on the City's website.
6. GACIT will be holding the annual public hearing in the City Hall Auditorium Thursday, September 19th at 1:00 pm for the 2021 to 2030 Ten Year Transportation Plan. It is expected that Executive Councilor Cryans, Commissioner Sheehan, Director Stamnas and others from the DOT will attend.

7. Public Works work order statistics are attached.

Councilor Berthiaume moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to accept the City Manager's Report and place it on file. So moved, the motion carried.

7. Mayor's Report

Mayor Grenier acknowledged the Herculean effort on the part of the ATV clubs, the AV Chamber of Commerce, and others, in helping to plan and execute this year's ATV Festival. This year was the largest ever and represented the City well.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

9. Council Comments

There were no Council comments.

10. Adjournment

At approximately 8:30 p.m. Councilor Higbee moved with a second by Councilor Theberge to enter non-public session per RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Land Matters. A roll call vote was taken. Councilor Higbee - Yes, Councilor Berthiaume – Yes, Councilor Theberge – Yes, Councilor Remillard – Yes, Councilor Morgan – Yes, Councilor Gentili – Yes, Mayor Grenier – Yes. The motion passed. So moved, the motion carried.

Land matters were discussed.

Councilor Higbee moved to come out of non-public session; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried.

Councilor Higbee moved to seal the minutes of the discussion in non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (e) Land Matters until the property is disposed of; Councilor Morgan seconded and the motion carried.

Councilor Morgan moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to go into non meeting at 8:57 pm per RSA 91-A:2 1 (c) Legal Consultation. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Higbee to come out of non-meeting. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Berthiaume left the meeting.

Councilor Higbee moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to go into non meeting at 9:43 pm per RSA 91-A:2 1 (a) Collective Bargaining. So moved, the motion carried.

Councilor Theberge moved with a second from Councilor Morgan to come out of non-meeting. So moved, the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:02 pm.

A True Record, Attest:

Shelli Fortin
City Clerk

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