

**City Council Work Session
December 16, 2019**

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

Others present: City Manager James Wheeler, Mark Eastman, City Clerk Shelli Fortin, Community Development Director Pamela Laflamme, Richard Laflamme, Jamie Welsh, Gina Welch, Barbara Tetreault, *Berlin Daily Sun* and public.

Mayor Grenier opened the meeting at 6:31 p.m.

He noted changes to the agenda by striking PD Opioid Reduction Grant from the Work Session and striking Item 6 with the same title under New Business. Councilor Rozek so moved; Councilor Remillard seconded and the motion carried.

121 Main St Demo

Ms. Laflamme explained that the city took the property by tax deed and BIDPA was asked to manage it. They have tried but have not been successful with any development efforts for the building. There are major issues with roof drains, water damage, and mold and Primex considers it a liability. Early estimates are that it will cost \$240,000 to \$275,000 to demolish without mold and asbestos remediation or tipping fees. The AVRRDD has been contacted to see if there are any creative ways to reduce tipping fees. BIDPA is concerned about the hefty price tag.

Mayor Grenier noted that BIDPA could pay to take the building down and the City could reimburse over five years. Councilor Rozek confirmed that the objective is to remarket the lot. He questioned filling the foundation; adding that a new structure would require a basement. Ms. Laflamme indicated that in the HEB specs to tear the building down, Jay Poulin recommended a sand gravel mix that will make it easy to redevelop.

Councilor Higbee confirmed that over \$75,000 has been spent on maintenance of the building already. Mayor Grenier stated that an RFP will go out and once prices are known, it can be discussed with BIDPA. Councilor Otis asked about timing and Ms. Laflamme noted that we could bid over the winter. There is speculation about whether there would be good pricing but the City Manager reserves the right to refuse all bids. Councilor Remillard moved to approve putting out an RFP for the demolition of 121 Main Street with the City Manager maintaining the right to accept or reject any or all bids; Councilor Rozek seconded and the motion carried. Councilor Remillard confirmed that the proposals will come to the Council

AVFGA Land Transfer Resolution

Mr. Wheeler explained that the City Attorney felt that another resolution was needed because of the transfer for \$1. The first reading will be this evening, there will be a public hearing and final read January 6. The Fish and Game Club is aware. Councilor Remillard affirmed that there were no changes made to the deed and Councilor Rozek confirmed that the specification that the city can buy back for \$1 will be in the deed.

Resignation of Gerald Dumoulin

Gerry Dumoulin sent a letter resigning from the City Treasurer position effective when we get someone to replace him. He's been outstanding to work with. Mayor Grenier noted that he will read the letter

into the record during the Mayor's Report. The treasurer approves all payments; he may get involved when the City does a bond. The pay is \$1200 per year. Mr. Wheeler confirmed that the City Manager appoints the position.

Eversource Abatement Cases at BTLA

Mr. Wheeler reported that the trial at the BTLA is complete. Briefs still need to be filed. It will be May before we get a final number. Councilor Rozek confirmed that the number is the loss of assessed value.

Mayor Grenier noted that there will be a BAA meeting December 30th to transfer real estate and confirm that the BAA does not want to execute its right to first refusal on the Weichart hangar.

The City Council will also meet in work session to discuss propane licensing inspection and fees.

Non Public Session

Councilor Remillard moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Land Matters; Councilor Theberge seconded and the motion carried unanimously by roll call.

Mr. Wheeler discussed a land matter.

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

Councilor Rozek moved to seal the minutes as releasing them would make any action taken ineffective; Councilor Higbee seconded and the motion carried.

Mayor Grenier moved 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.