

**Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
August 13, 2014
Montpelier City Hall Council Chambers**

In attendance: Mayor John Hollar (presiding), City Councilors Tom Golonka, Anne Watson, Thierry Guerlain, Jessica Edgerly Walsh, Justin Turcotte, Dona Bate and City Manager William Fraser. Assistant City Clerk Crystal Chase served as Secretary of the meeting.

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

14-186. Page Guertin rose to remind citizens of the clean water rally set for Saturday the 16th at 11am on the State House lawn.

Emily Bodecker spoke about the bike lane project that is in the works and urged the council to take this opportunity to be creative and come up with a plan that will allow for all forms of transportation. She also noted she felt it was important to start this on State Street for access to the State House lawn. She had a few configuration ideas and was asked by councilor Bate to email the council her diagrams. Councilor Watson asks that this be put as an agenda item for a future meeting, and Mayor Hollar suggested that DPW also be involved. Resident Craig Donnan of 188 Elm Street added that he thought the design could be better and supports the idea of further review for the State Street area.

Ben Eastwood prepared a document stating his concerns about the 1 Taylor Street development project. Mayor Hollar acknowledged his concerns and asked Councilor Turcotte to look into them and follow up with Mr. Eastwood.

14.187. A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Councilor Guerlain and seconded by Councilor Bate. The motion carried unanimously.

14-188. Four of the five applicants to Montpelier's Community Fund Board (Bernie Lambek, Warren Vail, Nancy Sherman, Ron Wild, and John Van Deren) were in attendance and each took a moment to speak to the council as to why they were seeking appointments to the board. Council member Guerlain moved to go into executive session which was seconded by councilor Edgerly Walsh. Motion for executive session passed unanimously. Motion was then made to exit executive session by councilor Bate and seconded by council member Edgerly Walsh which also carried without objection. Councilor Golonka moved the Council appoint Bernie Lambek and Ron Wild to the board. Motion was seconded by Councilor Bate and passed unanimously.

14-189. The Council considered appointments to the Design Review Committee. Applicant Seth Mitchell spoke briefly to the council about his request to fill the seat on the board as did Elinor Bacon, who was seeking the alternate seat. A motion to appoint Seth Mitchell to the regular seat and Elinor Bacon to the alternate seat was made by Councilor Edgerly Walsh with Councilor Watson seconding. Motion carried unanimously.

14-190. Council Member Bate moved James LaMonda's reappointment appointment and was seconded by Councilor Edgerly Walsh. Motion passed unanimously.

14-191. The Council considered appointments to the Planning Commission. Commission Chair Kim Cheney took a moment to express his feelings of the committee's good progress it had made during his time as chair and thought it didn't really make sense to change horses mid race. Ivan Shadis approached the council to voice his concern with affordable housing and hoped that all members would make this a priority. All Applicants spoke to the council regarding their desire to be on the board. Motion was made by councilor Guerlain and seconded by Watson to go into executive session, motion passed unanimously. Councilor Turcotte made motion to come out of executive session which was seconded by council member Edgerly Walsh and passed unanimously. Council member Guerlain made the motion to appoint the two year terms to Eileen Simpson, Kimberly Cheney, John Adams, and Leslie Welts. The motion carried unanimously.

14-192. Public Works Director Todd Law briefed the council on the progress and challenges of the sewer separation efforts throughout the city and the new MS4 permit regulations expected of the city. Councilor Edgerly Walsh asked Mr. Law to estimate the percentage of the city that is completely separated, in which his best rough estimate was 80-85%.

Councilor Turcotte suggested the council to look into the possibility of public outreach to notify residents of what they could do to help.

Todd Law announced he had worked with the Planning Director Mike Miller and had applied for and received a \$40,000 Grant for eco system restoration projects to help with the implementation costs. Councilor Watson asked what the next step would be. Mr. Law said that they city would have to put out a RFP asking for bids with different levels of costs and figure out how much more money we need/can put into it. Council member Edgerly Walsh expressed that it would be nice to have some sort of knowledge of the city's fiscal responsibility before entering into the budgetary season.

The Chair called a recess from 9:00-9:05.

14-193. Council opened a discussion of the penalty for delinquent taxes. Tax Collector Bev Hill approached the Council stating that Finance Director Sandy Gallup was out of town but confirmed that she had run the numbers and the reduction was not a concern of the finance department.

Councilor Guerlain made the motion to accept the ordinance change and reduce the penalty from 8% to 5% if paid within five business days of the due date. Motion was seconded by council member Bate and passed unanimously.

13-194. The Council opened a discussion of changing (lowering or eliminating) the late filing penalty for homestead declaration. Bev Hill stated that they did have some concerns with the thought of eliminating the late fee as there is staff time and resources that are associated with having to revise all the tax bills for folks who file late. She stated she thought the 3% was a fair appropriation but did ask for that authority to waive the fee for first time offenders.

Council member Golonka moved to pass the motion as stated by Bev Hill for the 3% penalty and granting the Delinquent Tax Collector the authority to waive for first time offenders. Motion was seconded by councilor Bate and passed unanimously. Ms. Hill

asked for and was granted special consideration of this issue to allow it to go into effect immediately rather than waiting for the official ordinance change.

- 14-195. City Manager Fraser reviewed a few points from the new Open Meeting Law. He brought to the councils attention they are they are supposed to have a 2 specific locations designated and voted on for posting public notices.
- Councilor Edgerly-moved to designate City Hall and the High School as the posting places for public notices. Motion was seconded by Watson and passed unanimously.
- Manager Fraser also brought to the council’s attention that an agenda item can only be added or removed as the first order of business and a lot of times the first agenda item is to “approve the agenda.” Although he thought they did a fine job tonight, he noted that they do have to explain in the motion for executive sessions the reasoning for entering into them as well as clearly explain their reasoning’s for final decisions after coming out of an executive session.
- 14-196. Councilor Golonka noted that he attended the Barre Town selectboard meeting and they opted to put the Regional Public Safety Authority as a ballot item. Barre City has appointed their two representatives to the governing body who should be at the next Authority meeting, and he looked forward to hearing from them.
- Councilor Watson reported that the Solar RFP has been re-issued and there have been some inquiries but no official bids yet. She asked that reverse angle parking be a future agenda item.
- Councilor Bate wanted to remind the public again about the Protect Berlin Pond Rally at the State House Saturday at 11am. There will be free Ben & Jerry’s ice cream and music.
- Councilor Guerlain questioned where the paintings that had previously hung in the council chambers had gone.
- Assistant City Manager Jessie Baker informed the council that they had been picked up by the T.W. Wood Gallery.
- Councilor Guerlain also wanted to offer his thanks to the city and voters on behalf of the Library as they just received the first half payment of the money allocated to them by the City. He also asked what could be done with the “Ariel’s” restaurant sign on River Street as they had been out of business for over 5 years and it should be taken down.
- 14-197. Mayor Hollar reported he attended a press conference Tuesday with the governor where he announced some tax credit finance projects. Following that he had accepted the ice bucket challenge for ALS awareness and he challenged all the council members to do the same.
- 14-198. The Assistant City Clerk offered a reminder that property tax payments were due on Friday the 15th.
- 14-199. City Manager Fraser reported that the Energy committee had entered Montpelier into the Georgetown University energy competition and we had received notice that we had

been selected as 1 of 52 to go to the next round. Obviously there are numerous more steps but it does have a prize of 5 Million dollars.

Councilor Edgerly Walsh stated that the final cities for the last round will be selected by this fall and the competition is two calendar years which would begin January 2015.

Motion was made to adjourn at 9:40 by council member Guerlain and seconded by Councilor Edgerly Walsh; motion passed unanimously.