

**Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
October 8, 2014
City Council Chambers**

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

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

- 14-223. Approval of agenda passed unanimously after being moved and seconded by Councilors Guerlain and Bate respectively.
- 14-225. Motion to approve Consent Agenda was made by Councilor Guerlain, seconded by Councilor Edgerly Walsh; motion passed unanimously
- 14-226. Ed Larson was seeking reappointment and the motion to appoint him for another term was made by Councilor Watson and seconded by Councilor Guerlain; passed unanimously.
- 14-227. Paul Carnahan from Montpelier Alive spoke about the survey responses that had come in regarding the parklet, noting that people seemed to be split with 45% saying they didn't think the parklet benefited the city, and 55% believing it did. Most negative responses were directly related to the loss of the parking spaces. He noted that they were exploring other options with putting them off-street rather than in parking spaces. Councilor Watson questioned if involving the design review committee should be in the approval process. Council Member Golonka thought adding the design review was an appropriate step. Councilor Edgerly Walsh was concerned that since Positive Pie had already been through all the hoops and was approved for their parklet that adding this step (and the possibility of them not getting approved by design review) would be unfair. Councilor Guerlain said that he believes how it looks is really important, and should be done to a certain standard. Councilor Turcotte thanked everyone involved for their work. Resident and down town business owner Cindra Conison addressed the council with her displeasure with the parklets using vital parking spaces. Jay White from the Design Review Committee took a moment to note that going through design review doesn't have to be a hurdle or negative thing. He noted that there are formal and informal meetings and if people wanted to have informal meetings, where no final "yes" or "no" decision has to be made, it could be very helpful to applicants. Councilor Watson suggested that going forward they ask/suggest that everyone meet with design review including VTC since they are going to be moving the location of the parklet to another area. The council all agreed that this was a proper request.

14-228. The Council received a Parking Committee update from Michael Clasen, Brian Cain, and Nolan Langweil. The Parking Committee was asking for a reconsideration of the State Street parking plan. Councilor Bate thought it would be a good idea to hold off on the final decision and have a bigger "Transportation committee" created with all subcommittees involved so they could all come together and figure things out collectively. Councilor Guerlain voiced his concern for holding off and delaying the decision. Bill Merrilees spoke to the council about the importance of creating good bike routes and bike lanes by using "sharrows" and putting in bike lanes where they fit. He also thought that getting all the committees together was a great idea. David Ellenbogen, President of the Pedestrian/Bicycle Coalition voiced his concerns with only using sharrows and one way bike lanes. He is afraid that the lack of safety from not have full bike lanes would deter some "would be" bikers from doing so. He also noted that encouraging these "would be" bicyclists could ease the downtown parking pressure. Councilor Watson, along with Councilor Edgerly Walsh, voiced support for creating the transportation committee. Councilor Golonka strongly urged reconsideration while Mayor Hollar felt they needed to make a decision and move forward with the project. While he thought adding parking was important he thought it went against the vision for this area. Councilor Bate disagreed by noting that the state house is a number 1 tourist spot and there needed to be parking around it. She agreed this needed to be revisited and suggested that the Council direct staff to have these 5 or 6 related committees come together.

Brian Cain spoke about the coach bus parking issues in town, noting they did help the situation this year by getting some designated bus parking areas out there, but noted that they still needed more. They are exploring the outside perimeter areas and suggested that the city get a page on the web site to provide bus drivers with information and directions as to where to park because that was a number one complaint of company's who will not come into Montpelier.

Police Chief Facos gave a brief update on the smart meter pilot program noting that all agreements for the trial have been signed. Councilor Guerlain voiced his opinions of the single street meter as being archaic, asking why Montpelier couldn't use more of the kiosk machines to de-clutter the streets. Kevin Casey stated that single pay creates more turnover, better management and easier enforcement. Mayor Hollar mentioned that Burlington was in process of adding kiosk machines on their streets, and it seems like a good idea. Councilor Watson asked that they come back after the smart meter pilot evaluation was complete to compare with some of Burlington's kiosk data.

Michael Clasen addressed the council on the Winter Parking ban issues. They are currently talking to business owners with off street parking trying to make agreements with them as well as possibly trying to come up with a pilot proposal to allow parking on the north side of Barre Street from the Catholic Church down to Sibley Avenue.

- 14-234. Councilor Bate moved that the Council adopt the proposed resolution to save antibiotics for medicine. Councilor Turcotte, through his experience with raising pigs, added that with proper care and using best practice there should be no need to use antibiotics. Karl Martin, Page Guertin, Melissa Moon, and Seth Collins all voiced their support to the council. Councilor Turcotte suggested that they strengthen the motion by including “let it be further resolved that Montpelier supports the Prevention of Antibiotic Resistance Act (PARA S. 1256) and the preservation of Antibiotic for Medical Treatment Act (PAMTA H.R.1150). And be it further resolved that Montpelier will send a letter to the Vermont’s Congressional delegation call for a ban on the nontherapeutic use of antibiotics in livestock agriculture and their support for PARA/PAMTA.” The Turcotte motion was accepted and seconded by Councilor Bate. The vote was unanimous in favor.
- 14-229. Councilor Watson- Recused herself for the discussion regarding the upcoming School Board FY16 budget process. Ken Jones was present to discuss the issue.
- Mayor Hollar suggested that they focus on the growth of per pupil spending, as it had gone up substantially. Councilor Golonka suggested looking at more collaboration and shared resources with U-32. Councilor Guerlain asked that they take an “end goal” approach by setting a target, then looking at the necessary give and take to meet it. Resident Chris Curtis brought up the fact that Union school is bursting at its seams with a 33% increase in enrollment and urged the council to think ahead as this big bubble of students will be eventually moving along up the system. He also noted that there is a \$25,000 match grant available for Union’s playground, which is in need up some upgrading, asking that they advise the School Board do what they can to capitalize on this. Councilor Edgerly Walsh expressed her feelings on how important the quality of education is and how seriously it is taken. She suggests that they look at the breakdown of the costs and weaknesses, and look for what is driving the increases. Mr. Jones noted that 80% of the budget is personnel.
- 14-230. Assistant Manager Jessie Baker addressed the council on the topic of bringing Recreation Department management under the City’s purview, stating that If the Council really wanted to have this happen as part of a bigger plan, then she would look at the steps involved on how to make it happen - but her opinion is that it is not worth the time and effort to do this just for the sake of simply doing it. Mayor Hollar asked if she had a sense of the savings. Baker said she could see no real dollar savings but perhaps more efficient departments with sharing resources. Councilor Turcotte questioned if there were already collaborations between the departments. City Manager Fraser noted that when asked to, they do/will work well together but currently operate independently. Sandy Gallup, Finance Director, noted that this would be a huge undertaking and would require a lot of focus and time. Mayor Hollar asked about the impact on staff, worrying that addressing this one task may take away or move other priorities back. Councilor Edgerly Walsh said while she does believe this is a smart idea, she feels that with everything else that they want to see happen it would be wise to push

this timeline back so they can get other tasks off their table before adding this one. Councilor Golonka noted that this was a goal of the council almost 10 years ago, as well as being a priority in the Matrix report, and would still like the Assistant Manager to come back January with a plan. Councilor Turcotte also expressed his concern for the Assistant Manager's time and worried about compromising other tasks to get this done by January. Ms. Baker agreed that it would take an incredible amount of her time, but added that she would make it happen if it was the Council's wish.

Councilor Turcotte made a motion to push back the timeline 6 months to give ample time. This motion was seconded by Councilor Bate. The motion carried 4-2, with Councilors Guerlain & Golonka opposed.

- 14-231. Finance Director Sandy Gallup reviewed the budget calendar. There was a brief discussion before Councilor Edgerly Walsh moved for approval. Motion was seconded by Councilor Turcotte and passed unanimously.
- 14-232. The Council considered a funding request to continue a Technical Feasibility Assessment for a parking structure in downtown Montpelier. Planning Director Mike Miller gave a quick rundown on what is in place and what they were still working on. He thinks that this feasibility assessment would be a great asset so the city will know whether the site will even work, before spending more time and resources on trying to secure it. Councilor Golonka stated he was not in favor of the general idea of building a 7.5-10 million dollar structure that the City cannot afford. He thinks that before moving forward the City should be looking for resources and partners to help fund it. Mayor Hollar agreed with Mr. Miller that they should determine if it's even feasible before looking for funding partners. Councilor Guerlain also voiced his support of the request. Councilor Edgerly Walsh moved to approve the request, seconded by Councilor Guerlain. Motion carried by a vote of 4-2, with Councilors Bate and Golonka opposed.
- 14-233. The Council opened a public meeting to discuss the Vermont Transportation alternative Grant Application due October 16, 2014. Planning Director Miller explained that this is an effort to limit the exposure of the costs involved to taxpayers for the purpose of exploring the feasibility. This would be a 3-year, \$300,000 grant which requires a 20% (\$60,000) match which would go into next year's budget. If it is found the project should not go forward for any reason, the City can simply not sign the grant and no money will have been spent. Councilor Edgerly Walsh moved to give the go ahead for the grant application, seconded by Councilor Watson. Motion passed unanimously.
- 14-236. Councilor Bate thanked everyone involved in the community meeting that was held about parklets. She also wanted to give thanks to Matt Dwyer, the owner of the building on School Street, for being a responsible owner and having the new brick work done and repaired.

Councilor Turcotte noted he would be attending the VLCT meeting that was scheduled for the next day. He also put thanks out to the road crew and all involved for the road work that was done to Judson Drive and Cherry Avenue. He also wondered if a small sign could be created to hang on the public microphone at Council meetings welcoming people and reminding them to introduce themselves and speak into the mic so the Council wouldn't have to continually remind people and make them lose their focus up there.

Councilor Golonka mentioned that the Public Safety Authority meeting was the next day and that they were still waiting on a vote from Barre Town. He also gave a heads up to the council that once the committee is up and running they may need to ask for money for staffing to get them through the first year.

Councilor Watson spoke of some confusion relating to a possible vacancy for her seat, but indicated she does plan on running in March. She noted that she loved the branding that was brought forward a couple of weeks ago. She reported that the Solar Subcommittee met and interviewed the three finalists and will soon have recommendation for the Council.

14-237. Mayor Hollar echoed Councilor Turcotte in saying that the road work that has been done looks great.

14-239. City Manager Fraser mentioned the VLCT town fair happening tomorrow and thanked Councilor Turcotte for going and voting on the city's behalf.

Motion to adjourn was made by Councilor Edgerly Walsh and seconded by Councilor Bate. Motion carried unanimously at 10:22pm.