

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
October 9, 2013
Montpelier City Hall Council Chambers

In attendance: Mayor John Hollar (presiding), City Councilors Thierry Guerlain, Jessica Edgerly Walsh, Alan Weiss, Andy Hooper, Tom Golonka and Anne Watson, and City Manager Bill Fraser. City Clerk John Odum acted as Secretary of the meeting.

Mayor Hollar called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

13-240. Nancy Sherman addressed the council as Chair of the Charter Revision Committee. She invited councilors to speak with the committee about their proposals.

13-241. Councilor Weiss asked that item g. be pulled from the consent agenda for discussion. The City Clerk added an application for a liquor license for a new wine shop on State Street. He also expressed embarrassment that the previous meeting's minutes had not been sent to the council prior to the meeting, promising to label himself a "moron" in the next minutes for the oversight. The Mayor thought that might be a bit much.

Councilor Guerlain moved approval of the consent agenda with the modifications. Councilor Watson seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 5:05PM.

13-242. Candidates for the open position on the Montpelier Housing Authority Board were noted (neither was present).

13-243. Mahima Poreddy addressed the council, expressing her desire to be reappointed to the Conservation Commission as its ex-officio youth member. Councilor Guerlain moved that Ms. Poreddy be appointed to the position, and was seconded by Councilor Golonka. The motion passed unanimously at 5:08.

13-244. Jon Anderson addressed the council, expressing his interest in being re-appointed to the Planning Commission. Councilor Edgerly Walsh asked Mr. Anderson about the goal of increasing housing in the city. Mr. Anderson suggested it was likely that increased housing density would be recommended, as well as conservation zoning in more rural areas. He also shared his views on other proposals likely to come before the planning commission.

Leslie Welts addressed the council, explaining her background and interest in serving on the commission. Tom Nowlan addressed the council, reflecting on his experience as youth member of the commission, and expressing his enthusiasm to be reappointed.

Tina Ruth addressed the council. Before presenting her case for reappointment to the planning commission, she informed the council of the results of the previous night's meeting to consider continuing discussions on merging the regional planning commission and the regional economic development commission. The vote was 11 against, 10 in favor, 1 abstention, 1 absence, and as such the motion to continue discussion failed. She reported that discussions on how the bodies could work more

closely followed. Ms. Ruth then discussed her interest in being reappointed to the commission, as well as her interest in enhancing the housing diversity in the city.

Councilor Guerlain moved that Tom Nowlan be appointed to the Planning Commission as a youth member. The motion was seconded by Councilor Watson. It carried unanimously at 5:24.

13-242. Steve Coble arrived, and addressed the council, expressing his interest in being reappointed to the Housing Authority Board.

13-245. The council proceeded to the testimony table to commence their roundtable discussion. This discussion was joined by Finance Director Sandra Gallup.

After much discussion, Councilor Guerlain moved the council adopt a ceiling for any budgetary increase of 1.5% at 6:37. The motion died for lack of second. The sense of the council after further discussion was to task the city manager with a 1.8% target.

A brief discussion of ideas for different approach to water and sewer fees was begun. A fuller, official discussion would follow in November.

13-241. The council returned to item g. from the consent agenda. Councilor Weiss took the opportunity to discuss more lighting, before moving its approval. Councilor Golonka seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 6:47.

13-246. Councilor Watson asked about a potential gesture to downtown businesses impacted by the construction. A brief discussion followed.

The meeting recessed at 6:50 to proceed to the planned "Public Spaces Forum."

The Council Reconvened the formal meeting at 9:00 (Councilor Weiss was not present). City Manager Fraser and Assistant City Manager Baker were present. Councilor Watson motioned to go into Executive Session to discuss committee appointments. Councilor Hooper seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilor Guerlain moved that the council return to open session at 9:17PM. Councilor Watson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilor Edgerly Walsh motioned for the following appointments (Councilor Hooper seconded): Montpelier Housing Authority – Steve Coble, Conservation Commission – John Fox, Planning Commission – Tina Ruth and Jon Anderson. The motion carried unanimously at 9:19PM.

The meeting continued and general preliminary discussions on following items followed: the Project for Public Spaces forum including ideas for future consideration (bricked block between Elm and Main on State Street, varied meter rates throughout town to reflect demand), the potential for events promoted through the Downtown Improvement District, an update on the status of city attorney, and consideration of ideas to support businesses after district heat construction. No decisions or conclusions were reached.

Councilor Hooper motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:50. Councilor Guerlain seconded. The motion carried unanimously.