

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
June 26, 2019 6:30pm
City Council Chambers

In attendance: Mayor Anne Watson (Chair), Councilors Dona Bate, Conor Casey, Lauren Hierl, Glen Hutcheson, Jack McCullough and Ashley Hill (at 6:39). City Clerk John Odum acted as secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30.

19-192. With the addition of items I and j to the consent agenda (i. street closure for Langdon Street July 3rd, j. street closure for Langdon Street) the agenda was approved by acclaim.

19-193. Unger general business and appearances, Page Guertin let the Council know that the Conservation Commission has selected a contractor to do the rain garden at the credit union.

Stephen Whitaker offered comments on the following: street sweeping, hazards relating to removal of trees, sidewalk work, the Christmas wreath on the building, the police handing “no trespass” orders to homeless persons. The Mayor’s response to emails. He indicated he would like to see a Council discussion on homelessness. Vicki Lane added comments.

Councilor McCullough moved approval of the consent agenda with items e and j pulled for discussion. Councilor Hill seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 6:40.

Item e (Street Closure Request: UMV Toy Run, 8/10) was discussed with Assistant City Manager Sue Allen and Police Chief Tony Facos. Vicki Lane and Amy McCrellis commented.

Councilor McCullough moved to approve Item I as requested. Councilor Bate seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mary Alice Profitt and Brad Lamell joined in the discussion of item j. Councilor Casey moved to approve item j and Councilor Hill seconded. Further comments were offered by Stephen Whitaker. The motion carried unanimously at 6:55.

19-195. Public Works Director Tom McArdle spoke indicated the sole ADA Advisory Committee candidate was unable to attend. Councilor McCullough moved that, pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3), the Council enter executive session to discuss the appointment of a public officer. Councilor Hill seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 6:56. At 6:57, Councilor Hutcheson moved to come out of executive session and Councilor McCullough seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 6:57. Councilor Hill moved the Council appoint Linda Lyles to the Montpelier ADA advisory committee. Councilor Casey seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 6:58.

19-196. The Mayor opened 2nd public hearing on the proposed change to the Berlin Street speed limit at 6:58. Tom McArdle and Tony Facos led off discussion.

Comments were offered by Stephen Whitaker, Vicki Lane, Gene Leon, Roberta Garland, Justin Thyme, Nate Fredericks, Cadence and Ken Richardson, Julie Giffin, Deborah Lisman, Laura Smith-Riva, Matt Dolezal, Perry Startozy, Mary Carol Dobbins, Noah Sexton, Jean Richardson, and Carol Tilley. The Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:10.

Councilor McCullough moved and Councilor Casey seconded, to amend the ordinance to reduce the speed limit on Berlin Street as indicated from 35 to 30.

Councilor Hill moved to amend the motion to move the speed limit to 25 for the entire length. Councilor Bate seconded. After discussion, the motion to amend failed on a 2-4 vote (Councilors Hill and Bate voting aye, Councilors Hierl, McCullough, Hutcheson and Casey voting nay).

The primary motion on the table then passed 4-2 (Councilors Hierl, McCullough, Hutcheson and Casey voting aye, Councilors Hill and Bate voting nay. More discussion followed passage.

The Mayor called a recess at 8:30. Council reconvened at 8:38.

19-197. Dan Groberg presented a Downtown Improvement District report and budget request. After discussion, Councilor Bate moved to approve the DID FY20 budget as presented. Councilor Casey seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 8:47.

19-198. Planning Director Mike Miller came forward to discuss proposed zoning fixes with the Council. After discussion which included Sandra Vitzthum, Councilor Bate moved to set the public hearings on the proposal for August 28 and September 11. Councilor Hutcheson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

19-199. At 9:22, the Mayor opened the public hearing for the 1st reading of amendments to: Chapter 5. (Fire Department) of the code of ordinances. Fire Chief Bob Gowans participated in discussion. With no comments from the public offered, the hearing was closed at 9:27. Councilor McCullough moved the Council hold the 2nd public hearing on July 10th. Councilor Hill seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 9:27.

19-201. Councilor Hierl noted that her work on the ordinance update was affecting the schedule. She also noted that a group has started meeting on the energy efficiency ordinance.

Councilor McCullough noted the traffic calming discussion planned for the upcoming Transportation Infrastructure Committee next week.

Councilor Hutcheson thanked Assistant City Manager Sue Allen for her work. He noted the "Pancakes for the People" consent agenda item before reminding listeners of his weekly constituent meetings at Bagitos.

Councilor Casey also thanked the Assistant City Manager for her service and expressed appreciation to Stephen Whitaker's comments before beginning a brief discussion the responsibilities of local versus state government on the issue.

Councilor Bate reported that she had been contacted by Migrant Justice about a proposed Fair and Impartial Policing policy. She also indicated that Yvonne Bird has been facilitating the Parks Commission engagement with strategic planning. She also noted the coming Transportation Infrastructure committee and indicated that the CVPSA had cancelled until August. A brief discussion on an RFP for simulcasting radios followed.

Councilor Hutcheson promoted the work of the Restorative Justice panel.

Councilor McCullough acknowledged the passing of advocate Bill Newhall, noting the July 8th memorial.

- 19-202. The Mayor noted the coming opening of Caledonia Spirits and discussed the date for a home energy labeling public meeting. She also gave an update on the Energy Committee and the Energy Action Network.
- 19-204. The City Manager reported that he was working on dates for a transportation forum. He also indicated he was finalizing the process for public meetings on the Senior Center and the Library. Finally, he discussed a building grant to look at rail (with the City of Barre and the Regional Planning Commission taking the lead) before expressing concerns about providing child care at meetings.

Without objection, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:48 by unanimous consent.