

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
January 12, 2022, 6:30pm
City Council Chambers and videoconference

In attendance: Councilor Jack McCullough (Chair) and Councilors Lauren Hierl, Conor Casey, Dona Bate, Jennifer Morton, and Jay Ericson. City Clerk John Odum acted as secretary.

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM.

- 2022-001. The agenda was approved with moving item 16 to the end of the meeting by unanimous consent.
- 2022-002. General business. Stephen Whitaker on greyhound bus almost not stopping for people and not using transit center and public records concerns. Councilors Bate, Casey, and Morton announced their re-election candidacies. Jake Brown noted an open Cemetery Commission seat on the ballot. Justin Dreschler spoke of supporting relocated Afghan families moving into the city.
- 2022-003 Councilor Bate moved approval of the consent agenda and was seconded by Councilor Morton. The motion carried unanimously.
- 2022-004. Phyllis Rubenstein and Rose Luzader spoke during the discussions of committee appointments. Councilor Hierl moved to enter executive session to discuss an appointment or series of appointments to city positions pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(3). Councilor Morton seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
- Councilor Hierl moved to return to open session and was seconded by Councilor Morton. Councilor Ericson moved the following appointments (and was seconded by Councilor Morton): To the Americans with Disabilities Act Committee, Deanna James, and Margaret Ferron. To the Complete Streets Committee, David Ory. To the Conservation Commission, Rose Luzader, and Benjamin Block. To the Design Review Committee, Martha Smyrski and Liz Pritchett.
- 2022-008. Community Fund Awards. Amy Cunningham presented. Comments were offered from Vicki Lane. Stephen Whitaker had comments regard the meeting packet, website, and Community Fund budget. Councilor Hierl moved to approve budget recommendation from Community Fund Board. Councilor Casey seconded. Comments were given by Thomas Moore. The motion carried unanimously.
- 2022-009. Ballot discussion with comments from Peter Kelman and Vicki Lane, no action taken.
- 2022-010. The Council received an auditor's report from Finance Director Kelly Murphy, Miranda Macdonald, and Ron Smith, with Heather Graves available on the phone. Comments received from Peter Kelman, Stephen Whitaker (on a Central Vermont Public Safety Authority audit), and Linda Berger. Councilor Bate moved to table the topic until the next meeting and was seconded by Councilor Morton. The motion carried unanimously.

2022-011. The public hearing on the ballot opened at 7:54PM. Participating were the Clerk, Stephen Whitaker, and Peter Kelman. The public hearing was closed at 8:07.

The Chair called a recess at 8:08 and reconvened at 8:18.

2022-012. The public hearing on the budget and bonds (concurrently) opened with a presentation from the City Manager at 8:19PM. Comments and questions were directed at the Council by Jody Pettersen, Didi Brush, Peter Kelman, Holly Fowler, Phyllis Rubenstein, Gene Leon, Vicki Lane, and Kate Stephenson. The public hearing was closed at 9:46.

2022-014. COVID discussion. No action and comments were heard from Stephen Whitaker and Vicki Lane.

2022-016. Council reports: Councilors Hierl, Morton, Casey, and McCullough expressed their appreciation for Councilor Ericson, who announced he was not running for re-election. Councilor Casey noted his new job as Director of Gunsense.

2022-018. The Clerk noted his recent potential COVID exposure and offered assurances that the office was safe.

Councilor Mccullough noted the local Democratic Party was holding a clothing drive.

2022-019. City Manager Fraser gave a petition deadline reminder and comments on the public hearing process.

2022- Councilor Hierl move the Council find that premature general public knowledge of a real estate matter will clearly put the city at substantial disadvantage by signaling intentions. Councilor Bate seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Councilor Hierl moved to enter executive session under 1 V.S.A. § 313(2) Councilor Morton seconded and the motion carried unanimously at 10:18.

Councilor Morton moved to come out of executive session and Councilor Hierl seconded. The motion carried unanimously at 10:33PM.

Councilor Ericson moved to authorize the City Manager to proceed with the purchase process of the Country Club property based on the parameters discussed in executive session. Councilor Casey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:34 by unanimous consent