

Council Minutes

January 23, 2017

A duly warned meeting of the Newport City Council was held on Monday, January 23, 2017 in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Paul Monette, Council President Neil Morrissette, Aldermen Jacques Roberge, John Wilson, Steve Vincent, City Manager Laura Dolgin, City Clerk/Treasurer James D. Johnson, Chief Jamie LeClair, Andy Cappello, Tom Bernier, Charlie Elliott, Sen. Robert Starr, Sen. John Rodgers, Rep. Gary Viens, David Snedeker, Doug Spates, members of the Press and Public.

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

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Morrissette moved to approve the minutes of January 9, 2017. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, motion carried unanimously.

Comments by the Public

Mayor Monette made a statement on public comment. He has done some research and found that allowing comment only on issues that require a vote as adopted by the council on December 21, 2015 is allowed until a council member appeals. Title 1 requires that the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to express its opinion on matters considered by the public body during the meeting if order is maintained. Public comment shall be subject to reasonable rules established by the chairperson. Roberts Rules state that attendees are not members of the meeting body and ordinarily have no right to participate. However, some bodies, especially public ones, may invite nonmembers to express their views, but this is done under the control of the presiding officer subject to any relevant rules adopted by the body and subject to appeal by a member.

Barbara DeVost from the Corrections Facility tried to discuss an on-going Water Meter dispute with the City of Newport. Ms. DeVost continued to stand and talk over several objections by the Mayor. Ms. DeVost and the issue were not on the agenda.

TIF Opportunity, NVDA Executive Director Dave Snedeker and David White by Phone (attached)

David White from White & Burke presented an opportunity to the council to join a consortium of Vermont communities who would benefit by have the legislature lift the capped on the number of TIF Districts. Mr. White reviewed how a TIF District works and its many advantages. Dave Snedeker Noted that NVDA would be working towards the same goal. Most if not all the legislators present seemed to agree with the effort to allow more TIF Districts. Dave Snedeker from NVDA noted that they would be

working towards the same goal. The cost to the City would be \$5,000. The funds could be taken from the so-called Wal-Mart money. Mr. Morrisette moved to enter the consortium with the money coming from the Wal-Mart funds. Seconded by Mr. Vincent, motion carried unanimously.

Pine Bluff/Cherry Lane and Grand List Ideas

Doug Spates presented a proposal that he ~~feels~~^{feels} will help development in the City. He named three projects that have not moved in years. His idea is that if a developer builds 3 or 4 unit a year he should get tax stabilization like the stabilization available to commercial/industrial business. This would encourage development, help the developer with taxes and raise the grand list. The council would be willing to work with Doug and Frank on this proposal.

Mr. Spates also had an issue with the policy on plowing roads not owned by the City. Mr. Spates noted the policy states that the City will take over and maintain/plow roads that are built to city specifications. However, the policy indicates that a two-year waiting period is required before plowing. Mr. Spates felt this is ridiculous since the City is collecting taxes and Water/Sewer fees during this time. He would like to see the policy changed.

Proposal for Flea Market in Gardner Park, May -October; Alura Lapierre and Andy Cappello (attached)

Mr. Vincent moved to approve the Flea Market on Sundays May-Oct. that the same spot and fee as the Farmers Market. Seconded by Mr. Morrisette, motion carried unanimously.

Invitation to Winterfest February 4, 2017

Mr. Cappello presented the schedule to the council. Mr. Wilson wanted to make sure there would be emergency services available.

Request to Waive Noise Ordinance for Relay to Life on June 17, 2017

Mr. Vincent moved to waive the Noise Ordinance for Relay for Life on June 17, 2017. Seconded by Mr. Roberge, motion carried unanimously.

Assign Council Delegate for a Special VLCT Meeting

Mr. Morrisette moved to assign Mayor Monette as the Delegate to the VLCT Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Roberge, motion carried unanimously.

Approve USDA Grant Application for Public Works Excavator

Mr. Vincent moved to authorize the USDA Grant pre-application. Seconded by Mr. Roberge, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Vincent moved to authorize Laura Dolgin, City Manager to apply for Federal USDA funds not to exceed \$97,500. Seconded by Mr. Roberge, motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Roberge stated he had been contacted by a person interested in joining the Fire Dept. and had been told they were not taking any new members. Chief LeClair explained that they are not taking new members now because they can't equip them with the required gear.

Mr. Roberge asked if the annual Audit is put out to bid. Mr. Johnson stated it is not and that he would not be agreeable to doing that now. He has a great relationship with the current firm. They are very professional, thought, they are very familiar with the city's finances and are available whenever we require assistance.

Ms. Dolgin presented the council with the Fireman's Raffle ticket

Ms. Dolgin noted that ACT 148 (SWIP) is undergoing revision in that all communities shall join the Solid Waste District.

Old Business

Mr. Vincent noted that the junk had been moved from East Main St. to Highland Ave.

Next Meeting Date

February 6, 2017

Executive Session for Pending Litigation/Contract, 1VSA 313 (a)(1)(A); (a)(1)(E)

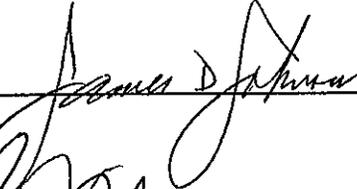
Mr. Roberge moved that a motion for the Board's specific finding that premature public knowledge of the subjects of the anticipated executive session tonight would clearly place the board and/or persons involved at a substantial disadvantage. Seconded by Mr. Vincent, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Roberge moved to enter executive session with counsel, for confidential attorney-client communications concerning contracts and pending litigation. Seconded by Mr. Morrissette, motion carried unanimously.

No action.

Adjournment

Mr. Roberge moved to adjourn at 9:32 PM. Seconded by Mr. Vincent, motion carried unanimously.

Attested  This 6th Day of February, 2017

 Mayor