

VERGENNES CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2013
MINUTES

Mayor William Benton called the regular meeting to order at 6 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station on Green Street. Those in attendance were:

Mayor William Benton	Neil Kamman, VUHS
Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette	Jeff Glassberg, VUHS
Alderman Lynn Donnelly	Christy Goyette, C&J Haulers
Alderman Clara Comeau	Joe Fortune, C&J Haulers
Alderman Lowell Bertrand	Howard Raik, CHP International, Inc
Alderman Joe Klopfenstein	Tony Staynings, NJCC
Alderman Renny Perry	Brian Fox, NJCC
City Manager Mel Hawley	Lauren Morales, NJCC
City Clerk Joan Devine	

BOND VOTE INFORMATION-VUHS: Neil Kamman advised he and Jeff Glassberg are members of the VUHS Board Directors and would like to make a brief presentation on the package of improvements associated with the bond vote being held December 10th. The Board is aware that we are coming out of a recession and no one has a lot of money, he advised. During that time period they had to cut programs, cut staff, and cut costs to repair the school and ended up with a roof that would not stop leaking and two bond votes that did not pass. We could not come back to the voters again within a year so we had to go for a 5-year loan to get the roof fixed before more damage was done, he advised. The voters did approve the loan to fix the roof and that has been accomplished. Under Jeff Glassberg's leadership we are going forward with the repairs that are needed and establishing a capital fund for future repairs needed at the school. The bond, for \$2.8 million, is needed for the repairs and includes refinancing the \$600,000 5-year loan for the roof. The first year of the bond if passed will cost taxpayers \$11 on a \$100,000 assessment and jump to \$37 in the second year. Mr. Kamman invited everyone to their bond vote informational meeting scheduled for December 3rd at 6 p.m. at the VUHS. Jeff Glassberg expressed appreciation to the City Council for their help at their June meeting that assisted them in dealing with their emergency. Mr. Kamman and Mr. Glassberg departed at 6:15 p.m.

NORTHLANDS JOB CORPS UPDATE: Howard Raik, President of CHP International, was present to advise his company was the selected contractor for the new Northlands Job Corps contract period. He reported they will assume responsibility for the overall management beginning December 1st and will be subcontracting the management of the purchasing and property department to Foxmar, Inc., d/b/a Education and Training Resources. Mr. Raik introduced his guests and described the roles each will perform in the operation. The primary vision is to improve their profile in the community and will accomplish this through partnership developments with employers, non-profit groups, churches, etc. They are also looking at turning their attention to qualified employees for performance. Plans are in place to work on the culture of staff and students to have respect for the host community, he advised. Mr. Raik estimated that 25 to 30 percent of their population is Vermonters and the vast majority is from New England. Job Corps is a statistics driven organization and the goals come from the federal government. Prior to departure they advised they are looking forward to doing business with us and creating a positive and lasting relationship.

ITINERENT VENDOR: C&J Haulers filed an application to renew their Itinerent Vendor License to offer ‘trash for cash’ service for calendar year 2014. City Clerk Devine advised the Certificate of Insurance is attached and the \$100 application fee paid. Christy Goyette advised they have been providing this service for 13 years and are very happy with the results. Alderman Lowell Bertrand moved to approve the application as submitted, seconded by Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette, with all voting in favor. A short discussion was had regarding traffic backups and possible ways to prevent them in the future.

WARRANTS: The warrant, totaling \$292,725.66, was presented for review and signatures of approval.

MINUTES: Minutes to the November 5th special meeting were presented for approval. Alderman Lowell Bertrand moved to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Alderman Clara Comeau, with all voting in favor except Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette and Alderman Joe Klopfenstein who both abstained due to being absent. Minutes to the November 22nd regular meeting were approved as presented by motion of Alderman Clara Comeau, seconded by Alderman Lowell Bertrand, with all voting in favor.

VERGENNES COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (VCDC): Mayor Benton announced that terms for committee members on the VCDC expired in March 2013. The policy requires the composition of members so not all members can be re-appointed as their position status may have changed. He recommended the following: Banker – Christine Collette; Real Estate – Nancy Larrow; City Council – Clara Comeau; Vergennes Partnership – Scott Gaines; City Clerk – Joan Devine; and Citizen at Large – Henry Broughton. There is no longer a Vergennes Chamber of Commerce so that position can be removed. Discussion then centered on the Committee’s confusing name and it was suggested that the name be changed to Vergennes Revolving Loan Fund Committee. Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette moved to appoint members as recommended with terms expiring in March 2015 and to change the name to Vergennes Revolving Loan Fund Committee. The motion was seconded by Alderman Bertrand with all voting in favor.

CITY GREEN HOLIDAY LIGHTS: Discussed briefly was the cost of buying and installing lights on the City Green for the holidays. Manager Hawley advised it takes the Public Works Department two days to put the lights up and take them down in addition to purchasing them which is an annual cost of \$3,000. A consensus showed all were in favor of continuing this event.

BUDGET AND MANAGER’S REPORT: Manager Hawley gave a report on the police station project which appears to be on budget and on schedule. The unanticipated surge tank installation originally estimated at \$4,400 cost only \$2,400. Don Johnson has almost completed the survey so we are that much closer to preparing a sewer agreement with the State for service at the train station in Ferrisburgh. Both the COPS grant and WomenSafe grant are all good with reimbursements coming in follow the brief shutdown of the federal government. A check for reimbursement of expenses for a pump station replacement on Main Street has arrived with only a few more bills to go. The sprinkler system has passed inspection; we were operating on conditional approval. FVOH loan of \$52,800 has been partially repaid with \$32,588 from their awarded historic tax credit certificate leaving \$20,000 that will be paid with the reimbursement from the Vermont Arts Council. We are also waiting for reimbursement on the trash/recycling grant from ACSWM for the trash/recycling receptacles

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Recreation Committee Chair Joe Klopfenstein reported they were awarded a \$21,000 grant from the State for the Toddler Playground proposed at the elementary school. They are working on parking issues and final design at the moment. Manager Hawley reported the Development Review Board (DRB) and the Planning Commission are very busy right now with the DRB working on the proposal to convert Denecker Chevrolet property to Neil's Family Market and Claybrook, a 50-unit residential project on the former Bourgeois property while the Planning Commission is working on the municipal development plan update.

VERGENNES BURYING GROUND: Mayor Benton displayed the new sign for the cemetery that was a joint effort between A & H Signs and Rebecca Duffy. He advised fencing is being looked into for design and pricing for hopeful placement in the spring. He also reported that the appointed committee working on the City Hall Courtyard proposal has concluded the original plan will be changed due to the loss of parking involved and the marquee being located in the City right-of-way and not in compliance with the zoning regulations. When a final plan is available, along with an estimate and funding proposal, they will then bring it to the City Council for review.

UPDATE: Manager Hawley informed the City Council that he was able to locate the boundary survey original done by Lee Lowell for the Didier Murat property on 104 South Water Street. A 30-day notice must be given before the public hearing can be held regarding abandoning the roadway on that property. City Attorney James Ouimette will be preparing the legal notice and associated documents. A public hearing should be sometime in January.

ADJOURNMENT: Senior Alderman Randall Ouellette moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m. The motion was seconded by Alderman Lowell Bertrand with all voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan T. Devine
Vergennes City Clerk