

VERGENNES CITY COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 26, 2015
MINUTES

Mayor William Benton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station meeting room located at 50 Green Street. Those in attendance were:

Mayor William Benton	Alderman Lowell Bertrand
Senior Alderman Renny Perry	Alderman Joseph Klopfenstein
Alderman Jeffrey Fritz	City Manager Mel Hawley
Alderman Lynn Donnelly	City Clerk Joan Devine
Alderman Michael Daniels	Michelle Eckels

WARRANT: The Warrant totaling \$675,551.76 was circulated for review and signatures of approval from the Board.

MINUTES: Senior Alderman Renny Perry moved to approve the minutes of April 28, 2015 as presented, seconded by Alderman Bertrand, with all voting in favor. Senior Alderman Renny Perry moved to approve the minutes of May 12, 2015 and was seconded by Alderman Bertrand. On the second page in the last paragraph the word “sewer” was replaced with “sewerage”. A vote on the motion after the correction showed all to be in favor.

DOG WARRANT: A Dog Warrant listing 33 dogs that are not registered as required by law was presented to the City Council for signatures. City Clerk Devine reported each pet owner has received two letters advising they needed to register their dog. A copy of the Warrant will be forwarded to the police department for further action including possible impoundment of any unregistered dog(s).

LIGHTING OF THE FALLS: Alderman Mike Daniels reported the falls have been lit at night in the summer since 2007. He advised the Vergennes Junior Fishing Derby Committee would like to know if they are going to be lit again this year so they can include the lighting of the falls in their program schedule. Mayor Benton stated that the City Council has discussed looking into permanent lighting as it costs about \$2,250 annually but that has not been done yet. Manager Hawley advised it is a timing issue now and suggested repeating what has been done in the past and he pays it out of the recreation program budget. There was a consensus that the annual lighting be continued. It was also suggested that the lighting of the falls be part of the planning project funded by the Strong Communities, Better Connections grant.

VERGENNES JUNIOR FISHING DERBY REQUEST: City Manager Hawley reported the Fishing Derby Committee has requested making a portion of Macdonough Drive one-way traffic during the derby. They felt it would provide more parking on that side of the river and would be safer for pedestrians. Following discussion, Mel suggested and it was agreed that the portion of Macdonough Drive from Comfort Hill to High Street should be completely closed with traffic diverted to Comfort Hill and High Street between the hours of 5 a.m. until 9 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and until noon on Sunday. Police, fire, rescue and residents of Macdonough Drive, Comfort Hill, and High Street will be notified by mail of the road closing.

VERGENNES SWIM TEAM REQUEST FOR FUNDING: City Manager Hawley provided a swim team financial history report from 2010 through 2014. He also pointed out that Vergennes swimmers make up less than 50 percent of the team and the remaining swimmers are from other towns. Michelle Eckels advised they have 54 swimmers enrolled to date but are expecting more; swim team practice starts on June 8th. She advised she is encouraged that they have 18 new swimmers in the age 8 and under category.

Manager Hawley advised all swimmers who signed up are entitled to a full refund if they decide to quit the swim team by June 22nd.

L.F. BENTON COMPANY LAND PURCHASE: The draft survey by Tim Cowan of the river lot that the City is looking to purchase from the L.F. Benton Company has been given to Attorney James Ouimette, advised Manager Hawley. Attorney Ouimette and Tim Cowan will be meeting to discuss the lot with uncertain ownership. We are not at a point of knowing if property was retained in error or if the lot was intentionally retained, advised Manager Hawley. Attorney Ouimette says we need to find the heirs and if there are none, the land goes to the State of Vermont.

MEIGS ROAD SEWER SERVICE: City Manager Hawley advised he has met with all the property owners on Meigs Road, except Harold and Helena Leach, in determining how the sewer lines are laid out in that area. He advised he has spoken with Brent Newton who is open to the Leach property having their sewer line connected to his sewer pump station. He hopes this might be a reasonable solution. Mr. Hotte wants the City to install a second sewer main on Meigs Road. This would enable him and others to have access to a main on their respective side of the street. Mel said that he has repeatedly told Mr. Hotte that he can connect his house to the sewer main on the east side of Meigs Road. Mel explained that it is not customary to have a sewer main going down both sides of the road. He informed the Board that he will continue to work on trying to get any other lines out of Mr. Hotte's backyard.

GEVRY PARK SEWER SERVICE: The public hearing for the proposed housing project by Addison County Community Trust in the Gevry Trailer Park in Waltham was held May 13th, advised City Manager Hawley. He advised he expressed the City's concern with not having a formal agreement for City sewer at that location. The meeting was recessed until June 23rd but he will not attend as it conflicts with the City Council meeting schedule.

MANAGER'S REPORT: City Manager Hawley reported the Ray E Davison Capital Equipment Committee met prior to this meeting and went through the investments, interest earnings, and the purchase made in a prior year. The current value of the fund is \$239,000 and \$5,700 is available in interest earnings. Next year the fund will earn approximately \$13,000. The committee took no action and the earnings will continue to build.

Grievance Day was misreported in the Addison Independent to be held June 5th. Grievance Day will be held June 1st and a correction will be made in the newspaper.

Manager Hawley presented his proposed FY2016 budget. He advised he is having difficulty in forecasting at this point but the revenues are as predicted except for the Police Department. He stated that he does not feel good about the preliminary proposed budget as it could possibly require a 12 cent tax increase if there is no fund balance to carry forward. He encouraged the Board to review the budget submitted and to communicate with him any suggestions they may have during the upcoming budget work sessions.

ADJOURNMENT: At 7:10 p.m. Alderman Lowell Bertrand moved to adjourn the regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Alderman Daniels with all voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Vergennes City Clerk