

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 25, 2016
MINUTES

Mayor William Benton called the regular meeting to order at 5:40 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station meeting room located at 50 Green Street. Those in attendance were:

Mayor William Benton
Senior Alderman Renny Perry
Alderman Mathew Chabot
Alderman Lowell Bertrand
Alderman Jeffrey Fritz

City Manager Mel Hawley
City Clerk Joan Devine
Tim Ryan
Reporter Andy Kirkaldy (6:05 p.m.)
Police Chief George Merkel (6:05 p.m.)

WARRANT: The Warrant totaling \$263,052.64 was circulated for review and signatures of approval.

MINUTES: Minutes to the September 13, 2016 meeting were amended on the third page under ‘Winter Parking Ban Ordinance’. The fourth sentence was amended to read, “Senior Alderman Perry agreed with Alderman Donnelly regarding flexibility for the police but noted the ordinance doesn’t have any flexibility.” Alderman Bertrand moved to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Senior Alderman Perry, with all voting in favor. A typographical error was corrected in the September 27, 2016 minutes. Alderman Bertrand moved to accept those minutes as corrected, seconded by Senior Alderman Perry, with all voting in favor.

RYAN BLOCK, LLC – DEMOLITION OF STORAGE BUILDING: City Manager Hawley explained that according to the zoning regulations demolition of buildings in the central business district can involve the City Council if such building contributes to the historical or architectural character of the district. He advised Tim and Lizbeth Ryan, principals of Ryan Block, LLC, will soon have an application before the Development Review Board to demolish the existing accessory structure located in the alley between the Ryan Block and the United Methodist Church. It is their intention to replace the structure using the same footprint and maintaining its same use. Alderman Matt Chabot advised he looked at the building and felt it does not contribute to the historical or architectural character of the district and moved that Ryan Block, LLC be allowed to demolish the building on that basis. Alderman Jeff Fritz seconded the motion with all voting in favor.

GREEN UP VERMONT APPROPRIATION: Green Up Vermont submitted their annual request for financial support and confirmation of the appointed local coordinator. Based on population, the request was for \$150; the same amount as last year. Senior Alderman Perry moved to appropriate \$150 to Green Up Vermont and re-appoint Lowell Bertrand as the City’s coordinator for Green Up Day. The motion was seconded by Alderman Chabot with all voting in favor.

FRONT PORCH FORUM APPROPRIATION: City Manager Hawley reported City Clerk Devine received an email from Front Porch Forum requesting a voluntary contribution to help them with operating costs rather than their charging a mandatory fee to towns. They are a for-

profit corporation, he stated. City Clerk Devine advised she has used Front Porch Forum several times for reminders to residents regarding property tax due dates, dog registrations, special city meetings, construction projects, etc. Senior Alderman Perry moved to contribute \$100 as recommended by City Clerk Devine and City Manager Hawley to Front Porch Forum. The motion was seconded by Alderman Bertrand with all voting in favor.

CORRECTION IN 2016 GRAND LIST: Manager Hawley advised the law allows the Board of Listers, with the approval of the City Council, to amend a grand list prior to December 31st of the year filed to correct an error or omission. He advised the property located at 191 South Maple Street owned by Stephen and Patricia Leone needs to be corrected. The Leones constructed a garage in the fall of 2015 that was missed due to the listers' punch list listing it as an outbuilding. The City's appraiser went to the property and did not see an outbuilding, made note of it, and the folder was filed with no change in appraisal. The Board of Listers was made aware of this error, advised Manager Hawley, and they recommend the assessment be raised from \$182,100 to \$198,600. Alderman Bertrand moved to amend the 2016 grand list accordingly, seconded by Alderman Fritz, with all voting in favor.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Hawley reported no concerns with the budget at this point other than vehicle maintenance in the Police Department budget. He mentioned the new cruisers have just arrived.

APPEAL - DEVELOPMENT REVIEW BOARD DECISION: City Manager Hawley, who also serves as the Zoning Administrator, informed the City Council that Mahaiwe, LLC has appealed a recent decision of the Development Review Board regarding their property at 360 Main Street. The City Council was provided with a copy of the decision and appeal. The City Attorney has submitted a notice of appearance on behalf of the City. City Manager Hawley advised the City Council could decide to not defend the decision. Senior Alderman Perry questioned why Mahaiwe, LLC would be appealing the condition in the decision for perimeter fencing when they offered it as "either-or" alternatives. City Manager Hawley advised the appellant does not feel the regulations support the conditions outlined in the decision.

COMMODORE DRIVE: The base coat of pavement is down on Commodore Drive, advised Manager Hawley, as well as trees planted, curbing and sidewalk in place. The City Council agreed to accept Commodore Drive as a City street in phases and he has the City Attorney working on the paperwork to accept Phase 1, he stated. The project was fully engineered, and at Senior Alderman Perry's suggestion, City Manager Hawley will look into some form of certification that the street is built to City standards. He also advised the street will be accepted in advance of the top coat of pavement. The development owner will provided the City with funds that will cover the estimated cost.

REVOLVING LOAN FUND: Manager Hawley updated the City Council on the \$95,000 loan with interest at 4 percent to Lincoln Geronimo, LLC. He advised the mortgage has been signed and recorded and a check for \$74,425 has been released; \$20,000 was held back for the streetscape project, as was the \$25 application fee, \$500 for attorney fees, and \$50 for recording fees. Monthly payments of interest only on \$75,000 will be owed through June, 2017. Beginning in July, after the streetscape project is completed, payments of interest only on

\$95,000 loan will be owed through October, 2017. At this point, the \$95,000 with interest at 4 percent will be amortized over the remaining nine (9) years.

POOL INSPECTION: City Manager Hawley advised the pool inspection was completed about three weeks ago. The representative from Aquatic Development Group that came was very experienced, he advised, and he found it very beneficial to listen to him. The representative was very impressed with the condition of the pool for it being 51 years old. He will also be recommending various safety signs. Once the report arrives he will make copies available.

TENNIS COURT RESURFACING: Last week the cracks in the courts were filled by Vermont Tennis Courts Resurfacing and the lines were painted where cracks were filled. The resurfacing will occur in the spring.

VOSHA INSPECTION: City Manager Hawley advised he has not received anything from VOSHA yet regarding the inspections at the wastewater treatment plant and the Public Works garage. He is expecting a citation for the list of violations that were found at the treatment plant even though those have since been corrected. There was also a violation at the garage involving a container of sewer dye solution that was not properly labeled which has been addressed.

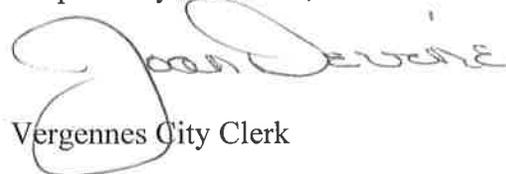
ROAD CLOSING – SOUTH MAPLE STREET: A culvert is being replaced on South Maple Street just south of the intersection of Victory Street, advised Manager Hawley. South Maple Street will be closed November 1st and 2nd. The City received a \$45,000 VTrans structures grant for this project and will also be incorporating replacement of the clay tile sewer main in the area of the project. The Public Works employees will be working long days to get this done in the least amount of time.

VV II HOUSING ASSOCIATES, LP: Manager Hawley advised that VV II Housing Associates, LP has appealed the Board of Civil Authority's decision on their 2016 grand list assessment of \$511,600.

COMMENTS: Mayor Benton announced Pumpkins in the Park will be held on Saturday from 3 to 5 p.m. on the City Green.

ADJOURNMENT: The regular meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m. by motion of Alderman Bertrand, seconded by Senior Alderman Perry, and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,



Dawn Devereaux

Vergennes City Clerk