

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
NOVEMBER 29, 2016
MINUTES

Mayor William Benton called the regular meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station meeting room located at 50 Green Street. An amendment was made to the agenda to include a request for an Outdoor Seating Agreement by Northern Daughters. Those in attendance were:

Mayor William Benton	City Manager Mel Hawley
Senior Alderman Renny Perry	City Clerk Joan Devine
Alderman Mathew Chabot	Shannon Haggett
Alderman Lowell Bertrand	Reporter Andy Kirkaldy
Alderman Mark Koenig	Cristy Goyette, C & J Haulers
Alderman Lynn Donnelly	Joe Fortune, C & J Haulers
Alderman Jeff Fritz	

MINUTES: The minutes to the November 15, 2016 meeting were reviewed and corrected. The last sentence on the first page was changed to read, "Senior Alderman Renny Perry advised the Downtown Designation renewal application includes flags and flashers for several crosswalks and pedestrian crossing signals for the Green Street/Main Street intersection." Alderman Bertrand moved to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Senior Alderman Perry, with all voting in favor.

WARRANT: The Warrant totaling \$732,341.60 was circulated for review and signatures of approval. Of that amount over \$690,000 was for payment of the second installment of education taxes paid to VUES and VUHS.

VENDOR LICENSE – C & J HAULERS: City Manager Hawley distributed a copy of the universal recycling law timeline provided by the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources with the agenda packet. He asked the representatives of C & J Hauler if they were accepting leaf and yard debris as required by law since it can no longer be brought to the landfill. Mr. Fortune advised they were taking leaves and charging by the bag and also taking brush up to 1¼" diameter. Mr. Fortune reported they do not take grass clippings because they can be combustible. Manager Hawley advised Act 148, the new universal recycling law, has changed the rules as it relates to recycling. Even though the City no longer needs a State permit to operate a recycling center, drop-off facilities are required to adhere to the new law. Mr. Fortune advised every town/city has to have a plan and if it is working, nothing more is needed. Trash haulers at drop-off facilities have to assure that food scraps are accepted effective July 1, 2017. Mr. Fortune said they have several options; they can hire someone to handle it, they can offer drop-off on their regular schedule, or they can set a specific day for it. Cristy Goyette stated they cannot make a decision on what they will do until Addison County Solid Waste Management District makes decisions on what they will be accepting. City Manager Hawley advised we are becoming regulated by the State so he recommends the City Council meet with C & J Haulers before July 1, 2017 to review what they have come up with to meet the new law. Senior Alderman Perry moved to grant C & J Haulers' a six-month Vendor License for \$50 and to

review the application again in May or June of 2017 relative to the second half of the calendar year. It was noted that C & J Haulers have paid \$100 for a one-year license. The motion was seconded by Alderman Lowell Bertrand with all voting in favor. City Manager Hawley felt the law was passed by the State prematurely since there was not a comprehensive plan in place on managing food scraps.

OUTDOOR SEATING AGREEMENT – NORTHERN DAUGHTERS: City Manager Hawley explained an outdoor seating agreement is needed for Northern Daughters to offer food and/or beverages on the deck located in the City right-of-way. He explained there are such agreements in place for Black Sheep Bistro, Vergennes Laundry, Park Squeeze, and 3 Squares Cafe. Senior Alderman Perry moved to grant an outdoor seating agreement to Northern Daughters. The motion was seconded by Alderman Donnelly with all voting in favor.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY DISCUSSION: Mayor Benton advised several ideas were exchanged at the last meeting regarding pedestrian safety and he was looking to see how the City Council would like to proceed. He advised he received an email from Carrie MacFarlane, who is a member of the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee, stating she would be willing to help. Alderman Donnelly suggested that lowering the streetlights on the utility poles on Main Street would bring more light to the sidewalks. City Manager Hawley stated that when the City switched to LED lighting, LED20s were installed throughout the City except in the downtown where LED40s were used. Senior Alderman Perry advised their downtown renewal application proposes getting the overhead wires moved out of the downtown district within five years. Once the utility poles are removed, the streetlights will need to be replaced, he advised. The project will need to go through a design phase and funding will be needed. He said that all properties in the downtown have the capability to have their respective electric service enter from the back of the building. Mayor Benton reported Middlebury now has the flashing lights for pedestrians which are MUTCD compliant; something the City can look into. He advised he would like a task force to possibly include two members of the City Council, Carrie MacFarlane, Stacy Raphael, and a representative from the Vergennes Partnership to work together and bring a proposal back to the City Council. Alderman Matt Chabot and Alderman Mark Koenig volunteered to serve on the task force. Mayor Benton advised he will contact the others to see if they would be willing to serve. Manager Hawley reported this will most likely lead to capital improvements and Water Tower Funds may be available if it meets the criteria.

SWIMMING POOL INSPECTION: City Manager Hawley reported the inspection report has been distributed to pool director Brad Castillo, swim team officer Michelle Eckels, public works supervisor James Larrow, the City Council and local resident Mike Quigley who used to work for Pool World and has a lot of experience with pools. He also advised that Michelle Eckels met with him and said the swim team would likely fundraise for new starting blocks this year and felt they could help with the cost of a building to store chemicals. Manager Hawley stated he has emailed the pool inspector, Steve Biernacki of Aquatic Development Group, and he does plan to come back in the spring to inspect the main drain as well as re-measuring the water depths at the location of the starting blocks.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Hawley reported having no concerns with the status of the budget and feels we are in good shape heading into winter. A copy of the Capital Projects

and Special Revenue Funds report was included in the agenda packet. He reported meeting with the VOSHA compliance officer on November 18 and delivered a letter and photos confirming that all corrective actions have been made as a result of their inspection and issuance of citations. The proposed penalties totaling \$10,920 were reduced to \$3,200. The penalties will be split equally between the Sewer Department budget and Public Works Department budget. Manager Hawley reported the audited financial statements from Fothergill Segale & Valley were recently distributed to the City Council via e-mail. Senior Alderman Perry suggested the City Council consider bidding out the audit as he feels it is good practice to bring in another auditing firm for a different look. The City Council will discuss this and the audited financial statements at the next meeting.

COMMENTS: Mayor Benton reported he had been contacted by a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) regarding their offer to purchase a 48-inch bench from Charleston Bench Company to donate to the City for placement in the City Green. The bench will have an inscribed brass plaque honoring those that served in the Vietnam War.

There will be only one regular meeting in December; that meeting is scheduled for December 20th at 5:30 p.m. at the Vergennes Fire Station.

ADJOURNMENT: The regular meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m. by motion of Alderman Lowell Bertrand. The motion was seconded by Alderman Lynn Donnelly with all voting in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Vergennes City Clerk