

CITY COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 20, 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. 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	Robert Trepanier
Alderman Lynn Donnelly	
Alderman Jeff Fritz	

MINUTES: The minutes to the November 29, 2016 meeting were reviewed and corrected. On the second page under 'Pedestrian Safety Discussion' the Bike and Safety Committee referred to was corrected to read Addison County Walk-Bike Council. Alderman Bertrand moved to accept the minutes as corrected, seconded by Senior Alderman Perry, with all voting in favor.

WARRANT: The Warrant totaling \$192,984.36 was circulated for review and signatures of approval.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TASK FORCE: Mayor Benton asked Alderman Chabot to report on the Pedestrian Safety Task Force meeting held last week. Alderman Chabot reported the meeting included representatives from Addison County Regional Planning (ACRPC) and Addison County Walk-Bike Council who appear to be a bit ahead of us. ACRPC feels grant dollars are available for the flashing signs the City was considering and they are willing to help us out with a grant application. He reported Public Works Supervisor James Larrow and Police Chief George Merkel were both at their meeting and their input was helpful. Stacy Raphael has also invited Vergennes Union High School (VUHS) to join the elementary school in implementing the Safe Routes to School program. Alderman Chabot felt two parallel programs are being run and he wants them to run in unison. City Manager Hawley advised Middlebury College did a sidewalk connectivity study in 2012 that the Task Force may find of some value as well as the Downtown-Basin Master Plan that is now finalized and addresses pedestrian improvements. Manager Hawley advised he noticed the pedestrian crossings signs on Green Street look like speed limit signs and perhaps they should be replaced with the more visible yellow diamond-shaped ones that are on Main Street. Shannon Haggett reported Local Motion out of Burlington should be of some help also.

WASTEWATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM MAPPING: City Manager Hawley reported the Lake Champlain Basin Program has a grant available, up to \$50,000, for planning and prioritization efforts to manage stormwater runoff and reduce Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs). He advised the City is subject to the new CSO rule that mandates the elimination of wastewater overflows with the next 20 years. Our stormwater infrastructure is mapped but we need to get our wastewater distribution system into a GIS mapping program, he advised. The

maximum grant is \$50,000 and although a local share is not required, a local commitment increases the likelihood of receiving an award. He recommended a \$10,000 allocation from the City; \$5,000 from the Sewer Department and \$5,000 from the Public Works Department. Senior Alderman Perry also felt it was essential to do and moved to authorize filing an application for a \$50,000 grant with a commitment of an additional \$10,000 as stated. Alderman Lowell Bertrand seconded the motion with all voting in favor. Projects approved for funding will be announced in late February.

CITY GREEN POLICY AMENDMENT: Mayor Benton pointed out that the policy requires an application for a display on the City Green to go before a committee comprised of the City Clerk, a Development Review Board member and a Recreation Committee member. He advised there no longer is a Recreation Committee so he recommended that position be filled with a Planning Commission member. Senior Alderman Perry moved to make that amendment to the policy, seconded by Alderman Bertrand, with all voting in favor.


AUDIT REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: Alderman Fritz inquired what the benefits were to be GASB compliant and what would be involved to get there. Senior Alderman Perry also felt we should at least look into it. He advised he felt an audit report for a GASB compliant organization is easier for the general public to read and understand. City Manager Hawley advised he does not take personal the auditors statements but felt the GASB statement was very negative. He did not know what is involved to get GASB compliant; it may cost \$50,000 or more just to populate the assets and does not know what the impacts will be once done.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT: Manager Hawley reported we have paid three quarterly installments on our insurances so they are reading 75 percent in the budget. We have purchased salt after last year's mild winter and overtime wages for the public works will begin to climb as winter moves in. He advised the South Maple Street culvert project, which we received a \$45,000 grant to do, is not completely done. The City had a sewer line under the old box culvert which added to the cost of the project. He asked if the sewer work could also be covered under the grant and was told it was eligible because the City owns the utility.

A letter from Matthew Witten of the Addison County River Watch Collaborative, requesting a \$400 contribution to their stream-monitoring activities, was made available to the City Council. City Manager Hawley advised Mr. Witten made a presentation recently at ACRPC but felt it was good to have him come to a City Council meeting occasionally to report their findings.

ADJOURNMENT: The regular meeting adjourned at 6:25 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