

**CITY OF MONTPELIER  
CAPITAL CITY OF VERMONT**

**City Manager's Weekly Report –6/11/10**

**UPCOMING MEETINGS ...**

- ❖ **Planning Commission:** Monday, June 14th, at 7:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers.
- ❖ **Board of Civil Authority - Training:** Tuesday, June 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 P.M. in the City Council Chambers.
- ❖ **Montpelier CAN:** Wednesday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM in the Conference Room.

**ENCLOSURES ...**

- ✓ April 28, 2010 Memo from Public Works Director re: Bridge inspection reports

**STATUS REPORTS ...**

**Reappraisal:**

Things seem to be moving smoothly. The informal hearings are being conducted now through Monday the 14<sup>th</sup>. Right now it looks as though around 350 of these meetings have been or will be held. That number may creep up to 400 by the close of business on Monday. This is compared to around 550 formal grievances that were filed in 2007 and about 500 in 2003. Hopefully, this informal process will resolve a lot of issues and reduce the number of formal grievances even further. A person, of course, can file a formal grievance without having gone through the informal process..

**Goals & Priorities:**

I appreciate the difficulty surrounding this process. I will try to get something in draft form which might make it easier to finish this up.

**Police Negotiations:**

No news on this. We need to set up another meeting time with the union.

**Summer Schedule:**

You decided to keep the regular schedule for now with the idea that you may cancel the August 25 meeting. You also decided that you will start the July 14 meeting at 6:00 PM.

**Berlin Pond Ordinances:**

As you know, we received revised drafts from Attorney Giuliani. It still doesn't include a provision about permission for use but that can be easily added at the second reading.

# CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT

June 11, 2010

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## Lamb Abbey:

You may have read the account in the paper about code issues with the Lamb Abbey. The sprinklers are already fixed and working, it was a minor repair. A couple of other relatively easy repairs have been made and the space is now approved for small use (20 or less people). This allows for dance classes, rehearsals, etc which are on going in that location.

However safety is an important issue when you are putting 100 to 200 people in a room. There is no proper second egress, the curtains are made of flammable material. There are no proper exit signs. Inadequate lighting. The main door opens inward instead of outward (which can trap people inside in a fire). In short, it's an old warehouse which was rigged up for performance use but never fully converted for safe assembly under state laws.

This came to a head with the proposal for an upcoming festival which projects 500-800 people in attendance. This caused everyone involved to take a closer look at all the safety and operational aspects of the facility. That includes the alcohol policy, how it's managed, who is responsible, who bears liability etc.

The Lamb Abbey has functioned nicely and quietly for a couple of years without incident. However it has always been one drunk driving accident or one fall down improperly lit stairs from having owners and operators held criminally and civilly liable for some steep damages.

The city has had the police chief, building inspector and me all talking with them about the best ways to make this place successful and safe. A plan is in place for certain interim improvements to be made which would allow the proposed music festival to occur on June 26<sup>th</sup>. If specified alterations and improvements are made, the space will be permitted for one time use. There is a "punch list" of improvements which would provide for ongoing use for events.

We recognize the importance of the arts and the need for this kind of performance space. We also don't want a tragedy on our hands. The building is owned by Ed Walbridge. We are in communication with Ed and are trying to assist him in any way that we can in making this work. If anyone can marshal the resources to get this place in shape it's Mr. Walbridge.

## Upcoming Meetings:

June 23

Berlin Pond ordinances – 2<sup>nd</sup> reading  
Noise Variance  
Interest and Penalties on taxes

July 14

6:00 PM – goals and priorities

William Fraser  
City Manager