

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
January 9, 2019 6:30 PM
City Council Chambers, City Hall

In attendance: Mayor Anne Watson (Chair) and City Manager Bill Fraser, Councilors Conor Casey, Ashley Hill, Glen Hutcheson, Jack McCullough, Dona Bate. Councilor Rosie Krueger was absent. Deputy City Clerk Sheila Healy acted as secretary.

The mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30.

- 19-003. The Mayor proposed that item 7 be postponed to next meeting. Agenda approved by unanimous consent as amended.
- 19-004. Mayor Watson recognized Nancy Sherman and Sergeant Jennings' great service to the city.
- 19-005. Councilor Casey moved that the consent agenda be approved. Second by Councilor McCullough. All in favor.
- 19-006. The council opened discussion on riverfront access and a potential park. Publicly offering comments or questions were: Ricarda Ericson, Regina Leonard, Steve Libby, Roy Schiff, Bob Heinz, and Katie Michaels.
- The Vermont River Conservancy presented 3 design concepts and 1 feasibility study. Discussion followed.
- Councilor Hutcheson moved to conduct more in depth public process on River Conservancy project. Seconded by Councilor McCullough. All in favor. Brief further discussion followed.
- 19-007. The Mayor opened the second public hearing on proposed parking ordinance changes. Discussion followed, with no comments offered by the public. The Mayor closed the public hearing.
- Councilor Bate moved to approve all ordinances as proposed at the second hearing. Councilor Casey seconded. Motion carried with all in favor.
- 19-009. The Investment Policy discussion began with speakers Terrance Field (Chair of investment committee), and Finance Director Todd Provencher.
- Councilor McCullough moved to approve the policy as proposed. Councilor Casey seconded. Discussion continued.
- Councilor Casey moved to amend the policy to include "The city is committed to integrating environmental, social and governance criteria into its investment considerations, including the considerations of environmental justice, labor rights, human rights and good citizenship on the side of companies. The Investment Committee

will consult with stakeholders and ESG experts to present the Council with a plan for such integration”. Councilor Hill seconded.

Councilor Bate proposed an amendment to the motion: replace “Investment Committee” with “Council.” Amendment accepted without objection. Amendment and underlying motion approved unanimously.

19-010. The Council discussed the Community Fund and Arts Board Recommendations with Christine Zachai, Ron Wild, and Michael Sherman.

Councilor McCullough moved to approve grant recommendations, Councilor Bate seconded. Further discussion followed. Motion carried 4-1 (Councilor Hill voting nay).

19-011. The Mayor opened the discussion on the proposed energy efficiency charter change. Participating were Richard Faise- Principal of Energy Futures Group, and Phoebe Howe from Efficiency Vermont

Councilor Hill moved to adopt the language for the proposed charter change with the addition of the word energy before efficiency. Second from Councilor Hutcheson. Motion carried with all in favor.

After more discussion, Councilor Bate moved to file charter change language with city clerk as passed. Second from Councilor Casey. Without objection, the motion was amended to include “January 24” to language. The motion as amended passed unanimously.

19-012. City Manager Bill Fraser opened the budget discussion, after which Mayor Watson opened the public hearing. Joining the discussion was Parks Director Geoff Beyer.

Councilor Hill moved to subtract a proposed parks position. Second from Councilor Hutcheson. Motion carries 4-2 (Mayor voting aye, nay votes from Councilors Bate and McCullough).

After further discussion, Councilor Hutcheson moved to push arts funding from \$20,000 to \$25,000. Councilor Casey seconded. Motion failed on a 2-3 vote (Councilors Casey and Hutcheson aye, all other nay).

Liz Genge from Downstreet Housing and Community Development participated in discussion of Housing Trust Fund. A letter from Carol Montgomery was read. Dan Groberg spoke regarding Montpelier Alive’s request for additional funding.

Councilor Casey moved to restore \$5,000 in funding to Montpelier Alive. Councilor Hutcheson seconded. Further discussion followed. Motion carried unanimously.

Dan Dickerson spoke on the proposed additional parks position. Further discussion followed.

Councilor Hutcheson moved to add funding for an annual citizen survey, Councilor McCullough seconded. Motion failed on a 2-3 vote (Councilors Hill, Bate and Casey voting nay)

Mayor Watson closed the public hearing.

Councilor McCullough moved to move forward with the budget and make next meeting for January 24. Councilor Casey seconded. Motion carries 4-1 (Councilor Hill voting nay).

19-014. Councilor McCullough reported on the open house for French Block apartments. Councilor Hutcheson noted his regular constituency meetings at Bagitos. Councilor Casey reported on legislative lobbying work happening in the Clerk's office and proposes including in charter change pitch into Montpelier-sponsored legislative reception. Councilor Bate congratulated those involved in restoring the French Block.

19-017. The City Manager offered comments on the appeal of recent DRB decisions.

Julia Chafets and Michael Sherman present a draft charge for the Social and Economic Justice Advisory Committee. Discussion followed. No formal action taken

Without objection, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 9:14.