

Minutes of the Montpelier City Council Meeting
August 14, 2019 6:30pm
City Council Chambers

In attendance: Mayor Anne Watson (Chair), Councilors Dona Bate, Conor Casey, Glen Hutcheson, Jack McCullough and Ashley Hill. Councilor Lauren Hierl was not present. City Clerk John Odum acted as secretary.

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

19-220. Comments regarding the recent death of Mark Johnson were offered by: Lawrence Siler, Zach Hughes, Peter Harris, Stephen Whitaker, and Elizabeth Parker.

Stephen Whitaker voiced concerns about a recent “incident” with police regarding a number of homeless individuals.

Ericka Reil offered her services on the homeless issue.

19-219. Without objection the proposed agenda was approved by acclamation

19-221. Councilor McCullough moved approval of the consent agenda sans item f. Councilor Hutcheson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

The Council took up consent agenda item f (City Hall plaza evening vendor request). Michael Cantalupo came forward for discussion. Councilor Hill moved the Council approve the permit request for the vendor from 10pm to no later than 2:00pm. Councilor Hutcheson seconded.

Councilor McCullough moved to amend the motion to make the permit subject to review during the permit period so that the Council can review, terminate or modify it if problems develop. The motion died for lack of a second. After more discussion, the underlying motion passed unanimously.

19-222. The Council discussed appointments to the Housing Trust Fund committee. After brief discussion, Councilor McCullough moved to appoint the applicants (Richard Amore and Rick DeAngelis as members of the public at large, Mary Hooper and Brian Evans as Housing Task Force representatives). Councilor Casey seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

19-223-224. The Council discussed the appointment to the Planning Commission. Marcella Dent spoke in regards to her candidacy. The appointment to the Development Review Board was also discussed (applicant Michael Lazorchak was not present).

Councilor McCullough moved the Council appoint both of the applicants to the positions they applied for. Councilor Hutcheson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- 19-225. The Council received an Energy Advisory Committee update (including Energy Efficiency Ordinance) from Kate Stephenson. Comments were taken from Vicki Lane, Ben Huffman, Stephen Whitaker, and Jeff Rubin. No formal action taken.
- 19-226. The Council discussed a proposed Vermont College of Fine Arts parcel zoning project. Councilor Hutcheson recused himself from discussion due to a potential conflict of interest. Kate Stephenson and Casey Ellison presented the proposal. Comments were offered by Page Guertin, Joe Castellano, Jeff Rubin, Stephen Whitaker, Vicki Lane, and Lawrence Siler. After discussion Councilor Bate moved to include this request to draw the zoning line for the density in the drafts that we will be receiving from the planning commission for consideration in the future. Councilor Casey seconded and the motion passed 4-1 (Mayor Watson voting aye, Councilor Hill voting nay).
- The Mayor called a recess at 8:05 recess. The meeting reconvened at 8:12
- 19-227. Planning Director Mike Miller offered a brief zoning update. After discussion, Councilor Bate moved to accept the changes to the draft so staff can warn public hearings for September 11 and September 25. Councilor McCullough seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- 19-228. The City Manager introduced a discussion of the proposed Homelessness Task Force. Comments were offered from Stephen Whitaker, Ericka Rell (VCIL), Zack Hughes, Casey Walsh, and Vicki Lane. After discussion, Councilor McCullough moved the city create a task force of up to eight people, and that the City Manager be directed to send out requests for applications from all the groups listed in his memo and to all the people who have either been listed in Steve Whitaker's memo or have otherwise already approached the city with their interest, or have expressed so in this meeting, including people who are here present, and that we get applications so the appointments will be made at the next meeting. Councilor Hutcheson seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Brief further discussion followed.
- 19-229. The Council opened a discussion of possibly synergy between Central Vermont Fiber and the Central Vermont Public Safety Authority. Stephen Whitaker opened discussion. CVPSA Chair Kim Cheney participated. After discussion, Councilor Casey moved that the City Council supports a cooperative effort between CV Fiber and CVPSA to look at a regional wide communications network that uses the fiber structure in its most efficient needs, urges the two groups to work together to accomplish that goal. Councilor Hutcheson seconded. After brief further discussion the motion carried unanimously.
- 19-230. At 9:20, the Mayor opened the second public hearing on amendments to the Code of Ordinances, chapter 7, Health & Sanitation. No public comments were offered. After discussion, the public hearing was closed a 9:28. Councilor Hill moved to set another public hearing for the next meeting. Councilor McCullough seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
- 19-231. Police captain Neil Martel gave an update on the recent protests in the city. Discussion followed. No formal action taken.

- 19-232. The City Manager gave the Council an update on the strategic plan. Discussion included comments from Stephen Whitaker. No formal action was taken.
- 19-234. Councilor Bate noted that two committees (MTIC and Complete Streets) are taking the relevant ordinance very seriously. Dona reported that she has asked CVRPC to have data collected to update numbers of downtown bikes and pedestrians
- Councilor Casey thanked the city staff for its handling of the recent conflict between the Farmers Market and the Biker's organization.
- Councilor Hutcheson reminded listeners of his weekly constituent meeting and noted the walkability of the city and that he was looking forward to the pedestrian/bike path.
- Councilor McCullough noted out the scheduled work on the Rain garden at the State Employees' Credit Union, making an appeal for volunteers.
- 19-235. The Mayor highlighted recent public hearings recently about traffic changes on Barre and Main Streets, as well as on the proposed energy disclosure, noting an upcoming meeting on the latter. She also noted the date of the coming transportation focused meeting.
- 19-236. The City Clerk reported on his activities at Defcon.
- 19-237. The City Manager thanked the Police Department for their efforts regarding the recent street protests. He also offered his condolences to the family of Mark Johnson, noting that further information would be released as soon as possible. Finally, he introduced Donna Barlow Casey who was starting as acting Public Works chief and Assistant City Manager.
- 19-238. Councilor McCullough moved that, pursuant to Title I, VSA §313, the Council enter executive session to discuss the appointment or employment or evaluation of a public employee. Councilor Hutcheson seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Without objection, the Mayor ruled the Council returned to open session and subsequently adjourned by unanimous consent.