

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Board of Aldermen Minutes
Monday, July 7, 2014

Members present; President Allaire, Aldermen Humphrey, Notte, Donahue, Siliski, Larson, Wallstrom, *DePoy, and Davis. Also present, Mayor Christopher Louras, Attorney Charles Romeo, City Clerk Henry Heck and other Officials and members of the public. Aldermen Kiernan and Brodowski were absent. Alderman DePoy arrived at 8:07 PM.

President Allaire called the meeting to order at 7PM.

President Allaire noted the new outline to the Board agenda and explained the passing of a new State law on open meetings and asked the Board to include the additions and deletions portion as a regular agenda item.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

A motion was made and seconded (Wallstrom, Larson) to add the Finance Committee report to the agenda. **Motion passed.**

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (June 16th, 2014)

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. **Motion passed.**

OUTSIDE THE RAIL

Beth Berra of Rutland City spoke on a request to have DPW plant a buffer zone of trees at the corner of West and Main Streets.

Mike Moran of Rutland City spoke on the issue of inmate release from the corrections center into the North-West section of the City. There was also discussion on the new LED lighting.

Kam Johnston spoke on several issues from cameras, tax appeals, and citizen input on the \$1.25 million grant just received by the city.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayoral Appointments

Mayor Louras asked the Board to table the nominations presented for Tony Romeo for Ward 3 Clerk, Thomas Valente as Cemetery Commission and Davis Coppock City Planning Commission. A motion was so moved and seconded (Larson, Davis) for the request. **Motion passed.** Mayor Louras spoke briefly on some training from VLCT on the new open meeting laws.

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS

Brennan Duffy; RRA Director, Rutland City Gateway Sign Initiative

Brennan Duffy, Director of the RRA presented the Board a new welcome signs initiative. Mr. Duffy presented proposed signage and potential locations. Mr. Duffy spoke on sponsorship for payment of the signs and a potential partnership with Rutland Blooms for plantings around the new signage. There was brief discussion on the information provided.

Wendy Wilton; Treasurer, Treasurer's Report May & June

Treasurer Wilton presented a May report but stated that she was unable to get all of June's prepared for tonight's meeting. The Treasurer was very detailed on the information presented including General & Proprietary Funds, Bank Balances, Delinquencies, and Income & Expense reports. There was brief discussion on the information provided.

Wendy Wilton; Treasurer, CEN Refinance Proposal

Treasurer Wilton presented a refinance opportunity on a City held Current Expense Note and asked the Board to authorize her to refinance at a lower interest rate. A motion was made and seconded (Siliski,

Wallstrom) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Siliski, Davis) approving the Merchants Bank refinance as noted in Treasurer Wilton's email at a rate of 2.75% for the next six (6) years. **Motion passed.**

Charles Romeo; City Attorney, Request for Executive Session, Environmental Court Appeal

Per past practice this request was moved to the end of the meeting.

Mike Coppinger; Downtown Partnership, Revolving Loan Fund Request

Mr. Coppinger presented a request from the Revolving Loan Fund Committee on an application from the 24 Wales Street Condo Association. The request sought a loan in the amount of \$20,000 with standard fund term, interest, payment and security rights. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) approving the Revolving Loan Fund Committees request to loan \$20,000 to 24 Wales Street with a ten (10) year term at an interest rate of 2% with monthly payments and security naming the City in 1st position on the "common areas". There was brief debate. **Motion passed.**

Barbara Spaulding; RRA, VCDP Grant Award

Mrs. Spaulding noted an earlier award ceremony with the Governor and read a prepared statement thanking all those involved on receiving a \$1.25 million Northwest Neighborhood & Housing Revitalization Grant.

Chief Schlachter; Officer Overtime Report

A report on officer overtime was presented to the Board. Alderman Davis thanked the Chief for the report and cover letter but was sorry the Chief was absent to discuss the report. Alderman Davis noted an "off balance" on the report and shared her concerns. President Allaire asked if there was any further debate. With no response, a motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) to receive and file the report. Alderman Donahue asked several questions in relations to if the issue was in committee. It was reported that the issue had been presented to the Board and was no longer in committee. A motion was made and seconded (Donahue, Davis) to refer the report presented to committee. The President noted the referral took precedent over the motion to receive and file and noted the new motion again and asked if there was any debate. Alderman Davis stated the request as a question to which Alderman Donahue stated to review the report and "or any other information that comes up". There was brief debate and a response from the City Attorney on the additional language in the motion. With the determination from the Attorney the President asked Alderman Donahue to be more specific on the additional language. Alderman Donahue stated he would be "blunt if that is what it takes". Alderman Donahue then stated " send to committee to be looked at for possible abuses, the way police officers are compensated and looked at as a whole, how it is done, and why it is done" and that is my motion. Alderman Davis immediately withdrew her second. There was no seconder to that motion with the additional language. The President noted the (Donahue) motion failed for no second and stated the original (Davis) motion to receive and file was on the table. There was continued debate on the original motion before the President called for a vote. **Motion to receive and file passed.**

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Sharon Davis; Chair, Community Development, Tax Stabilization

Alderman Davis read her report on the issue of residential tax stabilization for vacant/blighted properties. Alderman Davis noted the voter approved policies in March of 2013 & 2014. The report dealt with specific language changes to the Tax Stabilization Policy for Vacant/Blighted Residential Property. Alderman Davis moved to approve the policy with the proposed changes. This motion was seconded by Alderman DePoy. There were no questions from the Board. Kam Johnston asked a question on assessment value and how it is determined and the application process. There were other questions from outside the rail before the motion was voted on. **Motion passed.**

Chris Siliski; Chair, Finance Committee

Alderman Siliski read his report on the issue of fully depreciated assets. The committee met to discuss the request of the Treasurer to write off fully depreciated assets. Upon completing his report, Alderman Siliski moved to approve a write off of \$543,693 from the capital asset account. This motion was seconded by Alderman Davis. Debate was brief. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES

HR Committee

President Allaire is chair of the committee and read his report from their meeting on June 25, 2014. The report involved the personal manual and the review of sections 2, 3, & 4. President Allaire noted some concerns with the present manual and how it flowed. A sub-committee to the committee was to meet and discuss alternatives to bring back to the committee. The President noted their next meeting and stated that his report was for information only.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

There were no Representative Reports.

PETITIONS, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION

S.E.P. Request, Franklin, Cherry, & Brown St. Picnic, 7-27, 2-6PM

President Allaire read the request and sought the Boards pleasurer. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) approving the picnic on Franklin, Cherry and Brown Streets for July 27, with the rain date of August 3. There was brief debate. **Motion passed.**

S.E.P. Request, The Local, 7-19, 1 to 11:59 PM, Country Luau to Benefit Project Vision

President Allaire read the request and sought the Boards pleasurer. A motion was made and seconded (Donahue, Davis) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, DePoy) approving the request. There was debate on the police signoff and the capacity of the venue. An amendment was made (Notte, Larson) to the original motion setting the condition of a approved security plan with the PD and attached to the original application. **Motion passed.**

S.E.P. Request, Crop Walk for Hunger 2014, October 19th from 1:30 – 4PM

President Allaire read the request and sought a motion to suspend the rules. The request was so moved and seconded (Davis, Notte) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) approving the request for a Crop Walk on October 19th, 2014. There was no debate. **Motion passed.**

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to move into the Board of Control Commissioners. **Motion passed.**

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMISSIONERS

First Class Liquor Request, Donald Billings, Roots LLC, 30 Center St

President Allaire read the request from Donald Billings. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) to circulate the application for signatures. There was no debate. **Motion passed.**

Outside Consumption Request; Hop'n Moose Brewing Co, Friday Night Events

President Allaire read the request. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) approving the request of the Hop'N Moose Brewing Co. at 41 Center Street, with the caveat that the rules outlined by the Downtown Partnership are followed. **Motion passed.** The President was interrupted by the Clerk who asked for the Boards approval to sign off on the request as well. The President explained the request of the Clerk, Alderman Davis so moved the request. **Motion passed.**

Outside Consumption Request; Griffin's Publick House, Friday Night Events

President Allaire read the request. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) approving the request, authorizing the Clerk to sign and to follow the parameters set by the Downtown Partnership. **Motion passed.**

Outside Consumption Request; Center Street Saloon, Friday Night Events

President Allaire read the request. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) approving the request, authorizing the Clerk to sign and to follow the parameters set by the Downtown Partnership. **Motion passed.**

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to move out of the Board of Control Commissioners.
Motion passed.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business to come before the Board.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

New Business: Change to Board Rules #5, to adhere to New Open Meeting Law Requirements, Additions & Deletions

President Allaire read the request for changing the Boards agenda to adhere to the new State Laws on open meetings. The President noted the policy that has been in place and in seeking the opinion of the City Attorney, they felt a formal change to the policy was best. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to suspend the rules and take the issue up that evening. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Notte) to amend the Board Rules #5 and to insert additions and deletions to the beginning of the Board of Aldermen Agenda. **Motion passed.**

Aldermen Wallstrom requested a point of personal privilege. The President granted the request. Alderman Wallstrom wanted to thank everyone for their support of the RISE program this year. Alderman Wallstrom stated that the trip was a huge success.

Alderman Siliski requested a point of personal privilege. The president asked him to continue. Alderman Siliski wanted to acknowledge the 20 years of City service by Jack Facey who was stepping down from the Planning Commission.

President Allaire then noted an issue presented by Attorney Romeo on the last motion to amend the Boards agenda. Attorney Romeo stated that the vote needed a majority of the members to pass and because the vote was 7-1 with Alderman DePoy voting no the motion actually failed. There was brief discussion with no further action being taken on that issue.

President Allaire then stated a request for an executive session. The President noted the request was for civil litigation to which the city is a party and where the Board finds that premature or general public knowledge of the information discussed would place the public body or individual involved at a substantial risk. This request was so move by Alderman Davis and seconded by Alderman Notte. **Motion passed.**

At 8:56 the Board moved into executive session.

At 9:18 PM a motion was made to come out of executive session. **Motion passed.**

A motion was made and seconded (Wallstrom, Davis) authorizing the City Attorney to make an offer to Mr. Kelly what was discussed in executive session the parameters discussed in executive session. **Motion passed.**

At 9:20 PM a motion was made and seconded (Davis, Larson) to adjourn to a time certain of July 15th at 5:30 PM to set the city tax rate. **Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,

Henry A. Heck
Rutland City Clerk

VCDP Award Announcement

I respectfully request that the following statement be entered into the minutes.

As many of you already know, the City of Rutland has been awarded a \$1.25 million dollar grant from the Vermont Community Development Program to revitalize the Northwest Neighborhood.

There is a saying that it takes a neighborhood to raise a child, well it takes a city, a community, to raise a neighborhood. And it took a community of people to help make this application successful. As the grant writer I would like to publicly acknowledge the following people:

- Jim Simonds, Zoning Administrator for bringing the issues of blighted properties in Rutland City to the attention of the administration;
- Mayor Louras and Mark Foley Jr. for having the foresight to assign the task of blight remediation to the Rutland Redevelopment Authority;
- The Board of Alderman for their patience and support of the many planning grants that provided the RRA the tools necessary to write a successful application;
- NeighborWorks of Western Vermont including Ludy Biddle, Mary Cohen and Gregg Over and their entire Board of Directors for agreeing to partner with the City and focus their many talents and programs in the Northwest Neighborhood;
- Ami Wright for her assistance with creating the budget;
- Project Vision, in particular Joe Krauss and the many community volunteers whose insight and energy have been most valuable;
- Rutland City Police Chief Jim Baker who understands the importance of safety to the stabilization and revitalization of a neighborhood; and
- Brennan Duffy for creating ordinances and tax stabilization incentives to encourage re- investment in Rutland's neighborhoods.

I look forward to working on this project and administering this grant. I have never been more proud to live and work in the City of Rutland.