

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Board of Aldermen Minutes
Monday, March 20, 2023

Members present; Aldermen Cupoli, McCann, Savage, Barbagallo, Talbott, Tadio, Gillam, McClure, Adams, Hooker and Davis. Also present, Mayor Doenges, Attorney Bloomer and City Clerk Heck.

7:00 PM BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

City Clerk Heck called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

City Clerk Heck noted this was the first meeting after the election and noted requirements before the meeting would resume. Clerk Heck asked for all newly elected Aldermen to come forward. Mayor Doenges administered the Oath of Office and everyone took their seats. City Clerk Heck noted the opportunity to nominate their new Board President.

A motion was made by Alderman Barbagallo, to nominate Michael Talbott for President of the Board of Aldermen. Michael is extremely knowledgeable of city affairs, he's very organized and therefore I submit the name of Michael Talbott for Board President. Alderwoman Savage seconded the nomination. Alderwoman Davis moved to close the nominations. Alderman Gillam seconded. **Motion passed.** City Clerk Heck then called the vote of BOA President Michael Talbott. **Motion passed.**

President Talbott took his seat as President and thanked his fellow members for their support and confidence. He will do his best to run these meetings effectively and efficiently, to promote productive discussion and debate, to preserve order and decorum, and to communicate openly and clearly with both the Board and the public. President Talbott then continued with the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (March 6, 2023)

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) approving the minutes of the previous meeting. **Motion passed.**

OUTSIDE THE RAIL

Representative William Notte spoke about communication and how Montpelier and Rutland can work together to achieve goals for the City. He asked the Board members to reach out to him with questions. He wants to know what is going on with the City and he will do the same to let the Board know what is happening in Montpelier that could be to Rutland City's advantage.

Rutland County has a strong delegation that meets once a week as a Rutland Caucus, all political parties, and discuss what needs to be done for Rutland County. Representative Notte encouraged all members to reach out to their senators and representatives in Rutland County.

Representative Notte asked the Aldermen to sign a letter to the Speaker of the House, Jill Krowinski, requesting that the passage of the local option tax be sent to committee so it can be addressed in a timely manner. Representative Notte asked the Board to suspend the rules and circulate the letter for signatures and he would hand deliver it to Montpelier. President Talbott introduced the request, Alderwoman Davis so moved and Alderman Gillam seconded the motion to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** President Talbott introduced the request to circulate the letter for signatures. So moved by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderwoman Savage. **Motion passed.**

Chief KilCullen introduced Kyle Dawson, who has worked for Rutland City Police dispatch for about 10 months and prior to that worked for the State Police working dispatch. Kyle is now the Community Resource Specialist for the Police Department.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Doenges congratulated the newly elected and re-elected Aldermen. He also thanked the previous Mayor for setting the City up for success.

Mayor Doenges spoke about the three things he will bring to the Board: 1) What we have done for the past week or two; 2) What we are actively doing; and 3) What we are going to do next.

- In the past four days he has met with the Rutland Regional Planning (RPP) to find out what's in process there for our city. There's a lot of work that over time the City should actually be leading and there is a lot of work that the City is doing that can shift to RPP.
- The Mayor's office is now on the first floor and the reception has been great.
- Mayor Doenges has met with all City Department Heads to talk about his vision and what is next for Rutland City as a whole.
- He had a great conversation with the owner of some movie theaters and they are looking at Rutland as a potential option for their business expansion.
- The one percent option tax was submitted to Montpelier by the Clerk and the hope is that it will get approved during this legislative session otherwise the City would have to wait another year.
- There was a TIFF working group meeting and some action items out of that are for Mayor Doenges to meet with some land owners to see how we can get some control over those pieces of land or work with some organizations who could benefit from the use of the land.
- This morning there was a legislative breakfast at the Dismas House and a lot was learned about what is going on in our community and the recovery process.
- Actively the Mayor is looking at City Services, like cell phones and internet contracts, to find money that can be saved.
- Started working on a digitization strategy to make the City more accessible from a digital stand point.
- The WIFI has been updated in Chambers first which should help with the internet speed and will be rolled out to all of City Hall.
- Working with Barbara Noyes Pulling from Rutland Regional Planning Commission next week on energy efficiency grants. One is a municipal energy resilient program and the second is energy efficiency and conservation block grant. Both of these grants will allow us, for example, upgrade our buildings insulation, which has been done at City Hall.
- Started working on a draft contract with RRA. The RRA is actually undergoing a strategic planning session and trying to figure out what their future looks like.
- He has a meeting planned with Mary Ashcroft from Rutland Town, the new chair of the Rutland Town Select Board and connecting with Ian Sullivan hopefully at the end of this week.
- It was suggested to get together with other stake holders throughout the State about the Transitional housing that will be coming to an end in a couple of months.
- Lastly will be meeting with the Rutland Regional Planning Commission about the City's master plan and getting that ball rolling.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

President Talbott introduced the request to move the executive session to the end of the meeting. So moved and seconded (Davis, Savage). **Motion passed.**

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS

Barbara Spaulding; RRA, Center on Rural Innovation (CORI) – Grant Award

Barbara Spaulding introduced the request. The Center on Rural Innovation received a grant from USDA Rural Vermont to create a Placemaking plan for Rutland City. They have hired Lisa Glover as the Placemaking Fellow at CORI to lead the project with input from City stakeholders, including the RRA, the development Review Board and Chamber and Economic Development of the Rutland Region. The final plan is expected to be presented around December 2023.

A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, Savage) to suspend the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, Davis) for a vote of confidence to proceed and for the Board's participation as stakeholders. **Motion passed.**

Barbara Spaulding; RRA, Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize

Barbara Spaulding introduced the request. Vermont has never received the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize. The prize honors the work of communities that foster health and wellbeing for all by addressing systemic inequities. Ms. Spaulding felt it was relative because the Board had signed the Declaration of Inclusion in May 2021 and the prize would be \$250,000. The application would be in collaboration with multiple organizations. The RRA respectfully requests that the BOA support the City's application and designate the City to accept receipt of the prize on the community's behalf should one be awarded. Community partners can decide together how to use the unrestricted funds to benefit the community.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to suspend the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to approve the Robert Wood Johnson Culture of Health Prize application. **Motion passed.**

Barbara Spaulding; RRA, Autism Awareness Month – Art in City Hall

The City awarded Autism Advocacy and Intervention (AAI) a \$10,000 forgivable BIAP loan last December. April is Autism Awareness month and AAI is asking to hang artwork and provide information about Autism for the community to access at City Hall. This is for information only. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to receive and file. **Motion passed.**

Recreation Superintendent Peters; Request to Award RFP & Sign Contract

Superintendent Peters had a request to award RFP to Civic Plus. The current system is server base and is on its last leg. Civic Plus was the top choice and lowest price. Superintendent Peters is looking for \$17,562 to come from IT ARPA funds.

A motion was made and seconded (Cupoli, Savage) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to award the RFP to Civic Plus pending approval of the City Attorney, with the money to come out of the IT ARPA funds. **Motion passed.**

Treasurer Markowski; ARPA Resolution; Spending on Government Salaries for Additional Funds Received

President Talbott introduced the request. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** President Talbott read the motion, to elect the standard allowance approach for the City award to include the additional funds received of \$1062.33 to spend on the provision for government services throughout the period of performance of the grant. So moved Alderman Cupoli and seconded by Alderwoman Davis. **Motion passed.**

President Talbott read the motion, to adopt the resolution for the allocation of ARPA funding to include the additional funds received of \$1062.33 to fund government services under the replacing law sector revenue spending category to include general fund salaries over time and benefits and authorize the BOA

chair to sign the resolution. So moved Alderman Cupoli and seconded by Alderwoman Savage. **Motion passed.**

President Talbott read the motion, to assign the general fund unrestricted fund balance of \$1062.33 to be used to fund the “ARPA Special projects and expenses” that are approved by the Board. So moved Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Barbagallo. **Motion passed.**

Treasurer’s Report for City and RRA as of February 28, 2023

Treasurer Markowski asked for the Treasurer’s report to be received and filed and wants to spend more time on the quarterly report for the end of March. President Talbott entertained a motion to receive and file. So moved Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Adams. **Motion passed.**

Attorney Bloomer; Executive Sessions Request; Probable Litigation

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

There were no standing committee reports.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

There were no reports of representatives.

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES

There were no reports of select committees.

PETITIONS, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION

There were no petitions, letters, or miscellaneous communications.

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMISSIONERS

There was nothing to come before the Board of Control Commissioners.

BOARD OF CANNABIS COMMISSIONERS

There were no items for the Board of Control Commissioners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business to come before the Board.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

President Talbott then sought language from Attorney Bloomer to enter into executive session.

Attorney Bloomer presented language, noting a motion to find that premature general public knowledge regarding probable litigation, to which the City would be a party, would clearly place the City at a substantial disadvantage because the discussion will divulge the City’s strategy in such probable litigation and will include confidential attorney – client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the City. So moved Alderwoman Davis and seconded Alderwoman Savage. **Motion passed.**

Attorney Bloomer then presented language to enter into executive session, a motion to enter into executive session (with the inclusion of the City Attorney, Police Chief, Treasurer, Clerk and Mayor) to discuss probable litigation as allowed under Title 1, Section 313 (a)(1)(E) and Title 1, Section 313(a)(1)(F). So moved Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderwoman Hooker. **Motion passed.**

At 7:45 PM the public portion of the Board of Aldermen Meeting closed and the Board moved into executive session.

Alderman Adams left at 7:74 PM.

At 8:07 PM the Board moved out of executive session and back into the public portion of the meeting.

Motion to authorize the City to opt-in to the national opioid settlements with each of Teva, Allergan, CVS, Walgreens and Walmart, and to designate the Mayor as the individual who is authorized to sign formal and binding documents on behalf of the City. So moved Alderman McCann and seconded by Alderwoman Hooker. **Motion passed.**

Motion was made and second (Davis, Barbagallo) to adjourn at 8:13 PM. **Motion passed.**

Respectively,

Tracy L. Kapusta
Interim City Clerk