

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Board of Aldermen Minutes
Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Members present; President Doenges, Aldermen DePoy, Franco, Savage, Talbott, Tadio, Barbagallo and Davis. Also present, Mayor Allaire, Attorney Bloomer and City Clerk Heck. Alderman Gillam arrived at 7:20 PM. Aldermen Cupoli was absent.

7:00 PM BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

President Doenges called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (February 6, 2023)

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) approving the minutes of the previous meeting.

Motion passed.

OUTSIDE THE RAIL

Ed Clark from the Rutland Redevelopment Authority (RRA) Board spoke about the ad hoc housing group and the RRA agenda. The ad hoc housing group is a consortium of Neighbor Works, Housing Trust of Rutland County, Hale Resources, The Regional Planning Commission, The Rutland Housing Authority, Mayor Allaire, Andy Paluch and the RRA. The group has been meeting twice a month to develop ideas on how to encourage the development of housing within the City of Rutland. The group recognizes the need to create housing opportunities across the spectrum, from income sensitive housing and affordable housing for young families seeking to stay or come to our community, older families looking to downsize. The group is looking at many options, including ways for development of underutilized properties, development of new properties and potential developments that would support a Tax Increment Finance (TIF) district within the City of Rutland. The TIF district should be spearheaded by the RRA, but given the current situation, Lyle Jepson and Devon Neary have been the point persons. The housing component can be a contributor to the TIF district by potentially rehabilitating a property not currently supporting the Grand List. The RRA also has a Business Incentive and Assistance Program (BIAP) that has been enormously popular and successful. Vermont Community Development Program (VCDP) Grant applications, of which there are several qualified projects, unfortunately, only one can be recommended for implementation and planning grant per cycle. Barbara Spaulding has been an incredible resource for these applicants and none of this would happen without her. The RRA is going through a Strategic Planning process, with Melissa Levy from Community Roots, a small community and economic consulting organization that can lead us to a place where we know the RRA will be prepared to help the City for the foreseeable future. Looking for support from the Board of Aldermen and the City as they head to their internal planning to properly staff the organization.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Allaire reminded everyone that two weeks from tonight is election night. Folks can request absentee ballots from the Clerk's Office, vote in person at the Clerk's Office from 8-4 Monday through Friday and on Tuesday, Election Day March 7th. Polls are open from 7AM to 7PM.

Tomorrow night there will be a Mayoral Debate live on Peg TV at 6PM. There is a second debate that has been scheduled at the Paramount on Thursday, March 1st at 6PM.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

President Doenges noted the following additions and deletions to the agenda:

Additions are a Special Event Permit (SEP) request for Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Rutland Great Strides, May 20, 2023, Pine Hill Park Walk and GMP Pole and Wire request. Deletion to the agenda for the Community and Economic Development Report. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to approval the additions and deletions to the agenda. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS

Barbara Spaulding: RRA; Better Places Resolution

The BOA voted last November to support a 2023 application to the Better Places program to partner with Come Alive Outside to Reimagine Depot Park. The amenities were finalized for the park and the pre-flight application was filed by the steering committee. Moving forward the required crowdfunding through Patroncity and the City signing a resolution allowing Come Alive Outside to manage the grant and make an investment on the city owned land, specifically Depot Park.

The RRA and Recreation Department respectfully request that the Aldermen sign the attached resolution as it is a condition of the Better Places program to move forward with the project.

A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Davis) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Savage) to circulate the resolution for signatures. **Motion passed.**

Barbara Spaulding: RRA; BIAP Request, Euphoric Hair Experience

The RRA Board met on February 14, 2023 to review the BIAP application for Euphoric Hair Experience, LLC at 53 Merchants Row. The applicant, La'Keiah Sanchez, is asking for \$10,000 BIAP forgivable loan and referral to Heritage Family Credit Union (HFCU), to be used in conjunction with other resources, to open a black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) hair salon which is only the second such salon in Vermont. Six full-time employees will be hired. The RRA Board recommends approval of the \$10,000 BIAP forgivable loan and referral to the HFCU Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) program for a secured loan. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Talbott) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Tadio) to approve the \$10,000 BIAP forgivable loan for Euphoric Hair Experience, LLC and referral to the HFCU RLF program for a secured loan. **Motion passed.**

Barbara Spaulding: RRA; BIAP Request, Down Valley Bikes

The RRA Board met on February 14, 2023 to review the BIAP application for Down Valley Bikes at 10 Merchants Row. The applicants, Sam Mills and Paige Prouty, are asking for a \$5,000 BIAP grant and referral to HFCU, to be used in conjunction with personal investment. The bike shop will offer basic to specialized mountain bike services and outdoor apparel. The applicants also intend to host special events. The RRA Board recommends approval of the \$5,000 BIAP grant and referral to the HFCU RLF program for a secured loan. A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Savage) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Davis) to approve the \$5,000 BIAP grant and referral to the HFCU RLF program for a secured loan. **Motion passed.**

Chief Lovett: Rutland County Emergency Alerting Plan

As part of the City of Rutland Fire Department's participation in the Rutland County Emergency Alerting plan, the Fire Whistle at the Fire station will be blowing 4 rounds of 5-5-5, totaling 60 blows, on May 9, 2023 at 6:30 PM. This will coincide with the testing of the Green Mountain Power Emergency Alerting protocol for Chittenden Dam, which includes the use of the sirens located along the East Creek river basin. These alerting actions will simulate what would take place, in the event of an emergency, at the

dam. In the Rutland County Emergency Alerting Plan, in the event of an actual emergency, the whistle would be used to alert the citizens of the City of Rutland and the Town of Rutland of the existence of a Civil Emergency. The plan calls for general information about the emergency to be broadcast through cell phones, social media, the City's web sites and other traditional means. Geo Mapping is now included where individuals receive specific instructions based on their current location, as to what they should do, on their cell phones. If people are registered through VT Alert, they would also receive a message on their land line phones. This is for information only.

Chief Lovett: MOU between City and Swiftwater asset of the State of VT USAR Team

The City of Rutland Fire Department's involvement in the State Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team is essential to the department keeping trained and certified firefighters in the multiple modalities of Technical Rescue. Without this involvement the department would not be able to afford the training costs associated with keeping the team compliant with State and Federal Standards and remaining current with new techniques. Participation allows the department to receive equipment when available to the State Team.

Attorney Bloomer has reviewed the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will extend the department's participation with the State's Swift Water Team. Attorney Bloomer identified areas that clarification would be desirable, but the State is not receptive to changing their contract language. Chief Lovett is comfortable with respect to the areas where Attorney Bloomer preferred clarity, after speaking with the program manager for VT Task Force 1. If the City wants to proceed with the MOA in its current state, it is recommended that the cover letter be included in the packet to document the oral understanding that Chief Lovett has with the State.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, DePoy) suspending the rules and taking action on the request.

Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, DePoy) to approve and authorize the Fire Chief to sign the MOA that will extend our participation with the State's Swift Water Team. **Motion passed.**

Superintendent Peters: Recreation

Approval Contract for Pilot Program: Spring Swim Lessons at VAC

Vermont Achievement Center (VAC) in years past offered swim lessons, but with lack of resources this service is no longer available. Swim lessons are currently only offered in the summer through the White's Memorial Park Pool by Rutland Recreation and Parks. The classes reach maximum capacity, due to high demand, and all community members are unable to participate. Rutland Recreation and Parks will partner with VAC to offer swim lessons and community events at the Mitchell Therapy Pool, located at VAC during the evening and weekends through the months of March-June 30th, 2023. Rutland Recreation will provide Lifeguards and instructors for all activities that are programmed by the Rutland Recreation Department. A motion was made and seconded (DePoy, Savage) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (DePoy, Savage) to authorize Superintendent Peters, on behalf of the City, to enter into the rental agreement with VAC, subject to the City Attorney's approval of the final indemnification, insurance and warranty provisions. **Motion passed.**

Main Street Park Updates

Tyler Dahlin, Rutland Recreation Maintenance and Facility Director updated the Board on the Main Street Park Project. Request for Proposals (RFP) should be going out by the beginning of March for construction to start in the fall of 2023.

Mountain Bike Lending Program: Recognition of Financial Donor

Superintendent Peters recognized Alderman's Toyota and Alderman's Chevy for a donation of \$20,000 to go specifically to a lending program for youth for mountain biking. An RFP will be going out to buy 10-15 mountain bikes that will be used for two programs, Mountain Bike Club for youth and Greedy Girls program. If this is successful then the Recreation Department will continue to purchase bikes. A storage container will be bought and go to the left of Giorgetti to keep the bikes safe. This program will hopefully start in the Spring. Superintendent Peters asked the Alderman's Dealership how they wanted to be recognized and they said that one of the reasons that they do this is with the hope that other business's will see their generosity and want to do the same.

Winter, Spring, Summer Program and Facility Summary

Summer camps opened up on Wednesday, and filled 65% of the spots in the White Rock's Camp that holds 75 kids but actually took in 85 kids. So the additional spots will need to be figured out. All those registrations happened with an hour and half after it was opened. The need for summer camps is huge. The rink closes up next week and it has been a very successful. It has been a very busy week at the Recreation Department with school winter break. Last weekend the Night to Shine Dance was held and a Vermont Youth Wrestling State Qualifying Meet. Please check out the Recreation's website for all the current updates on programs and events. Rutlandrec.com

Treasurer Markowski; Treasurer's Report for Period Ending January 31, 2023, City & RRA

Treasurer Markowski read the Treasurer's Report for period ending January 31, 2023. This was for information only.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

There were no standing committee reports.

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES

There were no select committees reports.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

There were no reports of representatives.

PETITIONS, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION

SEP request for Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Rutland Great Strides, May 20, 2023, Pine Hill Park Walk

A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Gillam) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Davis) to approve the Rutland Great Strides walk on May 20, 2023 from 9AM to 12PM. **Motion passed.**

GMP Pole and Wire Request

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) suspending the rules and taking action on the request. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to approve the request for seven standard conditions. **Motion passed.**

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMISSIONERS

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

BOARD OF CANNABIS COMMISSIONERS

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Aldерwoman Davis made a motion and seconded by Alderman Talbott, to refer to the Public Works Committee for discussion, that water and sewer bills be separated out of the property tax bills. **Motion passed.**

Alderman DePoy asked if a cannabis shop that will be opening on the corner of Allen Street and Main Street has submitted anything for approval. Clerk Heck has not received the application yet.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

Motion was made and seconded (Davis, DePoy) to adjourn at 8:05 PM. **Motion passed.**

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy L. Kapusta
Deputy City Clerk