

CITY OF RUTLAND, VERMONT
Board of Aldermen Minutes
Monday, March 04, 2024

Members present; President Talbott, Aldermen Cupoli, Barbagallo, Davis, McCann, McClure, Gillam, Tadio, Savage, Adams, and Hooker. Also present, Mayor Doenges, Treasurer Markowski, Attorney LaChance, Fire Chief Lovett, Ed Bove, Andrew Strniste, and City Clerk Kapusta.

7:00 PM BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING

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

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS (February 20, 2024)

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

Motion passed.

OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA (Formally called OUTSIDE THE RAIL)

Karen Nawn-Fahey spoke about the Soup Bowls for Hunger Annual Fundraiser. This year the event will be held in person. This will be the 18th event and it takes place on April 11th in the Rutland High School (RHS) cafeteria. There will be two seatings at 4:45PM and 6:15PM. Sophia a sophomore at RHS, spoke about her second year helping with making the bowls. This year participants will be able to pick out their own bowl.

Ed Bove and Barbara Spaulding from the RRA thanked Alderman Cupoli and Alderwoman Hooker for their service to the RRA Board.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

- Mayor Doenges thanked Alderman Cupoli and Alderwoman Hooker for their service to the Board of Aldermen. Mayor Doenges also recognized Alderwoman Tadio, Alderwoman Davis and President Talbott and wished them all good luck in the election tomorrow.
- Mayor Doenges thanked the Clerk's Office for all their election prep and for a successful election tomorrow. He also noted that the Clerk's Office would be closed on election day.
- Mayor Doenges went to Montpelier last week to speak at a legislative session and spoke on the Tax Sale Redemption Period Bill that was sponsored and driven here out of Rutland.
- WCAX has a bureau back in the City which will bring media attention about Rutland back to the forefront.
- Rutland County Head Start had a ribbon cutting ceremony for their Early Head Start Program.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

Alderwoman Tadio made a motion to remove the Environmental Sustainability committee report from Reports of Select Committees from the agenda. So moved by Alderwoman McClure. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS

Ed Bove, RRA: Rutland Market-Rate Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Program Referral

Ed Bove introduced the request. The RRA Board met on February 27th with NeighborWorks of Western Vermont (NWWVT) to discuss the status of current loan applications, modifications to the process and re-launch of the Rutland Market Rate RLF Program. The RRA requests that the Board refer discussion of the Rutland Market Rate RLF Program to the Community & Economic Development Committee. A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to refer discussion of the Rutland Market Rate RLF Program to the Community & Economic Development Committee. **Motion passed.**

Mr. Bove also spoke about two new programs that are coming back online. Vermont Housing Improvement Program (VHIP) is a grant that is open to fair market rents and will open on March 25th and Vermont Housing Finance Agency (VHFA) Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) that was just dropped two days ago and it will be a low interest RLF. Contact the RRA Office for more information.

Chief Lovett: 2024 Homeland Security Grant to replace Technical Rescue Trailer

Chief Lovett asked for the Board's permission to apply for a grant through VT Department of Homeland Security to replace the twenty (20) year-old Technical Rescue Trailer. Chief Lovett is asking for the Board to authorize the Mayor to sign the grant. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Hooker, McClure) to authorize the Mayor to sign the 2024 Homeland Security Grant on behalf of the City. **Motion passed.**

Chief Lovett: 2023 AFG Grant (Assistance To Firefighter Grant to replace Firefighter Turnout Gear washer and dryer and a Technical Rescue Training Grant

Chief Lovett requested that the Board allow him to apply again for the AFG Grant (Assistance to Firefighters Grant) for 2023. This grant is designed to replace the existing Firefighter Turnout Gear washer and dryer. The second part of this grant is designed to address training teams, within the department, to perform technical Rescue. This grant will require a 10% match and the deadline is March 8, 2024. The match will be covered with the existing budget. A motion was made and seconded (McCann, Gillam) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (McCann, Savage) to allow Fire Chief Lovett to apply for the 2023 AFG Grant and if successful authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the City. **Motion passed.**

Chief Lovett: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Grant for a Hazard Analysis Survey of the City

Chief Lovett has applied to the Department of Public Safety, on behalf of the City of Rutland for a BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) Grant that will pay for an update to the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP). A Hazard Analysis Survey of the City of Rutland will pave the way to access funds, in preventative measures and resolutions for target issues in times of emergency and in recovery efforts. In kind services provided by Chief Lovett, his staff or other City Officials will likely cover any shared cost. A motion was made and seconded (Hooker, Cupoli) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Hooker, Davis) for permission for the Mayor to sign and accept these funds. **Motion passed.**

Administrator Strniste: Amendment to the Development Relating to 117 State Street/Conveyance of 117 State Street from Richard Jr. and Ann Reed to McCullen Rickert Properties II, LLC

Administrator Strniste introduced request. On behalf of the City-Owned Properties Committee, the Committee is recommending amending the Development Plan relating to 117 State Street, as well as recommending approval of the proposed conveyance of 117 State Street from Richard Jr. and Ann Reed to McCullen Rickert Properties II, LLC. The City-Owned Properties Committee met on February 28th to discuss potential amendments to the original Development Plan. After a comprehensive review of the work that was already completed and what was left to complete, the buyers requested to reduce the number of dwelling units from five (5) units to four (4) units due to practicality concerns. The Committee found the proposed amendment acceptable and asked the Board to approve the amendment and authorize the sale. A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, Savage) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, Savage) to approve the amendment to the Development Plan allowing the building to be four (4) dwelling units instead of five (5) dwelling units and authorize the sale of 117 State Street from Richard Jr. and Ann Reed to McCullen Rickert Properties II, LLC. **Motion passed.**

The City-Owned Properties Committee recommends to the Board the matter of creating a City-Owned Properties Program Policy back to the General Committee. This matter was previously referred to the General Committee in 2021, however, due to other priorities the Planning & Zoning Department and Legal Department were unable to complete the Policy. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Gillam) to refer the matter of drafting a City-Owned Properties Program Policy to the General Committee. **Motion passed.**

Treasurer Markowski: Treasurer review of RFP for City/RRA audit services and recommendations for audit services for FY24, FY25, and FY26

RFPs were sent to seven (7) auditing firms for auditing services. Only two (2) responses were received and only Sullivan, Powers & Company submitted a proposal for the City/RRA audit services. A response from RHR Smith was received but they were unable to submit a bid at this time. Based on the proposal submitted, Treasurer Markowski recommends approving Sullivan, Powers & Company for continued audit services. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to approve the recommendation for Sullivan, Powers & Company for audit services for the City/RRA for FY's 24, 25, and 26. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

Alderman Savage: (2) Charter & Ordinance Committee Minutes from February 27, 2024

Alderman Savage read the Charter & Ordinance Committee minutes from February 27, 2024. The first topic was language revisions to Dogs Ordinance 13 ROR 2552, 13 ROR 13-2557. Chair Savage met with Commissioner Peg Flory and Attorney LaChance to discuss finding alternative language to replace the term "vicious" in the city ordinances. It was found that the methods used for determining action needed when there is a reported dog bite could remain the same and that only the word vicious needed to be addressed. Chair Savage introduced canine behavior to replace the term vicious to the committee as the recommendation from the meeting. The Committee voted 5-0 to accept the language revision to Dogs and Other Animals 13 ROR 2552, and 13 ROR 13-2557 replacing the term vicious with concerning canine behavior and to send to the full Board and she so moves. Seconded by Alderman Tadio. **Motion passed.**

The second topic was language revisions to Fire ROR 7-2936 to include language suggested by Fire Chief Lovett allowing certain methods of outdoor cooking fires. Chief Lovett explained to the Committee that ordinance 7-2936, Burning in open places or near buildings could be revised to include the definitions of opening burning which would require a permit and cooking fires which use charcoal or LP gas in an outdoor fireplace, barbecue grill, or pit and to limit the use of wood with "smokeless fire cooker or pit" designed for the purpose of preparing food. Chief Lovett explained that broadening the definition to include fires other than a cooking fire could pose some risk to the city. Attorney LaChance said that new language introduced by Chief Lovett could be approved, and the topic would remain in committee for further discussion. A motion was made to approve the revisional language to 15 ROR 7-2936 Burning in open places near buildings submitted by Chief Lovett and to send to the full Board. Seconded by Alderman Barbagallo. **Motion passed.**

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES

There were no Reports of Representatives.

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES

President Talbott: Committee of the Whole Minutes from February 29, 2024

President Talbott read the Committee of the Whole minutes from February 29, 2024. The purpose of the meeting was to allow for a more detailed examination of the cannabis Retailers and Manufacturers Tier 2 applications for Nonna's Farms. Alderman McCann pointed out that the Board does not have the capacity to regulate or restrict a cannabis establishment outside of making sure they are compliant with zoning

bylaws, and signage and public nuisance ordinance. Alderwoman Tadio made a motion to refer the cannabis Retailers and Manufacturers Tier 2 applications for Nonna's Farms back to the Board of Cannabis Commissioners for approval. **Motion passed.**

PETITIONS, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION

Rutland County Parent Child Center: Running for Prevention 5k Run/Walk, April 27, 2024, 10AM-4PM

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to suspend the rules. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Cupoli) to approve the Special Event Permit for Rutland County Parent Child Center for Running for Prevention 5k Run/Walk on April 27, 2024, from 10AM to 4PM. **Motion passed.**

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMISSIONERS

There were no items for the Board of Control Commissioners.

BOARD OF CANNABIS COMMISSIONERS

Nonna's Farms: Retail and Manufacturers Tier 2

A motion was made and seconded (McClure, McCann) to enter into the Board of Cannabis Commissioners. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (McCann, Adams) to approve the application of Nonna's Farms Retail and Manufacturers Tier 2 license. **Motion passed.** A motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to go out of the Board of Cannabis Commissioners. **Motion passed.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

Alderman McCann would like to see the city develop and adopt informational green events guide that can be shared with Special Event applicants. Alderman McCann made a motion to refer the green events guide to the Environmental Sustainability Committee. So moved by Alderwoman Tadio. **Motion passed.**

Alderman Gillam would like to refer to committee the water main replacement package. Bids have come in way over budget. A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, Tadio) to refer the issue to the Public Works Committee. **Motion passed.**

Alderman Gillam would like to refer sludge and septic rates to committee. A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, Tadio) to refer sludge and septic rates to the Public Works Committee. **Motion passed.**

Motion was made and second (Cupoli, Savage) to adjourn at 7:57 PM. **Motion passed.**

Respectively,

Tracy L. Kapusta
City Clerk