Board of Aldermen Minutes
City of Rutland
Monday, June 2, 2025

Members present: President Allaire, Aldermen Talbott, Gillam, McClure, Whitcomb, Davis, Savage, Donahue, and Tadio. Also, present Mayor Doenges, Attorney LaChance, Treasurer Markowski, and City Clerk Kapusta. Aldermen Cupoli and Clifford were absent.

7:00 PM BOARD OF ALDERMEN MEETING
President Allaire called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and started with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADDITIONS, DELETIONS OR OTHER MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA
President Allaire asked if there were any additions, deletions or other modifications to the agenda. There were no other modifications to the agenda.

AMENDMENT AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) (May 19, 2025)
A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Talbott) approving the minutes of the May 19, 2025, meeting. President Allaire asked if there were any changes or corrections. Alderman Gillam noted an error on page 2 under Communications from the Mayor last paragraph, there was reference to a past Mayor in error. Motion passed.

President Allaire took a moment to address the Board and public about the last several meetings during Public Comment. It has become clear that Public Comment has become a platform for those who are more interested in making speeches or listing grievances at great length. The purpose of Public Comment is the opportunity for the public to address the Board on specific issues that need action or announcing an upcoming event which is specific and relevant to the City of Rutland.

PUBLIC COMMENT
Laurie Coombs, 51 Edgerton Street spoke about failures of the Rutland Police Department for lack of safety at 133 Grove Street over the past year. Her brother lived there until his death on May 13th.

Lindi Smith, homeless spoke about her recent experiences at 133 Grove Street.

Scott Varden, 88 Center Street spoke about his past experiences and wants to have fundraisers around the country and wants to start in Rutland City.

Nicole Conway spoke about a no trespass order that she received from the Community Center and that she wants it removed.

Beth Barra, 129 Church Street spoke about the grant article that was in the Rutland Herald regarding Wal-Mart and her concerns about the Wal-Mart building being turned into housing.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR
Mayor Doenges asked the Board if they would like to have an executive session at the end of the meeting to talk about 133 Grove Street. So moved by Alderwoman Tadio and seconded by Alderwoman Davis. Motion passed.

Mayor Doenges spoke briefly about Maplewood Commons a 32-unit housing development that is located off Forest Street.

Mayor Doenges commented on the Community Forum that was held at the Paramount Theatre hosted by Senator Peter Welch.

CONSIDERATAION OF SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT REQUESTS
There were no Special Event Permit requests.

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS
Barbara Spaulding, RRA: Recommendation for BIAP Grant – Bellaluccia's
Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The RRA Board met to review the Business Incentive Assistance Program (BIAP) application for Bellaluccia's located at 58 Merchants Row in Rutland. The applicant is Jessica Mazzariello who is requesting a $5,000 BIAP grant to open an intimate apparel and contemporary footwear store. The application meets the criteria through $33,000 in new financial investment.

A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to approve a $5,000 BIAP grant for Jessica Mazzariello the applicant for Bellaluccia's. Motion passed.

Barbara Spaulding, RRA: Special Benefits District Revolving Loan – C Street Holding Corporation
Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The City has a Special Benefits District Revolving Loan Fund that provides low interest loans to property owners in the Special Benefits District. The program is administered by the RRA and Downtown Rutland Partnership (DRP) and loan requests are reviewed by a subcommittee consisting of RRA Board members, DRP members, and the Mayor or his designee. The subcommittee recommends approval of a $30,000 Special Benefits District Revolving Loan at a 5% fixed interest rate for fifteen (15) years for Erica Jokinen of C Street Holding Corporation.

A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Savage) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to approve the Special Benefits District Revolving Loan to the applicant Erica Jokinen of C Street Holding Corporation, for $30,000 at a 5% fixed interest for fifteen (15) years. Motion passed.

Assistant Engineer Gillen: Utility Pole Request – 133 Forest Street
Green Mountain Power requested to install a private utility pole at the northwest corner of the Forest Street and South Street Intersection. A housing development at 133 Forest Street requires 3-phase power and a new pole needs to be installed at this location.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to authorize the Commissioner of Public Works to sign the "Standard Conditions for Above Ground Pole and Cable Projects, submitted by Green mountain Power dated May 2, 2025. Motion passed. Alderman Gillam voted no.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Donahue) to refer the form for Standard Conditions for Above Ground Pole and Cable Projects to the Public Works Committee. Motion passed.

Assistant Engineer Gillen: Merchants Row Midblock Crosswalk
A pedestrian refuge island at the midblock crosswalk on Merchants Row, between the West Street and Center Street intersections, has been painted in recent years by the Public Works Department, to reduce excessive speeding and improve safety of pedestrians in this area. Assistant Engineer Gillen would like to discuss this at a Public Works Committee meeting.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to refer the "Merchants Row Midblock Crosswalk" to the Public Works Committee. Motion passed. Alderwoman McClure stated that the Downtown Rutland Partnership and Ethan Pepin from RRPC should be included when the meeting is scheduled.

Assistant Engineer Gillen: Center Street Revitalization Engineering Services Agreement
Assistant Engineer Gillen introduced the request to review the findings, discuss available funding options, and choose from the three proposals that were reviewed for the Center Street revitalization.
A motion was made and seconded (McClure, Davis) to refer the `"Center Street Revitalization Engineering Services Agreement" to the Committee of the Whole. Motion passed.

Fire Chief Lovett: Request funding for a third Floating Firefighter Position
Chief Lovett introduced the concept of using "Floating Firefighters" to aid the department, during these uncertain times, at budget review last year. The benefits of this concept would allow qualified individuals to be trained and ready to assume the role of firefighter once a vacancy in the department occurs and not having to wait six (6) months before they're ready. Another benefit is the ability to move these firefighters around to cover extended sickness, vacations, comp time, and injuries. Chief Lovett has found a third "Floating Firefighter" and is requesting funding in the amount of $55,520.58 to cover the salary.

A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, Davis) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to approve the third "Floating Firefighter" funding of $55,520.58 from the unassigned fund balance and move to the salary line. Motion passed.

Next Chief Lovett learned that a budgeted line item to outfit these floaters has increased by $3,300. Chief Lovett would like to move $3,300 from the unassigned fund to the budgeted line item. Alderwoman Davis made a motion to move $3,300 from the unassigned fund to the budget line item and Alderwoman McClure seconded the motion. Treasurer Markowski stated that she would prefer to leave the budget alone and wait until the end of the fiscal year, which is June 30th, and then evaluate. Alderwoman Davis rescinded her motion, and the seconder agreed.

Treasurer Markowski: Request Board approval of Bond Declaration of Intent
Treasurer Markowski introduced the request to approve the Declaration of Intent and authorize the City Clerk to sign. The Declaration of Intent for use of bond funds is being prepared for the Capital Improvement Bond – Giorgetti project. The intent is to use the bond proceeds to reimburse the City for funds spent in advance of the borrowing.

A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Tadio, McClure) to approve the Declaration of Intent and authorize the City Clerk to sign. Motion passed.

Attorney LaChance: TD Bank Financing Documents and Resolution for JCI Project
Attorney LaChance will bring this item back to the next Board of Aldermen meeting.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES
Alderman Donahue: Community & Economic Development Committee Report of May 13, 2025
Alderman Donahue read the Community & Economic Development Committee report from the May 13, 2025, meeting. The two items discussed were the Downtown Designation Area within the Amended Neighborhood Development Area of the City of Rutland Zoning Map and consideration of a Municipal Request for Tier 1B Area Designation for submission to the Vermont Land Use Review Board.

A motion was made and seconded (Donahue, Davis) to approve City Planner Bove as the City's designated contact point (and conduit for the collection of further public input and information gathering on the Plan to be shared with the Committee on behalf of the Board of Aldermen). Motion passed.

REPORTS OF SELECT COMMITTEES
There were no Reports of Select Committees.

REPORTS OF REPRESENTATIVES
There were no Reports of Representatives.

PETITIONS, LETTERS, MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATION
There were no Petitions, Letters, or Miscellaneous Communication.

BOARD OF CONTROL COMMISSIONERS
There were no items for the Board of Control Commissioners.

BOARD OF CANNABIS COMMISSIONERS
There were no items for the Board of Cannabis Commissioners.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
Attorney LaChance: Correction of date in motion approving VMERs Part D for non-union sworn officers
Attorney LaChance stated that there was an error in the motion from the last meeting and would like the Board to entertain reconsidering and striking the former motion and she will read the correct language with the correct date for the Board to approve. So moved by Alderwoman McClure and seconded by Alderwoman Davis. Motion passed.

Attorney LaChance read the following motion. A motion to find that all sworn officers including sergeants, commanders, and police chief that are not otherwise covered by the collective bargaining agreement, who do not elect to join at the first offering can join by notifying VMERs September 30th to join the following July 1st. All new eligible hires after the date of this vote shall be required to enroll in VMERs D as of July 1, 2025, as a condition of employment. So moved by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderwoman McClure and seconded by Alderwoman Davis.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS
Alderwoman Davis made a motion to refer the discussion of Wal-Mart to the Community & Economic Development Committee. Seconded by Alderman Donahue. Motion passed.

Alderman Gillam made a motion to refer the Historical Society Building issues to the General Committee. Seconded by Alderwoman McClure. Motion passed.

Attorney LaChance read the motions for the executive session. A motion to find that premature general public knowledge regarding security or emergency response measures, the disclosure of which would place the City at a substantial disadvantage because the disclosure could jeopardize public safety. So moved by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderwoman Tadio. Motion passed. A motion to enter into executive session with the inclusion of the Mayor, Treasurer, Clerk, City Attorney and Chief of Police to discuss security or emergency response as allowed under Title 1, Section 313(a)(10). So moved by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderman Talbott. Motion passed.

At 8:11 PM President Allaire called for a brief recess.

At 8:15 PM President Allaire called the meeting back to order and immediately went into executive session.

At 8:37 PM a motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to go out of executive session. Motion passed.

At 8:37 PM a motion was made and seconded (Tadio, Talbott) to adjourn. Motion passed.

Respectively submitted by,

Tracy L. Kapusta
City Clerk