

Board of Aldermen Minutes
City of Rutland
Monday, July 7, 2025

Members present: President Allaire, Aldermen Talbott, Gillam, McClure, Whitcomb, Davis, Savage, Donahue, Clifford, and Cupoli. Also, present Mayor Doenges and City Clerk Kapusta. Alderwomen Tadio was 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. The executive session was moved to the end of the agenda and Alderwoman Savage's Charter and Ordinance Committee report was removed from the agenda. There were no other modifications to the agenda. So moved by Alderwoman Davis and seconded by Alderwoman McClure. Motion passed.

AMENDMENT AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING(S) (June 16, 2025)

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) approving the minutes of the June 16, 2025, meeting. President Allaire asked if there were any changes or corrections. Alderman Clifford advised that he had resigned from the Search Committee and reference to him being on the committee in the minutes under Communications from the Mayor should be removed. Clerk Kapusta asked Alderman Clifford if he was still on the committee as of June 16, 2025. Alderman Clifford was unsure. Clerk Kapusta stated that she would check on the dates and make the change if necessary. Motion passed. Alderwoman McClure voted no.

President Allaire took a moment to remind the public that 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

Nicole Conway, a Rutland City resident spoke about a no trespass order that she received from the Recreation Community Center, and she would like it rescinded. Alderwoman Davis stated that the Board of Aldermen does not have the jurisdiction to wave a no trespass order.

Liz Demarco Weinman, 3 Charter Hill Drive brought attention again to the blighted property at 1 Irving Heights and loitering on foot and in cars on Combination Pond. Ms. Weinman's husband has been in contact with Engineer Gillen for a sign to be placed at Combination Pond regarding no loitering. Alderwoman McClure made a motion to refer the issue of blighted properties to the Community and Economic Development committee. Seconded by Alderman Talbott. Motion passed. Alderwoman McClure made a motion to refer discussion of signage for Combination Pond. Engineer Gillen stated that the sign has been ordered and DPW would be in contact with Ms. Weinman to let her know when it arrives. Alderwoman McClure withdrew her motion.

Stanley Mattison, 299 West Street expressed concerns about racing up and down the street and using the West Street bridge as a launch pad. Mr. Mattison stated that the bridge needs to be taken out and lowered. Alderwoman McClure made a motion to refer the discussion of speed mitigation on West Street to the DPW Committee. There was no second on the motion. Alderman Clifford made a motion to refer the matter to the Police Chief. Alderwoman Davis seconded the motion. Alderman Whitcomb questioned whether the referral should be sent to the Traffic Safety Committee. Alderman Clifford withdrew his

motion. Alderman Whitcomb made a motion to send the matter to the Traffic Safety Committee. Alderwoman Davis seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Alexis Moore, 38 Pine Street spoke about the birds and why she fed them. She enjoys doing this and doesn't want that to be taken away from her by an ordinance.

Tom Giffin, City Cemetery Commissioner received a phone call from an individual who was looking for a memorial dedicated to the Rutland City World War II veterans. This individual's father was a World War II veteran from Rutland City. Mr. Giffin stated that the City has monuments in the park for the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, Korea, Vietnam Veterans and for World War II a statue of Major General Merritt Edson, who was awarded the Medal of Honor. Rutland City does not have a memorial for its World War II veterans in the park. Mr. Giffin feels that the lack of recognition of a World War II veteran memorial should be corrected and perhaps a memorial could be part of the Rutland Sculpture Trail Program, or a City sponsored project. Alderwoman McClure made a motion to refer the matter of a conversation about a World War II memorial being added to the sculpture trail in some capacity to the Community and Economic Development committee. Alderman Gillam seconded the motion. Alderman Clifford felt that it should go to the Recreation Committee because they are the ones dealing with memorials already in the parks. Recreation Director Dahlin added that he would like to be part of the discussion and whether it be the Sculpture Trail or something else, he would love to be part of the discussion. Motion passed.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

Mayor Doenges shared a reading in memory of Officer Jessica Ebbinghausen and a moment of silence in her honor.

Mayor Doenges would like to refer the parking garage lease and the operation and management contract to the Community and Economic Development committee for discussion. So moved by Alderwoman McClure and seconded by Alderman Gillam. Motion passed.

Mayor Doenges gave an update on the legal department. A job description has been placed on the City's website and a couple of other sites to find a candidate and a new RFP will be going out looking for outside counsel that could serve as a full-time City Attorney. Mayor Doenges asked if it was the desire of the Board to have somebody sitting in the attorney's seat moving forward. President Allaire stated that he would like to have somebody here to deal with issues that come out of nowhere and procedurally making sure that motions and actions are proper.

In the interim the HR and Legal Secretary is taking on all legal issues and will delegate and or triage them as needed.

Mayor Doenges recognized the Building Department and all the efforts taken lately regarding condemned, falling down houses, and homes with major issues. There is a nuisance policy and ordinance that needs to be completed. Mayor Doenges will connect with Alderwoman Savage to get that meeting scheduled with the Charter and Ordinance committee.

Recently the Mayor met with two different developers that are interested in developing in the city. One is talking about 30-unit housing development right outside of downtown.

Downtown construction is starting to move along, and the Northern Borders Regional Commission kick off for the grant will be held tomorrow with a bunch of stakeholders downtown and to talk about preparation for the construction on Center Street.

Sean Atkins the new RRA Director will start at the end of July.

Mayor Doenges congratulated Barbara Spaulding on her thirty-year anniversary with the RRA.

Mayor Doenges announced that he will be away beginning July 19th and will return on August 4th. President Allaire will serve as Mayor in his absence. Tyler Richardson will be available for first questions, and he will be communicating with President Allaire as needed.

CONSIDERATION OF SPECIAL EVENT PERMIT REQUESTS

There were no Special Event Permit Requests.

REPORTS AND LETTERS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS AND OFFICIALS

Director Dahlin: Giorgetti Refrigeration Replacement Project

Director Dahlin gave an update on the Giorgetti Refrigeration Replacement Project. Equipment has been ordered, and the first installment payment has been made. The brine on the floor has been disposed of and is out and demo started as of last Monday. Everything as of now is on track and on point for starting up the season. Alderman Donahue congratulated the Recreation Department for two ribbon cuttings recently for the Godnick Center and Main Street Park.

Barbara Spaulding, RRA: City of Rutland and HFCU BIAP RLF Agreement

Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The City's BIAP RLF agreement with HFCU expired June 30, 2025. The only changes to the revised agreement were the dates and updated interest rates as provided by HFCU during the most recent bi-monthly meeting.

A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Davis) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, McClure) to allow the Mayor to sign the agreement for the period July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2030, with the amendment to the interest rates as noted. Alderman Donahue offered one other small amendment in addition to the rate changes. Debate, Alderman Donahue would take out the word annually regarding the rates. Barbara Spaulding, RRA stated that she would have to check with the HFCU before any changes could be made to the agreement. President Allaire offered a suggestion that Ms. Spaulding could check with HFCU and see what their feelings are on the amendment by Alderman Donahue and if there are amendable to that change it can be brought to the next Board of Aldermen meeting. Motion passed. Alderman Whitcomb voted no.

Barbara Spaulding, RRA: Resolution to Designate RRA for Planning Grant Administration

Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The City was awarded a \$60,000 Planning grant to assist in the merger of HTRC, NWWVT, and Shires Housing to reduce operational costs and increase the availability of affordable rental housing units and associated supportive services. Prior to the first requisition of funds, the City must adopt a resolution, from PM-4 designating the RRA to perform the general administration for the grant.

A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, Clifford) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, McClure) to request the Aldermen to circulate for signature the resolution provided. Motion passed.

Barbara Spaulding, RRA: Resolution to apply for a 2025 VTrans Large-scale Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant

Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The RRA is assisting DPW in applying for a 2025 VTrans Large-scale Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant to supplement the full streetscape rebuilding of Center Street in Downtown Rutland. This work will be in conjunction with the extensive underground utilities

work. The current estimated cost for the streetscape work is \$3,258,279 which includes the 20% local share.

A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, McClure) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Gillam, McClure) to request the Aldermen to circulate the resolution for signature. Treasurer Markowski asked where the 20% local match is coming from. Engineer Gillen stated that other sources like TIF, for example the work that's being done in conjunction with this to help support the match. Motion passed.

Barbara Spaulding, RRA: Resolution to apply for a 2025 VTrans Small-scale Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant

Barbara Spaulding, RRA introduced the request. The RRA is assisting DPW in applying for a 2025 VTrans Small-scale Bicycle and Pedestrian Grant to improve pedestrian crossings, with a focus on locations that have a history of collisions resulting in pedestrian injuries. The current estimated cost for the improvements is \$115,500, which includes 50% local share.

A motion was made and seconded (McClure, Talbott) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (McClure, Davis) to request the Aldermen to circulate the resolution for signature. Treasurer Markowski asked where the local match for this grant was coming from. Engineer Gillen stated there will be a variety of sources used, such as the sign budget and using some in-house labor, and from the pavement marking budget. Motion passed.

Planning Director Bove: NBRC \$3M Catalyst Award

Planning Director Bove introduced the request. The City was just awarded a \$3M catalyst grant for the Center and Wales Street Redevelopment Project. The Mayor needs to sign the form to apply for, accept, and expend grant funds from the Northern Borders Regional Commission.

A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Savage) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Talbott, Donahue) to authorize the Mayor to sign on behalf of the City of Rutland to apply for, accept, and expend grant funds from the Northern Borders Regional Commission. Motion passed.

Planning Director Bove: RFP for consulting services to assist with the update of the City of Rutland Municipal Plan

Planning Director Bove introduced an RFP for consulting services which will be paid for out of the municipal planning grant in the amount of \$20,000 to hire a consultant or consultants to help with the municipal plan.

A motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (Davis, Savage) for approval for the RFP for planning services for the municipal plan update for the City of Rutland. Motion passed.

Planning Director Bove: Referral of City-owned Properties to Finance Committee

It was determined that City-owned properties need to go to the Finance Committee first and then to the Board.

Police Chief Kilcullen: Request to transfer cruiser fee revenue generated from charges billed to outside vendors for security/traffic details and be moved to the Police Department Equipment Replacement Fund

Chief Kilcullen explained that years ago police would be requested to have a presence at road construction and that had stopped with lack of staffing. Recently personnel have been able to provide this

service, and the request is to transfer the amount generated at the close of the fiscal year, \$6,179.50 to be transferred to the police equipment replacement fund.

A motion was made and seconded (McClure, Davis) to suspend the rules. Motion passed. A motion was made and seconded (McClure, Davis) to transfer cruiser fee revenue generated from changes to outside vendors for security details and be moved to the Police Department equipment replacement fund in the amount of \$6,179.50. Motion passed.

Treasurer Markowski: Preliminary discussion of the FY26 tax rate, year-end adjustments, and fund balance changes

Treasurer Markowski provided a preliminary memo on the tax rate.

- Estimated Revenue, other – The non-tax revenue includes user fees, PILOT and other miscellaneous revenue. Currently working with departments to obtain the FY26 projections.
- Estimated Surplus or deficit – The calculation of surplus includes several items that require Board review and approval. Below are fund balance assignments for consideration.
 - Bridge Expense – DPW streets budget includes a \$60,000 allocation for bridge expenses. In the past unspent funds have been transferred to the bridge fund.
 - BIAP Funding – Estimated funding for the BIAP account is \$85,000. BIAP is funded with 50% of solar revenue and 50% of solar lease revenue.
 - Police Department – FY 26 budget included funding for 33 officers. Committee minutes reflect using fund balance if 2 additional positions were added for \$220,000.
 - DPW Vehicle expense – FY 25 budget included \$60,000 for the purchase of truck. The truck was ordered but not delivered. The request will be to rollover the funds.
 - Equipment Replacement Funds – The budget includes \$295,000 for Police, Fire, DPW, and Recreation equipment replacement funds. The voters and legislature approved increases in the funding. The increase of \$230,000 was not budgeted. These funds will need to be assigned for FY26.
 - RRA – TIF – The contract between the City and RRA includes an allocation of \$65,000 for TIF. This is unbudgeted and needs BOA Approval for funding in FY26.
 - PY Fund Balance – Last year the Board approved the assignment of \$574,212 of fund balance to offset the FY25 tax rate.

Treasurer Markowski stated that the grand list is down from last year. Assessor Langlois explained that the utility transmission lines and substations were in the legislative session and all towns now must use the value that the State hired contractor sets. This new calculation lowers Rutland City's grand list by \$7M. This deduction has also impacted the City's CLA, bringing that calculation down as well.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

There were no Reports of Standing Committees.

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

There was no Unfinished Business.

MISCELLANEOUS MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS, NEW BUSINESS

Alderman Gillam made a motion to have the Board President and Mayor send a thank you letter to the Governor for his support and vote in getting the \$3M from the Northern Border package, which is a big chunk to help the Center Street project and help get the hotel off the ground. Alderman Talbott seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Alderman Clifford clarified that he did not resign from the search committee until June 18th, so his correction to the June 16th minutes is not needed.

Alderwoman McClure made a motion to refer to the Public Safety committee the City's plan on mitigation on trash and waste in Rutland City that seems to have increased with the release of participants in the State hotel program. Alderwoman Savage seconded the motion. There was debate among the Board regarding who should be in attendance and who would be accountable. Director Dahlin stated that the Recreation Department already has a policy that's in place and there is a safety officer that deals with this. Every vehicle that Recreation has carries rubber gloves and trash pickers. The Recreation Department also works closely with the Police Department. Motion failed. Clerk Kapusta asked President Allaire if a show of hands could be done as it was not clear how many yeses and no votes. Alderwoman McClure asked for a roll call vote. Alderman Donahue stated that the motion's been made, seconded, and voted on and declared by the Chairman, not the City Clerk.

Executive Session:

President Allaire read the motions for the executive session. Motion to find that premature general public knowledge regarding security or emergency response measures, a disclosure of which could jeopardize public safety. So moved by Alderwoman Savage and seconded by Alderman Cupoli. Motion passed. Motion to enter into executive session with the inclusion of the Mayor, Clerk, and Police Chief to discuss the matter of security under Title 1, V.S.A. Section 313(a)(10). So moved by Alderwoman Savage and seconded by Alderwoman Davis. Motion passed.

At 8:44 PM the Board went into Executive Session.

At 8:56 PM a motion was made and seconded (Davis, McClure) to go out of executive session. Motion passed.

A motion was made and seconded (Donahue, McClure) to refer to the Finance Committee impact fees for events in Rutland City. Motion passed.

At 8:59 PM a motion was made and seconded (McClure, Davis) to adjourn. Motion passed.

Respectively submitted by,

Tracy L. Kapusta
City Clerk