

**VERGENNES CITY COUNCIL FINAL Meeting Minutes**  
**REORGANIZATION MEETING**  
**Tuesday, MARCH 14, 2023**

COUNCIL MEMBERS/STAFF: Mayor Christopher Bearor, Deputy Mayor Dickie Austin, Alderman Cheryl Brinkman (Zoom), Alderman Jill Murray-Killon, Alderman Zoe Kaslow, Alderman Sue Rakowski, Alderman Ian Huizenga, City Manager Ron Redmond, City Clerk Penny Austin.

VISITORS: Matt Chabot, Andy Kirkaldy, and Shannon Haggett

- 1. Microphone Check:**
- 2. Call to Order:** 5:35 PM
- 3. Amendments to the Agenda:** None
- 4. Approval of Minutes (2/28/23).** Motion to accept minutes as written by Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Alderman Kaslow. Vote: 7-0. Approved unanimously.
- 5. Approval of Warrant (3/14/23).** Motion by Deputy Mayor Austin, seconded by Alderwoman Rakowski.
- 6. Visitors:** None
- 7. City Council Organization:**
  - a. Welcome to Mayor Chris Bearor and Alderwoman Cheryl Brinkman
  - b. Recognition of service to the City: Mathew Chabot and Mel Hawley. Matt brought a print from a local artist to give to Mayor Chris that Jeff Fritz gave to him when he became Mayor and asked that he does the same to the next Mayor.
  - c. City Council Organization:
    - i. Adoption of City Council meeting schedule through March 2024. Motion to approve by Alderwoman Rakowski, seconded by Alderwoman Kaslow. Approved unanimously.
    - ii. Election of Deputy Mayor. Alderwoman Kaslow nominated Deputy Mayor Austin to continue as Deputy Mayor with Alderwoman Rakowski seconding. Approved unanimously.
    - iii. Adoption of Roberts Rules of Order for executive boards and committees which waives various formalities and calls for Mayor to vote on all motions. Alderwoman Rakowski made a motion to adopt as written with Alderwoman Murray-Killon seconding. Discussion ensued. Alderwoman Brinkman moved to amend the motion to state *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, latest edition with a second from Deputy Mayor Austin. Vote on amendment: 7-0. Approved unanimously. Vote on first motion: 7-0. Approved unanimously.
    - iv. Designation of Newspaper of Record: Motion by Deputy Mayor Austin to make the Addison Independent as the newspaper of record, seconded by Alderwoman Rakowski. Vote: 7-0. Approved unanimously.

**8. Business:**

- a. Request for the approval of a one-year license (May 1, 2023 to April 30, 2024) for the sale of liquor, tobacco, and tobacco substitutes for the following businesses:
  - i. KPH Drugs, Inc. (Kinney Drugs) 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Liquor License
  - ii. Brockton Corporation (Shaw's) 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Liquor License, Tobacco License, and Tobacco Substitute
  - iii. Wesco, Inc. (Champlain Farms) 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Liquor License, Tobacco License, and Tobacco Substitute
  - iv. R. L. Vallee (Maplefield's) 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Liquor License, Tobacco License, and Tobacco Substitute
  - v. Pork Squid, LLC (Park Squeeze) 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Liquor License
  - vi. Moohah, Inc. (Black Sheep) 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Liquor License and Outside Consumption Permit

Alderwoman Rakowski made a motion to approve all with Alderman Huizenga seconding. Deputy Mayor Austin abstained as he is the Operations Director for Pork Squid and Moohah. Vote: 6-0 for Approval.
- b. Appointment of Alderwoman Cheryl Brinkman to the Addison County Solid Waste Management District Board of Supervisors for a one-year term ending in February 2024. Motion made by Deputy Mayor Austin to appoint, with Alderwoman Rakowski seconding and Alderwoman Brinkman abstaining. Vote 6-0 to appoint.
- c. Appointment of Alderwoman Rakowski to the Parks and Recreation Committee as City Council representative for a one-year term ending in March of 2024. Motion made by Alderwoman Kaslow to appoint, with Deputy Mayor Austin seconding and Alderwoman Rakowski abstaining. Vote: 6-0 to appoint.
- d. Alderwoman Rakowski gave a pool update. The Pool Pumphouse motor is not repairable so will need a new pump. Electrical Inspector Red-tagged our pool electrical wiring as we had exposed electrical wires. An insurance claim may cover some of the expenses above. These things are in addition to the planned upgrade to the drainage system.
- e. Amendment of appointment of Alderwoman Cheryl Brinkman to the Vergennes Planning Commission for a two-year term, August 1, 2022 to July 31, 2024, to now serve as a non-voting ex officio member per 24 VSA 4332.b. Motion to approve Deputy by Deputy Mayor Austin, second from Alderwoman Rakowski with Alderwoman Brinkman abstaining. Vote 6-0 to appoint.
- f. Appointment of Alderwoman Cheryl Brinkman to the Energy Committee as City Council Representative for a one-year term ending in March 2024. Motion made by Deputy Mayor Austin to appoint with Alderman Rakowski seconding and Alderwoman Brinkman abstaining. Vote: 6-0 to appoint.
- g. Appointment of Sid Bosworth, Don Ferris, Al Harder-Hyde, Keith Morrill, Maggi Shadroui, Jeremy Francis, Grace Williams, to the City of Vergennes Energy Committee for a term ending March 2024 (per bylaws adopted by the Vergennes City Council, October 11, 2022.) Motion made by Deputy Mayor Austin to appoint, with Alderwoman Kaslow seconding. Vote 7-0 to appoint.

- h. Request to apply for a Municipal Energy Resilience grant through the Vermont Agency of Administration, Buildings & General Services, for up to \$4,000 for energy resilience community capacity building, with no city match required. Motion made to approve the request by Alderwoman Rakowski, seconded by Alderwoman Kaslow. Vote: 7-0 Approval.
- i. Discussion of Board and Committee vacancies. Board of Auditors (one vacancy), Board of Listers (2 vacancies), Grand Juror (one vacancy-letter of interest from Michelle Eastman received), Development Review Board (one vacancy), and Parks and Recreation Committee (five vacancies). It was determined that we should add these to the City website, City Facebook page and Front Page Forum with instructions to send letters of interest to the City Manager for review.
- j. Discussion of proposed changes to the Parks and Recreation Committee charge, updated and adopted by the City Council March 22, 2022. City Manager Redmond explained that with the advent of a full-time recreation coordinator, the recreation committee (which had run the city's recreation activities and reported to the Council) can now work directly with the Recreation Coordinator. Our Recreation Coordinator, Martha DeGraaf, said she was okay with the changes. Edits to the charge were discussed. A final version will be presented at the next meeting for council approval.
- k. Appointment of Kathy Rossier, Ben Hatch, Julian Cesner, Tania Bolduc, Mike Daniels, Matt Hawes, Erin Wolcott, and Robyn Newton (as Addison Northwest School District representative) as members of the City of Vergennes Parks and Recreation Committee for a one-year term ending March, 2024 (per charge updated and adopted by the Vergennes City Council, March 22, 2022). Motion made by Deputy Mayor Austin to appoint, with Alderwoman Rakowski seconding. Vote: 7-0 to appoint.
- l. Council discussion of a possible 2023 special election to seek voter approval of:
  - i. Proposed updates lease agreement between the City of Vergennes and the Friends of the Vergennes Opera House.
  - ii. Proposed lease agreement between the City of Vergennes and the Addison County Communications Union District a.k.a. Maple Broadband regarding the placement of telecommunications equipment on city property.
  - iii. Certain city reserve funds (not previously approved by the voters), per 24 V.S.A. 2804.  
City Clerk and City Manager to write up a proposal for this special election outlining the estimated cost, timeline for warnings and ballot configuration and present to the Council at the next meeting in March.
- m. Discussion of policy for Infrastructure Improvement Fund, approved by the voters on March 7, 2023. Further review and discussion of draft document. Pushed to the next council meeting further review and adoption.
- n. City Council approval of City Manager's appointment of Jason Ouellette as Chief of Police per 24 V.S.A. Chapter 15, section 9©. Deputy Mayor Austin moved to approve the appointment with Alderwoman Kaslow seconding. Vote: 7-0 Approved.

9. City Manager's Report: Update on Portage Project sewer lines: 300 feet of sleeving of pipe was done taking only 12 hours. It went so well that they may use this process to upgrade some existing lines that need it.
10. Mayor's Report: Mayor Bearor spoke to Recreation Coordinator, Martha DeGraaf about using his \$1000 stipend from the City to purchase a picnic table for the pool made from recycled plastic. He also told us that he has others that would like to contribute to the cause as well. He is hoping to get enough for 4 tables.

Adjournment: Motion made by Deputy Mayor Austin to adjourn the meeting with Alderwoman Rakowski seconding. Vote: 7-0 Approved. Adjourned at 6:55 P.M.