

PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL

For the Regular Meeting of July 5, 2011.

City Clerk Betty Morlock swore Mark Howe into office as City Manager. Howe introduced his wife Tammy and daughter Courtney.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Hodges and City Clerk Betty Morlock called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Jeff Altoft, Maryalene LaPonsie, Andrew Schrauben and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Sharon Ellison.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, City Clerk Betty Morlock, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, Police Chief Barry Getzen, Light and Power Employee Tom Russo, Planning Commission Chair and Lowell Light and Power Boardmember Jim Hall, Lowell Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce, Water Distribution Superintendent Bob Robinson, Water Distribution Employee Todd Phillips and Water Treatment Plant Employee Brian Van Veelen.

IT WAS MOVED BY SCHRAUBEN and supported by LAPONSIE to excuse the absence of Mayor Pro Tem Ellison.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #1. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY SCHRAUBEN and supported by LAPONSIE to approve the agenda as written.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 20, 2011.**

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and supported by SCHRAUBEN to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 6, 2011 as corrected.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #3. **APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLES.**

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and supported by SCHRAUBEN that the bills and accounts payables be allowed and the warrants issued.

YEA: Councilmembers Altoft, LaPonsie, Schrauben and Mayor Hodges.

NAY: None. ABSENT: Mayor Pro Tem Ellison. MOTION CARRIED.

<u>BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (07/05/11)</u>	
GENERAL FUND	\$40,901.43
MAJOR STREET FUND	14,171.69
HISTORICAL DISTRICT FUND	216.00
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND	2,880.47
AIRPORT FUND	3,204.94
WASTEWATER FUND	89,151.57
WATER FUND	66,617.06
CABLE TV FUND	7,950.00
DATA PROCESSING FUND	10,281.25
EQUIPMENT FUND	1,459.11

Item #4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** Paula Mierendorf of 303 Roberta Jayne presented the idea of pursuing a community garden near her home. Mayor Hodges thought this was a great idea. It was noted the property is owned by the City. DPW Director DesJarden noted the area is classified as park property. Hodges suggested Mierendorf present the idea to the Parks and Recreation Commission for further consideration.

Item #5. **OLD BUSINESS.**

- a. Streets, sidewalks plan – The Council adopted the sidewalks improvements ordinance upon sale of property at the May 2 meeting. Also, Council lifted the moratorium requirement sidewalk improvements at their March 21 meeting.
- b. Wastewater Treatment update – A full report will be provided by the engineering firm of Hubbell Roth and Clark, Inc. in July.
- c. East Riverfront renovations – A site visit was been completed with the DNR and went well. A Parks and Recreation Master Plan update was completed and approved by the State to qualify for grant assistance. A survey delineating ownership has also been finished. A design charette (getting citizen input) for riverbank improvements was successfully carried out by Design Plus, Inc. on Thursday, January 13. At the Downtown Development Authority meeting of February 17, the Boardmembers recommended purchase of the amphitheater property from Lowell Area Schools for \$25,000. Also, the amphitheater riverfront design was approved along with an allocation of \$50,000 toward the project. At its January 11, 2011 meeting, the Lowell Area Community Fund provided \$50,000 in

addition to this task. The Council, at its February 22 meeting approved the purchase of Lowell Area Schools property within the amphitheater area at a cost of \$25,000 as recommended by the DDA. A site visit will be done next Tuesday, June 28.

An application for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund grant of \$300,000 has been submitted to the State. A LCTV Endowment Fund grant application of \$50,000 was completed.

- d. Consumers Energy – sidewalk report – DPW Director DesJarden has contacted Consumers Energy involving necessary sidewalk repairs and is awaiting a response.

Item #6. **DESIGNATION OF MARK HOWE AS SIGNATORY FOR BANK ACCOUNTS.** With the retirement of City Manager Dave Pasquale and appointment of the position to Mark Howe effective July 1, 2011, the Council needs to designate Howe as a signatory for bank accounts of the City.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to designate Mark Howe as the signatory for the City Bank Accounts.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #7. **ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS** – Mayor Hodges turned the meeting over to ZBA Chair LaPonsie.

- A. 218 South Washington – Jice Pharmaceuticals – variances related to building additions – set public hearing (8/1). Jice Pharmaceuticals has submitted plans to add on to the existing office and manufacturing areas on South Washington Street while proposing a 60' x 100' metal building.

An initial review was provided by the Planning Commission at its June 27, 2011 meeting. Jay Kilpatrick and Brian Wegener of Williams & Works, in the memorandum to the Commission of June 21, noted the following variances:

- expansion of a nonconforming building in terms of front and side setbacks
- distance from residential lot line (currently 18 feet to 4 feet) is insufficient where 50 feet is required
- the maximum lot coverage is 60% appears to be exceeded with parking lot improvements.

IT WAS MOVED BY HODGES and seconded by ALTOFT to set a public hearing for August 1, 2011 regarding a variance request at 218 South Washington, Jice Pharmaceuticals.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #8. **EXTENSION OF HUNT STREET WATER MAIN – REVIEW PROPOSED SPECIAL ASSESSMENT.** At the request of a property owner, a six inch water main extension of approximately 275 feet has been requested. The extension would run far enough to allow three properties to connect to the City water line. There is interest in connecting to the water line from the farthest homeowner. It is unlikely the other two homeowners would want to connect at this time. The preliminary estimate is approximately \$37,000, which would include a contingency as well as an additional contingency for engineering.

City Manager Howe recommended a public hearing be established.

Mayor Hodges questioned the meaning of “D.I”. Water Distribution Supervisor Bob Robinson stated D.I. stands for Ductile Iron, which is a type of cast iron pipe.

Councilmember LaPonsie asked if the three homeowners would split the cost if there is a special assessment. Howe stated the Council needs to decide whether there should be a special assessment as well as how the cost of the project should be allocated. As in the past, the homeowner who wants to connect would pay the special assessment and connection fee immediately. The Water Fund would cover the remaining portion until the other homeowners decide to hook into the line, at which time the Water Fund would be reimbursed.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to set a public hearing for August 1, 2011 to discuss the extension of Hunt Street water main and proposed special assessment.

YEA: 4. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #9. **COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMENTS.** Councilmember Schrauben announced the birth of his son, Henry. Schrauben also welcomed City Manager Howe as well as noted Karen Burd is retiring from teaching elementary school. She will be missed.

Councilmember Altoft stated the bike race held over the weekend went well. However, signage should be improved next year if another race is held.

Councilmember LaPonsie congratulated Schrauben on the birth of his son. LaPonsie also welcomed Howe.

LaPonsie stated the Planning Commission met on June 27. They are reviewing the Zoning Ordinance and determining which areas need to be updated. Training will also be available for the Planning Commission members.

Mayor Hodges welcomed City Manager Mark Howe. Hodges also thanked City staff for a wonderful send off to former City Manager Dave Pasquale. On Wednesday, June 29 an open community fairwell and reception was held for Pasquale. It was attended by many who have worked with Pasquale including City Managers, Mayors and Councilmember’s from other communities.

Hodges stated Lowell Light and Power will meet on July 14 and the Chamber of Commerce on August 9, 2011. Also, the Look Memorial Fund has distributed monies throughout the community, which will be beneficial. Coffee with Council went well last Saturday. One individual discussed the idea of an office building and public restrooms at the cemetery. Coffee with Council meets the first Saturday of each month from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Everyone is encouraged to attend. Issues discussed will not be recorded.

Item #10. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**. City Manager Howe reported on the following:

1. The following boards and commissions meetings minutes are provided:
 - Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority meeting of March 21, 2011
 - Planning Commission meeting of May 23, 2011
2. The Riverwalk Festival will be held on Friday and Saturday, July 8 and 9.
3. Howe stated his first two days have been very enjoyable. Prior to starting his job as City Manager he spent much time meeting with various individuals and staff members.

Howe commented on the Council's desire to have a goal-oriented City Manager. This includes the 90-day action plan he submitted as part of his interview along with a progress report. He intends to use this to update the Council on the progress and timeline of goals in the 90-day plan.

As a result of recent discussions with Councilmembers, Howe recommended additional goals which will require further discussion with the council. The goals include facilitating the development of a strategic plan, reviewing and updating City policies and ordinances, developing long term plans for street and sidewalk improvements, reviewing water and sewer systems and addressing current needs, developing marketing and public relations plans, and developing sustainable financial plans.

Howe explained the goals worksheets will provide the Council with updates while at the same time providing focus on key goals identified by the Council.

Howe stated the quality of the leadership team and staff of the City is remarkable. He has heard previously the City has a great team of professionals who care about the City. Howe stated his hat is off to staff and the work they do.

The City is facing the retirement of Water Treatment Plant Superintendent George Regan. Water Treatment Plant Employee Brian VanVeelen recently passed a test which allows him to step into the position of Water Treatment Plant Superintendent. There has been discussion in the past of whether or not the City would like to contract this position out similar to that of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. However, Howe suggested VanVeelen be hired as the Superintendent now and review the idea of a contract at a later date. He also noted the contract with

Wastewater Treatment Plant should be reviewed as well. Howe has received good reports about VanVeelen and he has shown his commitment to the Water Plant. With Council's consent, Howe wished to promote VanVeelen to this position upon Regan's retirement. By general consensus, the Council agreed.

Howe thanked the Council for giving him the opportunity to serve as City Manager. He looks forward to working with everyone.

Item #11. **APPOINTMENTS**. None.

IT WAS MOVED BY SCHRAUBEN to adjourn at 8:03 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk