

PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL

For the Regular Meeting of October 3, 2011.

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, Mayor Pro Tem Sharon Ellison and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, City Clerk Betty Morlock, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, Police Chief Barry Getzen, Lowell Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce, Lowell Light and Power Boardmember and Planning Commission Chair Jim Hall and City Treasurer Suzanne Olin.

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

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

YEA: 5. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2011.**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and supported by LAPONSIE to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 19, 2011 as written.

YEA: 5. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

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

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

YEA: Councilmembers Altoft, LaPonsie, Schrauben, Mayor Pro Tem Ellison and Mayor Hodges.

NAY: NONE. ABSENT: NONE. MOTION CARRIED.

<u>BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (10/03/11)</u>	
GENERAL FUND	\$42,958.14
MAJOR STREET FUND	25,519.80
LOCAL STREET FUND	8,281.55

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND	76,214.52
AIRPORT FUND	1,920.00
WASTEWATER FUND	39,007.22
WATER FUND	2,705.53
CABLE TV FUND	9,350.00
DATA PROCESSING FUND	975.00
EQUIPMENT FUND	1,543.30
CURRENT TAX FUND	1,543,421.00
LEE FUND	1,075.00
LOOK FUND	12,124.20
CARR FUND II	1,075.00

Item #4. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** No comments were received.

Item #5. **PENDING COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE.** City Manager Mark Howe reported on the following:

- a. Streets, Sidewalks Plan – Sidewalk Inspectors are covering the City. Work should be completed by the end of October, 2011.
- b. Wastewater Treatment Plant – Smoke testing will be completed from October 10, 2011 through October 21, 2011.
- c. East Riverbank Renovations – Nothing new to report.
- d. Zoning Board of Appeals – This is a new pending project. Further discussion will be held.

Item #6. **FRED MEIJER TRAIL NETWORK PRESENTATION.** Carolyn Kane and Anna Marie Bower provided a presentation to the Council. The two along with others, have been working on a funding model which would fund the entire 80 plus miles of trail in the Fred Meijer Trail Network which are left to be developed. It is important to keep in mind there is also an Endowment Fund which has been created by the Fred Meijer Foundation, which would cover maintenance of the trail.

Since May, 2007, Kane has been working on the trail project. The group has raised \$2.3 million dollars. Recently, a working grant was received from the National Park Service who will assist with the planning and design.

Bower stated Kane should be congratulated as she just returned from Washington D.C. She received an award for one of the rails to trails conservancies. This project continues to grow.

Item #7. **HILLSIDE COURT PROJECT.** City Manager Mark Howe stated five bids were opened on September 30, 2011 concerning the Hillside Court project. The low bid was from Olin Excavating in the amount of \$60,650.50. The published engineers estimate for the project was \$62,000. In fairness, this was estimated when asphalt prices were much lower and have since increased.

Olin Excavating did not provide a bid bond at the time of opening, but did so afterward. The actual bond for the project was included in the bid.

The contractor has done some work for the City, but not street work. This is an excavation contractor who is proposing to do the leveling and the excavation work but then Reith Riley would actually be a subcontractor for them.

Howe recommended Council approval of Olin Excavating in the amount of \$60,650.50.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to approve the bid contract with Olin Excavating in the amount of \$60,650.50 for the Hillside Court resurfacing project.

YEA: 5. NAY: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Item #8. **FIRE AUTHORITY FUND BALANCE.** Councilmember LaPonsie explained during the last meeting there was a situation where the Fire Authority Board had a fund balance of \$17,000 but a \$20,000 deficit. Therefore, there will be a bill of approximately \$4,000 which will be split among the townships and the City.

The two questions raised during the meeting are; should there be a fund balance and if so how much and should the authority be saving up in the budget for equipment?

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison believed there should always be a fund balance. As far as having an Equipment Fund, the City is having the same problem. It is a struggle when something is needed and there is nothing in the budget.

Councilmember Schrauben was concerned regarding one of the parties not having enough money to participate in the expense. Mayor Hodges agreed. He wanted money set aside every year to grow. Also, into the future, Hodges proposed a 10 percent level be phased in over the next five years.

Item #9. **COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMENTS.** Councilmember Schrauben stated the Airport Board will meet October 4, 2011 and the Parks and Recreation Commission will meet on October 18, 2011. More updates were received regarding the proposed community garden. The LARA Board will meet on October 12, 2011. It is very exciting to see Lowell becoming a trail hub. This is the center of one of the largest rail to trails in the country. Also, there is another trail which has just been completed after 10 years. The grand opening will be held on Saturday, October 8th, 2011.

Schrauben also mentioned the death of Chris West. He commented on the last time he was at Flat River Grill and how well he was treated.

Councilmember LaPonsie also commented on the passing of West and gave her condolences to her family.

LaPonsie stated the Zoning Board of Appeals will be discussed during the October 19, 2011 worksession. The Planning Commission approved the Jice Pharmaceutical site plan at the last meeting and is ready to move forward.

Councilmember Altoft stated he missed the Downtown Development Authority meeting due to having to work.

Also, Chris West will be missed.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison stated the Arbor Board will be meeting Monday, October 10, 2011. She noted the Cemetery looks wonderful. The old cedar trees have been replaced with newer trees and it is such an improvement.

Ellison also noted Chris West will be missed as well as Gordon Gould.

Mayor Hodges stated Lowell Light and Power will be meeting next week. Work continues on the bio digestion facility. The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors also met and will meet again next week. The Look Memorial Fund has not met in some time.

Hodges commented on the community losing a number of good people. We all need to step up and continue to make Lowell the great community it is.

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

- Howe has spent a great deal of time exploring grant opportunities that may be available either to the City of Lowell or residents of the community. He attended a work session with Kent County Community Development and met with a representative from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. He is also making contact with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation.
- A Community Partners meeting was held last week. This is a group of representatives from various community organizations who are coming together to share information to promote collaboration in the community.
- The Street Team held its first meeting in an effort to begin the process of creating a street improvement plan for the city. Residents Dave Austin and Dennis Kent are assisting Dan DesJarden and Howe in the endeavor. Howe is grateful for the local expertise in the area.
- The Planning Commission approved the final site plan for Jice Pharmaceuticals.
- Including the Hillside Court project, there has been approximately three-quarter million dollars' worth of street improvements completed within the past two years. This includes Bowes, N. Center, Ottawa, Brook, Maple, Grand and now Hillside Court. This also includes the crack sealing done on Foreman, Gee, Grindle and Valley Vista Drive. The City has a long way to go but much has already been done.
- The Michigan Municipal League Conference is held this week.

Item #11. **APPOINTMENTS.** It has been suggested that a Councilmember not serve on the Board of Review. Therefore, Jeff Altoft has stepped aside. Laurie Noall will replace Altoft.

By general consensus, the Council agreed.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 8:21 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk