

**PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE  
CITY OF LOWELL  
MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2014, 7:00 P.M.**

**1. CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; ROLL CALL.**

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Hodges and roll was called by Deputy City Clerk Susan Ullery.

Present: Councilmembers Jeff Altoft, Jim Hall, Sharon Ellison, Chris Schwab and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, Deputy City Clerk Susan Ullery, Police Chief Steve Bukula, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, and Lowell Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce.

**2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to approve the agenda as written.

YES: 5. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S).**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to approve the regular minutes of the May 19, 2014 meeting as written.

YES: 5. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLE.**

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

YES: Councilmembers Altoft, Hall, Ellison, Schwab and Mayor Hodges.

NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (06/02/2014)

|                      |             |
|----------------------|-------------|
| General Fund         | \$18,189.51 |
| Major Streets Fund   | 12.61       |
| Local Streets Fund   | 12.60       |
| Downtown Development | 770.85      |
| Designated Contr.    | 1,494.50    |
| Wastewater Fund      | 9,165.03    |
| Water Fund           | 6,462.65    |

|                 |           |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Cable TV Fund   | 18,436.75 |
| Data Processing | 20.00     |
| Equipment Fund  | 273.87    |

5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.**

On behalf of the group “citizens in support of fiber”, Dave Mortimer spoke regarding the benefits of internet municipal fiber optic network.

On behalf of Donna Drive residents, Adam Wesley of 321 Donna spoke, and provided photos, regarding the condition of their road. Wesley also provided signatures from residents indicating their support and request to the City for the road to be repaved.

Ryan Peal, owner of Vergennes Broad Ban LLC spoke regarding his business and how an internet municipal fiber optic network would impact his business. Currently, his business has submitted plans for the installation of two towers in Lowell Township. They plan to cover rural areas.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.**

- A. Strategic Plan Update. Howe stated a tree planting photo opportunity at the new BP Gas Station with the Arbor Board and city staff was recently held.

A first draft of the Recreation Plan was presented to the Parks & Recreation Commission for review. The next step will be to take their input and incorporate that into the next draft.

The stakeholders group has agreed on a final concept for recommendation to the City Council regarding the Riverwalk Stage/Showboat Plan, which is scheduled for the next City Council meeting.

The Lowell Area Recreation Authority is preparing a recommendation for the Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trail connector, which will be discussed at its meeting on June 11.

The Downtown Development Plan held a kickoff meeting on May 30, 2014.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. Lowell Police Officers Association Letter of Understanding. We have successfully negotiated an agreement with the Lowell Police Officers Association to maintain the current health insurance plan for the next fiscal year. In addition, we have agreed to reopen the contract for discussion about health insurance plans for the following fiscal year (2015-16).

At one point, we were being told that Priority Health would no longer cover retirees under the current plan. We looked at prices for alternative plans and ultimately decided to stay with the current plan for another year.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by SCHWAB to approve the Letter of Understanding with the Lowell Police Officers Association and authorize appropriate signatures.

YES: 5. NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

b. Fireworks Ordinance.

Last year we had some discussion about adopting a fireworks ordinance as allowed under state law adopted a few years ago. The ordinance would prohibit the use of fireworks in the City of Lowell except for the day of, day before, and day after a national holiday.

Chief Bukala provided statistics of fireworks complaints over the last few years.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by SCHWAB to adopt the ordinance as presented.

Councilmember Altoft wanted more time to consider the ordinance. Councilmember Ellison wanted input from the public. Howe explained this ordinance can be put on hold if there is discomfort.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by ALTOFT to table the motion.

YES: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Ellison)      NO: 3. (Councilmembers Hall, Schwab and Mayor Hodges)      ABSENT: 0.      MOTION DEFEATED.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by SCHWAB to adopt Ordinance 14-01.

YES: 4. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall, Schwab and Mayor Hodges)

NO: 1. (Councilmember Altoft)      ABSENT: 0.      MOTION CARRIED.

8. **COUNCIL COMMENTS.** Councilmember Altoft agreed that Donna Drive is in terrible shape as well as Jefferson. We need to concentrate more on the west side of town. Altoft explained Bowes Road is a Major Street, not a Local Street. Other funding is available for repairs on Major Streets while tax dollar funds are used to repair Local Streets. Altoft asked if sidewalk inspections would be completed this year. Howe stated inspections are complete and letters will be going out soon.

Councilmember Schwab had nothing to report.

Councilmember Hall stated the riverwalk to the north has been nicely renovated. However, the skateboards are destroying it. If anyone happens to see someone destroying property take a picture and send it to the Lowell Police Department.

Councilmember Ellison agreed with Hall and suggested people also report owners who do not have their dogs on leashes or are not cleaning up after their pets. The Memorial Day Parade was amazing and Lowell was featured in the news.

Councilmember Hodges reported L & P Board will meet next week as well as the Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. The Look Memorial Fund met and are considering other investments such as working with the Grand Rapids Foundation. Hodges received the city newsletter as well as information regarding the summer concert series. The concerts begin June 12, 2014. He commented on how well the Memorial Day Parade went and thanked Dave Thompson for his efforts.

9. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. The Lowell Area Historical Museum is planning to place more historical markers this year. This year they are looking at locations near the entrance to the riverwalk, near 206 Main, and overlooking the Flat River dam.
2. Conversations have been held with the building inspector about ADA requirements for downtown buildings and the significance of these buildings being in the historic district.
3. One citation was issued last week to a skateboarder. The police are monitoring all areas where skateboarding is not allowed. The community put together a skateboard park and possible we could add some additions to this park.
4. Resolutions are now being circulated as part of the minutes.

10. **APPOINTMENTS.**

No appointments were made.

11. **CLOSED SESSION.**

A. Union Negotiations

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to move to closed session at 7:50 p.m. as allowed under the Open Meetings Act MCL 15.268(c) to discuss union negotiations and personnel.

YES: Councilmembers Altoft, Hall, Ellison and Mayor Hodges.

NO: Councilmembers Schwab. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL return to open session at 9:10 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to adjourn at 9:11 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

---

James W. Hodges, Mayor

---

Susan S. Ullery, Deputy City Clerk