

**PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
MONDAY, MARCH 16, 2015, 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 City Treasurer Suzanne Olin.

Present: Councilmembers Jeff Altoft, Sharon Ellison, Jim Hall, Matt Mayer and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, City Treasurer Suzanne Olin, and Police Chief Steve Bukala.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by MAYER to approve the agenda as presented.

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

NO: None.

ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the regular minutes of the March 2, 2015 meeting as written.

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

NO: None.

ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by MAYER to approve the accounts payable as presented.

YES: Councilmember Altoft, Ellison, Hall, Mayer and Mayor Hodges.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

General Fund	\$30,362.85
Major Street Fund	\$760.59
Local Street Fund	\$760.61
Downtown Development	\$884.95
Designated Contributions	\$489.57
Airport Fund	\$3,377.66
Wastewater Fund	\$47,294.44
Water Fund	\$24,920.03
Data Processing Fund	\$3,614.97
Equipment Fund	\$2,758.75
Current Tax Fund	\$475,003.09

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

Laura Brower, expressed concerns on behalf of her parents that reside at 310 Lincoln Lake, next to the house that burned down over a year ago. She questioned the City's plan for the demolition. Police Chief Bukala stated Bank of America has been paid by the insurance company and should be making plans to tear down the house. He mentioned he put another call into the bank today to check the status of the project.

Mayor Hodges noted there are legal channels that must be followed.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.**

A. Strategic Goals Report. City Manager Howe mentioned the flow monitors have been installed and quotes are needed to clean the lines. He mentioned Dan DesJarden is in the midst of getting prices. By general consensus, the City Council agreed to consider the quotes at a special meeting on Monday, March 23, 2015 prior to its worksession.

The Downtown Development Plan has been presented to the DDA.

B. Pending Council Projects Report. A lime disposal update will be coming soon. A memo has been drafted.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. 2015-2016 Comprehensive Tree Plan. James Reagan, Chairman of the Arbor Board, mentioned he came to the Council in February 2007 to investigate a study committee to maintain trees on public right of way. He added in order to become a "Tree City" four things are needed: including establishing an Arbor Board, a tree ordinance, a budget of \$2.00 per capita and to observe Arbor Day. He mentioned this year, Arbor Day will be observed on April 24, with the planting of a tree at the Lowell Family Chiropractic office. To date, Reagan said the Arbor Board has planted 501 and 200 pine seedlings throughout the community with financial assistance from the City of Lowell, Lowell Light and Power, LCTV, Look Fund and the Lowell Community Fund. Highlights of the Arbor Board projects include planting trees on the Riverwalk Plaza, Bowes Rd, Ridgeview and Sibley and the Boy Scout cabin. He mentioned for 2015 a proposed project is the bio digester pipeline, extending from Lighthouse, and planting trees along the path. Reagan reported the budget for the upcoming year is \$10,000. He thanked DPW Director Dan DesJarden for all his assistance in carrying out projects. Reagan also thanked the Council for their support.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by ALTOFT to adopt the 2015-2016 Comprehensive Tree Plan as presented by the Arbor Board.

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

NO: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

- b. Fund Balance Policy. Howe explained under the Government Accounting Standard Board (GASB) guidelines, they require Cities to have 5 components of fund balance including non-spendable, restricted, committed, assigned and unassigned. Howe mentioned the main component is item D whereby the City would establish a fund balance of \$500,000 or 15 percent of expenditures. Howe mentioned bond agencies like to see liquid cash; it makes the bondholders more confident that we have cash available to make payments. Howe suggested the City establish a policy for the general fund balance of \$500,000 or 15 percent of expenditures.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to adopt the Fund Balance Policy as presented.

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

NO: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

- c. United Water Agreement. At a previous meeting, the Council authorized Howe to negotiate a successor agreement with United Water for operation of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The highlight of the new agreement is a term of 5 years, with the rate for the first year frozen at the current level. Future increases will be based on increases in the Consumer Price Index. Howe further mentioned a \$22,000 repayment to United Water will also be eliminated. Councilmember Altoft questioned what the average computer price index has been. Howe responded approximately 2.2%. Councilmember Ellison questioned why five years? Howe responded he felt 5 years was best for the City.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to adopt Resolution 06-15 to approve the United Water agreement as presented.

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

NO: Altoft. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

8. MONTHLY REPORTS

No comments were received.

9. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilmember Mayer stated the Fire Authority had not met, and will hopefully meet next month.

Councilmember Altoft stated the Airport Board had a good meeting last week and there are lots of plans to clean up the airport. He mentioned a possible idea of the Airport contracting with homeowners to trim trees. He added this will help with their goal of obtaining general utility status.

Councilmember Hall said he had nothing to report from the Planning Commission. LARA will present their presentations at the Community Expo on March 28, 2015.

Councilmember Ellison thanked the Arbor Board for their work.

Mayor Hodges said the LL&P line workers rodeo will be held in Sacramento California and Lowell Light and Power will be sending out a representative. He added Tom Russo and Greg Pierce will be making a presentation during the distributive generation sessions. He added the bio digester is about two weeks behind deadline and a public open house will be held in April. Light and Power has been working on policies and procedures and a draft budget will be coming to Council shortly. He mentioned Sharon Morris at Light and Power had an update on the 2014 energy optimization program. He added Light and Power's next meeting will be held on April 19, 2015. Hodges also reported the Lowell Area Chamber of Commerce met last week and a presentation was held on a community currency program. The Lowell Expo will be held on March 28, 2015. Hodges reported the Helen Look Fund applications will be due April 24 with distributions made in May. He thanked Mayor Pro Tem Ellison for hosting the Laugh Fest for him recently under short notice.

10. **CITY MANAGER REPORT.**

1. The City has unscrewed the bulbs on every other light downtown and is seeking public input. This has given us an opportunity to test the idea of removing every other light and extending the downtown lighting to the railroad tracks to the west and Jackson Street to the east. This was an idea that came out of our stakeholder meetings and included in the Downtown Placemaking Plan.
2. The Downtown Development Authority has approved funding to assist with the Avery Street project this year. The design work will begin soon and look forward to completing this project.
3. City Manager Howe reported there is a workshop scheduled for Monday, March 23, 6 p.m. at City Hall. The group "Flat River Connect" would like to come to the work session to discuss possible leasing of office space in the old cable building.

11. **APPOINTMENTS.**

Mayor Hodges reported on the following appointments

Board of Review
Alternate Vacancy -

Construction Board of Appeals
Vacancy -

12. **CLOSED SESSION**

A. Pending Litigation

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to move to closed session at 7:29 p.m. as allowed under the Open Meetings Act MCL 15.268(c) to discuss pending litigation.

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

NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to return to open session at 7:51 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by ALTOFT to adjourn at 7:52 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Susan S. Ullery, Deputy City Clerk