

PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL

For the Regular Meeting of Monday, December 5, 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, Chief of Police Barry Getzen, Light and Power Boardmember and Planning Commissioners Jim Hall and Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce.

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

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

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

Item #2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGUALR MEEING OF NOVEMBER 21, 2011.**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by LAPONSIE to approve the minutes of the November 21, 2011 meeting as corrected.

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

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

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded 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 (12/05/11)</u>	
GENERAL FUND	\$46,515.91
MAJOR STREET FUND	2,318.00
LOCAL STREET FUND	51,309.60
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND	30,523.00
AIRPORT FUND	79.94
WASTEWATER FUND	39,646.75
WATER FUND	2,982.87

DATA PROCESSING FUND	269.30
EQUIPMENT FUND	54.96
CURRENT TAX FUND	2,409.49

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

Item #5. **PENDING COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE.** City Manager Howe stated there were no updates at this time other than the sidewalk replacement plan which would be a separate item on the agenda.

Item #6. **REQUEST TO EXPAND THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT FOR KING MILLING COMPANY TO INCLUDE PARCELS 41-20-02-453-030 AND 41-20-02-451-005.**

Mayor Hodges noted his wife is employed with King Milling. Therefore, he would be abstaining from discussion and turned the meeting over to Mayor Pro Tem Ellison.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison noted it had been requested to expand the Industrial Development District for King Milling Company to include parcels 41-20-02-453-030 and 41-20-02-451-005. This would include all of King Milling's properties located on the east side of South Hudson, south side of Main Street and west of the Flat River. This would qualify the company for tax abatement certificates under Public Act 198 involving future expansions.

For the Council to consider this, a public hearing would need to be established for Tuesday, January 3, 2012.

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONSIE and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to set a public hearing on Tuesday, January 3, 2012 to consider the expansion of the Industrial Development District for King Milling Company parcels 41-20-02-453-030 AND 41-20-02-451-005.

YEA: Councilmembers Altoft, LaPonsie, Schrauben and Mayor Pro Tem Ellison. NAY: None.

ABSTAIN: 1. (Hodges) ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison turned the meeting back over to Mayor Hodges.

Item #7. **SIDEWALK REPLACEMENT PLAN.** City Manager Howe reported the survey completed by City staff showed that approximately 6,300 lineal feet, or 1.19 miles of sidewalk are in need of repair. In August of 2000 a sidewalk evaluation study was conducted by Rowe Incorporated which showed approximately 3,200 lineal feet of sidewalk was in fair to poor condition. Thus, the total amount of sidewalk that needs to be repaired has doubled.

It is estimated that the total cost to repair sidewalks would be approximately \$166,000. Howe proposed seeking funds from the Downtown Development Authority (\$37,000, 22%), Community Development Block Grant (\$25,000, 15%), LCTV Fund grant (\$49,000, 30%) and Lowell Area Community Fund (\$55,000, 33%). Another way of financing the sidewalks would be to require the first portion of repairs be paid by homeowners then supplement the remaining amount with grant funds. Yet another option would be a special assessment

district, perhaps citywide, that would generate enough revenue to create a revolving fund for sidewalk repair and perhaps even enough to construct sidewalks in areas where sidewalks are missing.

After much discussion there was a general consensus that Howe should proceed with the process of seeking grant funds.

Item #8. **COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMENTS.** Councilmember Schrauben stated the Airport Board will meet tomorrow, December 6 and the Parks and Recreation Commission will meet on Thursday, December 20, 2011. The Lowell Area Recreation Authority is addressing maintenance of the trails.

Councilmember LaPonsie stated the Planning Commission will be meeting on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 and the Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority will meet on Monday, December 12, 2011. LaPonsie also noted the success of another night time Christmas parade.

Councilmember Altoft stated he had no reports this week but commented on the informational meeting on November 30th for the bio-digester project. He felt it was a very good meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison stated the Arbor Board will be meeting on Monday, December 12 and thanked the Light and Power Board and City Manager Howe for the informational meeting on the bio-digester project.

Mayor Hodges noted he too attended the informational meeting on the bio-digester project. Also, the Light and Power Board meeting is on December 8, 2011. The Chamber of Commerce will not have a board meeting this month but encourage everyone to attend the Ambassador's Breakfast Club at 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, December 14 at Impact Church. Hodges also thanked the Chamber for another successful Christmas Parade. The Look Memorial Fund met on November 30 and approved the following grants; Lowell Area Schools \$3,983.00, City of Lowell \$15,000 and Flat River Outreach Ministries \$7,950.

Item #9. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.**

1. We are reviewing the draft audit report and are awaiting final numbers from Lowell Light and Power that will need to be inserted into our audit. One we have those figures the auditors will finalize the report. We are targeting December 19 for the auditors to make a presentation to you.
2. I am planning to submit the following grant applications to the Lowell Area Community Fund before the deadline on December 16:
 - a. Tree Replacement Program – for funds to be used to implement the City Tree Plan as recommended by the City Arbor Board.
 - b. Technology Upgrades – for funds to be used to upgrade document retention and distribution equipment for city offices.
 - c. Ballfield Dugouts – for funds to be used to construct dugouts at the city ball diamonds.
3. We have received an initial rating of city streets with the assistance of the Grand Valley Metro Council showing that nearly 70 percent are in Fair or Poor condition while just over 30 percent are Good or Excellent. I have ordered the RoadSoft program which is available at no cost to the city that will assist us in analyzing the data and setting priorities for street repairs. It is interesting to note that 11 years ago, a report by Rowe Incorporated dated August 25, 2000 indicated that 69% of the local streets had a Good to Excellent rating while 31% were rated Fair to Poor.

4. A Public Information Meeting was held on November 30 with a presentation from Lowell Light and Power Superintendent Greg Pierce and Sustainable Partners President Greg Northrup making a presentation to members of the public about the proposed bio-digestion project. Approximately 35 people attended.
5. Training for council members who will begin the new session of the council in January will take place on December 12 at 7 p.m.
6. Previously I had indicated we would submit a grant request to the Community Fund for a police records management system. However, Chief Getzen had been able to work collaboratively with another agency to acquire this at no cost to the City of Lowell. The system should be ready for use at the beginning of January and will provide all the records needs of the Police Department.
7. Work is ongoing with the website and the City now has a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cityoflowellmichigan.

Item #10. **APPOINTMENTS.**

By consensus of the City Council, Jeff Altoft was appointed as the alternate Board of Review position.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 8:22 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk