

**PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2012**

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

The Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Mayor Hodges and City Clerk Betty Morlock called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Jim Hall, Andrew Schrauben, Jim Valentine, Mayor Pro Tem Ellison and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, City Clerk Betty Morlock, Police Officer Chris Hurst, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce and Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent Mark Mundt.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

City Manager Howe request that a Clarke Street Resolution be added as item F under New Business.

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

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

3. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

IT WAS MOVED BY SCHRAUBEN and seconded by HALL to approve the regular minutes of the March 5, 2012 meeting as presented.

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

4. **APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLES.**

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

YEA: Councilmembers Hall, Schrauben, Valentine, Mayor Pro Tem Ellison and Mayor Hodges.

NAY: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

<u>BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (03/19/12)</u>	
GENERAL FUND	\$19,178.10
MAJOR STREET FUND	2,313.16
LOCAL STREET FUND	2,266.17

DDA FUND	940.24
AIRPORT FUND	1,170.19
WASTEWATER FUND	4,754.59
WATER FUND	11,416.59
CABLE TV FUND	1,549.60
EQUIPMENT FUND	789.36
CURRENT TAX FUND	584,772.80

5. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** Paula Mierendorf of 303 Roberta Jayne stated she had presented the idea of pursuing a community garden near her home last summer. She is now asking what she needs to do to get going on this project and if there were any restrictions on having a well installed for watering the garden. Mayor Hodges directed her to attend a Parks and Recreation Commission with a complete plan for them to review and make a recommendation to the City Council. DPW Director DesJarden stated she would need to contact the Kent County Health Department regarding a well.

6. **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. **PENDING COUNCIL PROJECTS UPDATE.** No comments were received.
- B. **LIGHT AND POWER BOARD COMPENSATION.** At the March 5, 2012 meeting, the Local Compensation Commission presented recommendations for the rates of pay for the elected City Council. The commission was also asked to present a recommendation for the appointed members of the Light and Power Board.

With respect to members of the Light and Power Board, the City Charter requires that:
“Members of the Board shall receive nominal compensation, which amount shall be set by the City Council each year by resolution.”

Based on the recommendation from the commission, a resolution has been prepared for Council consideration.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to adopt the resolution establishing the compensation for members of the Board of Light and Power of \$20 per meeting for a total of 20 meetings with annual compensation not to exceed \$500 per year.

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

NAY: Councilmember Hall. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT REPORT.** Mark Mundt, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent, stated the water and wastewater industries are slowly beginning to feel a

shortage of qualified people entering our field. Many things are being done to address this issue. The following is the effort with which he has been involved.

In the fall of 2009 Mundt organized a committee of 12 industry professionals that included folks from engineering and operations as well as both private sector and public sector professionals. The purpose of the group was to approach Grand Rapids Community College about offering a two year Water Resource degree. Currently only Bay de Noc Community College and Delta College offer this degree. Because of the population base in the greater Grand Rapids area and the fact that so many water and wastewater plants are located in southern Michigan, the committee felt that offering such a degree in the Grand Rapids area only made sense.

Over the last few months they have been working with Delta College representatives to not only secure facilities to be able to teach the advanced water and wastewater courses, but also facilities for internships and instructors. In the near future they will be assisting with the distribution of course brochures to local high schools and press releases about the program.

Delta College has placed a renewed effort on offering a water degree at GRCC with classes beginning in the fall of this year.

This is only one way to help backfill the vacancies we are beginning to see in the industry, but Mundt is very happy about this and proud to have been part of the effort.

No action needed.

- B. **WATER RELIABILITY STUDY CONTRACT.** The City is required by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to submit a Water Reliability Study every five years. The previous study was submitted in 2007 and was completed by Williams and Works for \$7,500. City Manager Howe asked Williams and Works to present a proposal to complete the study for 2012, which they have submitted with a total proposed fee of \$6,000. Based on their experience with our system and the reasonableness of the proposed fee, Howe asked the Council to authorize him to contract with them for the 2012 Water Reliability Study.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to authorize City Manager Howe to enter into an agreement with Williams and Works for the purpose of completing the 2012 Water Reliability Study at a cost of \$6,000.

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

- C. **BOWES ROAD ENGINEERING CONTRACT.** The current capital improvement plan calls for reconstruction of Bowes Road in two areas:
- 1,950 feet west of Valley Vista then west approximately 975 feet. This project includes removal of existing pavement, installation of new storm sewer, placement of new base and asphalt surface and the installation of new sidewalk along the north side.
 - Mill and resurface from West Street to Hudson Street.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$417,500; of which \$334,000 would come from MDOT Small Urban Funds and \$83,500 from the city's Major Streets Fund.

In order to proceed, the City needs to contract with an engineering firm for design and construction supervision services. Williams and Works submitted a proposal for this work and has been the firm engaged in previous Bowes Road projects. The total cost of their proposal is \$37,650. Approval will give us the ability to move forward with an anticipated construction period of September 5 through October 15.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by SCHRAUBEN to authorize City Manager Howe to contract with Williams and Works for design engineering and construction engineering services for the 2012 Bowes Road project at a cost of \$37,650.

- D. **UPDATED BUDGET CALENDAR**. The previous Budget Calendar called for a council work session on May 28, which is Memorial Day. Thus the Council needs to decide when they want to schedule this budget work session. A preliminary budget will be presented at a work session on April 9. We may also be able to schedule a work session following the May 21 regular meeting.

Consensus of the Council is to have the work session on Wednesday, May 30 at 6 p.m.

- E. **ZONING ORDINANCE DISCUSSION – TOWING FACILITIES**. The City has received an inquiry to locate a towing facility within the C-3 District. After discussing this issue with planner Jay Kilpatrick and City Attorney Richard Wendt, it was determined that the ordinance has not defined this type of use nor does it allow it within any zoning district.

This issue will be brought to the Planning Commission for discussion and possible zoning ordinance amendment.

No action needed.

- F. **CLARKE STREET RESOLUTION**. Clarke Street was created and constructed in 2004 but was never added as a local street and therefore not eligible for Act 51 funding.

In order to designate the street as a local street and receive Act 51 funding for it the governing body must adopt it as a local street through a resolution that meets the state requirements for this process.

IT WAS MOVED BY VALENTINE and seconded by ELLISON to adopt the resolution approving the addition of Clarke Street as a local street.

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

8. **MONTHLY REPORTS**. No comments were received from materials presented.

9. **COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Councilmember Hall had no comment.

Councilmember Schrauben stated Airport Boardmember Kevin Vezino has resigned and wanted to thank Kevin for his years of service on the board with many of them being the Chair. Parks and Recreation will be Tuesday, March 20 at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall. Lowell Area Recreation Authority will have a booth at the Expo and will seek input on Phase II of the trails. In addition they are looking for volunteers to help with the maintenance of the trails.

Councilmember Valentine stated the Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority will be meeting on March 26 at 4 p.m. and kudos to Mark Mundt to place a renewed effort on offering a water degree option in the Grand Rapids area.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison noted the Arbor Board is working on Arbor Day and spring activities. Ellison also attended the Light and Power Board meeting in behalf of Mayor Hodges and they primarily discussed their budget and activities at the Expo.

Mayor Hodges stated a group from Lowell will be traveling to Germany to visit some bio-digester locations. He also noted the Lowell Area Fire Department is having their annual pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 24 from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. Everyone should go for breakfast at the Fire Station then to Lowell High School for the Chamber of Commerce Expo. Also, Girls Night Out will be on Thursday, April 19th. Hodges also noted his appreciation to City Manager Howe for his leadership in working with the townships and Lowell Schools.

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

1. The City received an "A" rating from Standard and Poor's with a stable outlook. This is a very good rating based on our size and other demographics. In addition, we went to market to refinance the bonds for City Hall and I am pleased to report that we will save \$570,000 or more than 13 percent over the next 20 years. There will be an immediate savings of \$106,000 to the General Fund during the current fiscal year and \$74,000 for the next fiscal year. This was a very positive move that will go a long way toward stabilizing our financial position.
2. We are receiving a number of requests from fireworks companies to set up temporary facilities to sell fireworks this summer. State law does not allow us to prohibit these types of "transient merchants" however we can require that they follow our special use procedures under the zoning ordinance.
3. Work continues on the preliminary budget that will be presented to you in April.
4. The public comment period for proposed amendment to the Kent County Solid Waste Management Plan has been extended 90 days. Written comments will be accepted until June 15, 2012.
6. Staff will have website training on Thursday, March 22, 2012.

10. **APPOINTMENTS.** No appointments were made.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 7:34 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk