

**PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE  
CITY OF LOWELL  
MONDAY, OCTOBER 20, 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, Sharon Ellison, Jim Hall, Matt Mayer and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Mark Howe, Deputy City Clerk Susan Ullery, Chief of Police Steve Bukala and Lowell Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

Councilmember Mayer requested four additional items be added.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and seconded by MAYER to add Item 6C “Approval of previous minutes”.

YES: Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer.

NO: Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges.

ABSENT: None. MOTION FAILED.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and seconded by MAYER to add Item 6D “Discuss Budget Information”.

YES: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

NO: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

ABSENT: None. MOTION FAILED.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and seconded by MAYER to add Item 7E “City Manager Performance”.

YES: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

NO: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

ABSENT: None. MOTION FAILED.

IT WAS MOVED BY MAYER and seconded by ALTOFT to add Item 12B “City Manager Performance”.

YES: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

NO: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

ABSENT: None. MOTION FAILED.

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

YES: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

NO: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

ABSENT: None. 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 October 6, 2014 meeting as written.

YES: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

NO: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the closed session minutes of the October 6, 2014 meeting as written.

YES: 3. (Councilmembers Ellison, Hall and Mayor Hodges)

NO: 2. (Councilmembers Altoft and Mayer)

ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

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

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

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

NO: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (10/20/2014)

General Fund	\$41,658.59
Major Street Fund	289.65
Downtown Development	300.77
Designated Contributions	8.75
Airport Fund	17,997.24
Wastewater Fund	4,944.24

Water Fund	19,215.34
Data Processing Fund	1,738.83
Equipment Fund	604.80
Current Tax Collection	22,642.48

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

Tony Ellison of 407 N. Division thanked the City Council and City Manager for all they have accomplished within the City. He urged residents to attend the Lowell Light and Power Board meetings. Ellison had concerns with the Council and wanted everyone to do what is best for the City of Lowell.

Doug Krause, 357 Donna, recently received a letter from Chief Bukala regarding the removal of dead and diseased trees. Krause requested additional time be allowed on the removal of these trees.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.**

A. Strategic Plan Update. An updated report was provided. City Manager Mark Howe stated the next stakeholder meeting is scheduled for October 23, 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers at city hall.

B. Pending Council Projects Report.

Downtown Tower Removal – No bids were received.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Right Place Presentation. Birgit Klohs, President & CEO of “The Right Place” made a presentation on the activities and benefits of the city’s collaboration with the Right Place. She asked the Council to re-invest \$12,500 with The Right Place as done in previous years.

B. Underground Wires Ordinance. The Council requested this item be on the agenda for a report from Light and Power. The Light and Power Board discussed this item at their last meeting and made some changes to their policy.

Councilmember Mayer raised concerns regarding the report from Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce. Altoft stated this is about following policy. Pierce stated they have a policy which states primary underground wire should be 36” deep at the time of inspection. Altoft felt the primary should be encased on concrete.

Mayor Hodges confirmed national guidelines were followed. Pierce responded yes. Councilmember Ellison liked the idea of photographing the job site.

C. Property Easements. In order to construct a sewer line from Litehouse to the Lowell Energy Center a number of easements have been negotiated and granted to the City of Lowell. These easements require council approval to accept them so that they can be recorded with the Kent County Register of Deeds.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to adopt Resolution 18-14.

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

D. Downtown Tower Removal. Bids to remove the downtown tower were due on Friday, October 17. However, no bids were received.

8. **MONTHLY REPORTS**. Councilmember Mayer requested the performance data sheet from Light and Power be provided with the monthly reports.

City Manager Howe explained the financial reports which are included with the monthly reports. He pointed out the column showing the available balance for each activity and capital outlay items.

9. **COUNCIL COMMENTS**.

Councilmember Mayer stated the next Fire Authority Board meeting will be November 17th.

Councilmember Altoft suggested another Councilmember attend the DDA meetings as he is unable to. Altoft met with City Manager Howe regarding the parking lot to the south. Altoft also commented on the Lowell Police Department and wanted to clarify that he does not want to do away with the LPD but rather review the budget items. Altoft did however want to review the contract with the Wastewater Treatment Plant and have it go out for bid. Altoft also believed Mayer had a right to add items to the agenda. Altoft referred to the Light and Power issue and did not believe public safety was a waste of time. He also noted the many dead trees throughout town. There seem to be many along the new walking trail behind Tractor Supply. Altoft stated a 30 day notice to cut down dead or diseased trees is not long enough.

Councilmember Hall stated LARA met and was presented with various options for the new trail locations. Planning Commission has continued to review Mixed Use Zoning. There will be a community walk on November 1, 2014 to review those areas that could be affected.

Councilmember Ellison suggested a worksession be established as to how matters are handled when serving on City Council. Ellison also wanted to continue to move forward with the Strategic Plan. This is something that was adopted by all the Councilmembers.

Mayor Hodges stated Lowell Light and Power met a couple weeks ago and discussed the buried cable issue. They were also very involved in the Harvest Festival. The bio-digester is on schedule. The Chamber of Commerce hosted the Harvest Festival. A successful recycle project was also held at the fairgrounds. The Chamber of Commerce introduced two student representatives who will be attending their meetings. Girls Night Out went very well. In looking ahead, Christmas through Lowell is coming up as well as the Chamber Winter Gathering, held in May. Look Memorial Fund is now accepting applications, which are due October 31 at 4:00. They will meet on November 19<sup>th</sup> to consider the applications received.

10. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. City Manager Howe commented on the importance of communication. It is the key to success. Howe stated his door is always open.
2. Howe provided an aerial photo of the South Monroe proposed parking area.
3. Kent County Emergency Management and the Kent County Health Department provided information to pass along to the general public about Ebola.
4. Initial data for the downtown parking analysis is being gathered. The City will meet with Williams and Works soon to discuss future development and the impact of parking needs.

11. **APPOINTMENTS.**

None.

11. **CLOSED SESSION**

A. Union Negotiations

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to move to closed session at 8:26 p.m. as allowed under the Open Meetings Act MCL 15.268(c) to discuss union negotiations.

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 8:53 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 8:54 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

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James W. Hodges, Mayor

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Susan S. Ullery, Deputy City Clerk