

**PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 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, City Treasurer Sue Olin, Chief of Police Steve Bukala, Light and Power Board Chairman Greg Canfield and 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 presented.

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 work session minutes of the October 30, 2014 meeting as written.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the regular minutes of the November 3, 2014 meeting as written.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the closed session minutes of the November 3, 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 ALTOFT 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 (11/17/2014)

General Fund	\$38,078.71
Major Street Fund	1,287.66
Local Street Fund	1,287.66
Downtown Development	72.99
General Debt Serv.	65,372.51
Airport Fund	44.55
Wastewater Fund	50,795.89
Water Fund	7,597.24
Data Processing Fund	18,602.64
Equipment Fund	3,780.60
Current Tax Collection	9,378.27

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

No comments were received.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.**

A. Strategic Plan Update. An updated report was provided. City Manager Mark Howe highlighted the following strategic goals; (a) Street Asset Management Plan and noted we have completed the mix of fixes and received estimates of the cost of each from Williams & Works. Also, the Grand Valley Metro Council has created a database of our streets and will begin working on the draft modes for our consideration. (b) The Community Clean-up Project that was sponsored by the townships, the city, the school district and the chamber was held during the harvest festival and was very successful. (c) Code Compliance Process and Reporting, at the end of October we were at 86% compliance for all zoning and code enforcement complaints taken during the year. Of the 14% that are still open, one is a foreclosure home awaiting a sheriff sale and three are vacant buildings awaiting the sale of property. As of this Council meeting, we are at 95% compliances. (d) Downtown Development Plan, a public open house to reveal the final plans for the downtown will be held on November 20, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber at City Hall.

B. Pending Council Projects Report. No further updates at this time.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Airport Manager Introduction. City Manager Mark Howe introduced Casey Brown, the new Airport Manager for the City. Casey has lived in Lowell most of his life and has been involved with the airport and aviation through his father since the age of 10. Casey is married with two sons and his family enjoys going on trips in their airplane. He recently received his private pilot's license. He has been a project manager for eight years and is currently employed at Meijers.

Casey stated he is the son of Roger Brown, the previous owner of the Ledger and Buyers Guide. He thanked the Council for appointing him as the new Airport Manager and stated he was very excited about this position. He also mentioned they had a cleanup day at the airport that was very successful.

B. Liquor License for Sunshine Meadery, LLC – Local Government Approval. Jacob Lemoine, owner and manager of Sunshine Meadery LLC (501 Ottawa) applied to the Michigan Liquor Control

Commission to obtain a liquor license to produce mead (honey wine) in the City of Lowell. In order to receive approval they must have approval from the local legislative body. Lemoine explained that they plan to make 500 gallons or so the first year and plan to distribute it to restaurants, retailers and farmers market.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and seconded by HALL to adopt the resolution recommending the approval for a liquor license for Sunshine Meadery, LLC.

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

NO: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

- C. Auditor Presentation. Peter Haefner, of Vredeveld Haefner presented the 2014 audit findings for the City Council and Lowell Light and Power. Peter explained effecting year ending June 30, 2015, the City will be required to implement a new pension reporting standard. This standard requires governments to report a “net pension liability” for the unfunded portion of its pension plan. He also mentioned the City has increased their General Fund balance significantly over the past few years and is very positive for the City of Lowell.

Howe questioned a standard for fund balance. Haefner felt 25% of expenditures were a good target.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to accept the annual audit as presented.

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

- D. Adoption of Ordinance 14-2. Ordinance to amend subsection G of Section 4.08, “Accessory Building and Uses,” of Chapter 4, “General Provisions,” of appendix A, “Zoning,” of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lowell.

The planning commission held a public hearing and recommended adoption of a change to the zoning ordinance that will allow accessory buildings in the C-3 district only to not exceed the floor area of the main building. The current requirement is less than 25 percent of the floor area of the main building; however, the planning commission explored examples and options where accessory buildings could be permitted to exceed the 25 percent requirement. Again, this amendment would only affect the C-3 district.

No public comments were received.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to adopt Ordinance 14-2 as presented.

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

NO: None. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

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

9. COUNCIL COMMENTS.

Councilmember Mayer stated the Fire Authority met today and are looking at other options to fund the purchase of air packs since the grants they had applied for were denied due to no more FEMA monies available.

Councilmember Altoft mentioned he had a meeting with City Manager Howe regarding sidewalks. He felt there were more sidewalks than on the list that need to be tagged. He also mentioned the parking meeting held on November 11th had good ideas, however, there is not a lot of parking on the west side of the river. He also mentioned the City has lots of FOIA requests. He suggested the City put everything on line including council packets and wages. He also mentioned salt for the roads will be more expensive this year.

Councilmember Hall had missed the LARA meeting but noted they had presented their preliminary design report. He also stated how nice it is to see all the traffic in Lowell.

Councilmember Ellison stated there was no Arbor Board or Downtown Historic Commission meetings this month and the LCTV will meet tomorrow, November 18th.

Mayor Hodges mentioned that he attended the Light and Power Board meeting last week. The kick off meeting for Laugh Fest was also last week. He encouraged everyone to get involved this year to support the Gilda's Club. The Chamber of Commerce is working on the Christmas parade and the Expo. Hodges also noted the Look Memorial Fund will be meeting on Wednesday, November 19th at 4 p.m.

10. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. The planning commission had been very busy working on an amendment to the zoning ordinance relating to seasonal merchandise sales, mostly in response to requests for transient merchants selling fireworks in accordance with changes to state law allowing fireworks sales. There has also been some discussion on the peddler, transient merchants and solicitors sections of the code of ordinances and whether or not conflicts exist between this section of the code and the zoning ordinance. We have previously discussed updating the peddler, transient merchant and solicitation (business activities) section of the code of ordinances and may need to establish where that fits into other priorities and projects discussed during your strategic planning workshop.
2. Attached in the agenda packet was a memo updating council on a recent parking meeting that was held with property owners, business owners and residents in the northwest downtown area.
3. A meeting with the LCTV Committee will be held to discuss with them the recent action taken by the council to allocate interest from the fund for the next year to local streets.
4. Staff is working with the Michigan Rural Water Association who can supply us with an operator in charge of the distribution system in the event we do not find a qualified application for the Water Distribution Supervisor position.

11. **APPOINTMENTS.**

Mayor Hodges stated two positions are open on the Board of Review.

11. **CLOSED SESSION**

A. Union Negotiations

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to move to closed session at 7:43 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.

Council returned to open session at 7:53 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 7:54 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Susan S. Ullery, Deputy City Clerk