

**PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 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, Police Chief Steve Bukala, City Treasurer Suzanne Olin and DPW Director Dan Desjarden.

2. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

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

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

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

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the special meeting of November 24, 2014 as corrected.

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

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by ALTOFT to approve the regular minutes of the December 1, 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 December 1, 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 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 (12/15/2014)

General Fund	\$11,335.30
Major Street Fund	4,032.00
Local Street Fund	17,628.17
Downtown Development	1,446.04
Airport Fund	2,751.84
Wastewater Fund	81,871.09
Water Fund	3,059.07
Data Processing Fund	440.00
Equipment Fund	6,458.57

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

DPW Director Dan DesJarden clarified he is not retiring because of difficulties with City Manager Howe. He would be willing to sit down with anyone and explain why he is retiring.

6. **OLD BUSINESS.**

A. Strategic Plan Update. An updated report was provided. City Manager Mark Howe played a video from You Tube showing the Lowell Police Department making traffic stops and instead of issuing tickets they gave Christmas presents. Currently, the video has nearly 25 million views. Police Chief Bukala explained Rob Bliss approached the LPD in October regarding this project. Bukala mentioned this was probably the most rewarding two days of his career.

At the last City Council meeting the Council approved moving forward with design and preparing bid specifications to relocate the lift station and replace the force main with a gravity feed. Also, the final plan for the Downtown Development Plan with cost estimates will be presented to the DDA at its February meeting.

B. Pending Council Projects Report. The engineering firm has been in contact with the DEQ and has been informed that lime application on agricultural land is being handled by the Department of Agriculture effective September 16. The City is working with both departments to determine how to proceed.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Ordinance Amendment 14-03 – Amend Section 3.02, “District Boundaries,” of Chapter 3 “Zoning District – General,” of Appendix A, “Zoning,” of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lowell.

The Planning Commission has recommended rezoning the properties at 318 East Main and 312 East Main from Industrial to C-2. These properties, known as the former Superior Furniture building, have the potential for future commercial development. In addition, the property owner has applied for a parcel split on one of the properties that will ultimately enable the construction of a parking lot behind the buildings on the 200 block of East Main Street.

It is recommended that the Lowell City Council adopt Ordinance 14-03.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to adopt Ordinance 14-03.

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

B. Backhoe Replacement.

The City developed specifications and sought bids to replace the 1986 Case backhoe used by the Department of Public Works. Three total bids were received. Two met the specifications and one did not. The two bids meeting specifications were from AIS Construction Equipment and Michigan CAT.

The specifications included a base model plus options for auxiliary hydraulics and four-wheel drive instead of two-wheel drive. The City also asked the companies to quote trade-in value for the current backhoe. After reviewing the bids, the City felt we may be able to do as well or better than the quoted trade-in values by sending the current backhoe to an auction service. The bid results with the two options are:

AIS Construction Equipment:	\$94,600 for a John Deere 310 SK
Michigan CAT:	\$98,636 for a Caterpillar 420 F

Following the opening of bids, our equipment operators visited and operated both machines and reported that their preference was the John Deere.

In the equipment replacement plan, the City anticipated spending \$100,000 to replace the backhoe this year and to finance the cost of replacement over a 10-year period. The city attorney and treasurer are still working on the details and bid process for financing, however, we are requesting approval for the purchase so that we can lock in the current bid. A request to approve financing will come before you at a later meeting.

It is recommended that the Lowell City Council authorize the purchase of a John Deere 310 SK backhoe from AIS Construction Equipment for \$94,600.

Councilmember Altoft asked if the City tried to go through the State of Michigan with the bid process. City Manager Howe stated there was discussion of going through mideal and taking that price. He wanted to put it out for bid and have them even bid again mideal price to see if they could get a lower price. Howe stated he would check on this.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to authorize the purchase of a John Deere 310 SK backhoe from AIS Construction Equipment for \$94,600.

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

C. Kent Intermediate School District – Collection of Summer Property Taxes for 2015.

As in previous years, the Kent Intermediate School District has requested that the City collect the 2015 summer property taxes for the district. The City collects the KISD property taxes at no fee in exchange for retaining earned interest while the monies are deposited in city accounts.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and seconded by HALL to approve the request from the Kent Intermediate School District to collect the 2015 summer property taxes for the district at no fee in exchange for retaining earned interest while the monies are deposited in city accounts.

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

NO: None. ABSENT: None. MOTION CARRIED.

D. Fire Department SCBA Equipment.

The SCBA is a pack worn with tanks. A fireman has the ability to change out these tanks at the scene of a fire. The Fire Department has tried three times to obtain funding through a FEMA grant. They have attempted to work with other municipalities. There is at least one municipality still moving forward with this purchase. If the City of Lowell goes in with them, this helps to keep the cost down.

The Fire Board had discussion about this and tried to get an idea of what the final day would be for having to replace this equipment. If you try to phase it in then you could be dealing with two different types which could create confusion.

The Fire Authority recommended replacement of the equipment based on whether or not the municipalities were able to produce the funding for this which total \$111,000 if action is taken by December 30. Another idea being considered is if this could be financed.

Councilmember Mayer stated it is not the cylinders that are out of date, but the frames that hold the cylinders. They are not manufactured anymore.

Councilmember Hall stated the board discussed financing but it wasn't clear if they could legally finance. Hall suggested tabling the issue. There is a deadline of December 31, 2014. We can have a meeting once the townships have met.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and seconded by MAYER to table the issue regarding the fire department SCBA equipment.

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

8. MONTHLY REPORTS. No comments were received.

9. COUNCIL COMMENTS.

Councilmember Mayer stated the Fire Board met on December 15, 2014. The next meeting will be January 12, 2015. Mayer stated the townships have yet to meet regarding the SCBA equipment. A motion was made to move the meeting dates to the second Monday of each month.

Councilmember Altoft stated the Airport Board met last week. Everyone did a great job cleaning up the airport. Altoft congratulated Police Chief Bukala on the recent video.

Councilmember Hall stated the Planning Commission discussed rezoning the property at 312 and 318 E. Main Street. The final proposals for the trail connection was reviewed at the LARA meeting. Hall also commented on the LPD video. He was surprised when it hit London and Australia. Hall thanked Rob Bliss and appreciated the creative thinking.

Councilmember Ellison stated the Arbor Board will begin working on the Comprehensive Tree Plan that will be presented to the City Council. DDA discussed the potential parking lot. LCTV Committee met and the progress reports were reviewed for the past years grants. Ellison stated she is very proud of the

police department as well as all of the other departments of the City. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mayor Hodges stated the Lowell Light and Power Board met last week and reviewed policies. They also continue to progress on the bio-digester. The Chamber of Commerce is having Santa visits. He encouraged everyone to shop Lowell. The Look Memorial Fund met the end of November and granted funds to the Lowell Area Arts Council, Lowell Area Fire Department, Lowell Area Historical Museum, and the American Legion. Hodges also thanked Police Chief Bukala. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

10. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

1. We have offered the Water Distribution Supervisor position to Jeff VanSetters. Jeff is currently working for the City of Kentwood and has six years of experience working in water distribution and three years working for a private company as a pipe layer. We are looking forward to welcoming Jeff to the team!
2. The Director of Public Works position has been posted. We will be accepting resumes through January 9, 2015, and hope to have a final candidate selected before March.
3. We have a copy for public review of the Draft Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) developed by the Grand Valley Metropolitan Council. The MTP is a federally-mandated document that lays out the transportation investment priorities for the next 25 years in Kent and eastern Ottawa Counties.
4. Peter Letzmann will be present at the January 26, 2015 work session. He would like to speak with each Councilmember individually so he can put an agenda together.
4. I will be out of the office during the weeks of Christmas and New Year's Day. During that time we will be travelling to Virginia to visit our daughter and grand-daughter. Happy Holidays to everyone!

11. **APPOINTMENTS.**

Airport Board	
Vacancy – (Jim Myaard currently serving)	01/01/2015
Board of Review	
Vacancy – (Nancy Wood)	06/30/2015
Alternate Vacancy -	
Building Authority	
Vacancy – (Mark Howe currently serving)	01/01/2015
Construction Board of Appeals	
Vacancy – (Dan DesJarden currently serving)	01/01/2015
Vacancy – (Greg Canfield currently serving)	01/01/2015
Downtown Development Authority	
Vacancy – (Mike Sprenger currently serving)	01/01/2015
Vacancy – (Mike Larkin currently serving)	01/01/2015

Downtown Historic District
Vacancy – (Nancy Wood currently serving) 01/01/2015
Vacancy – (Steve Doyle currently serving) 01/01/2015

LCTV Endowment Board
Vacancy – (Dennis Kent currently serving) 12/31/2014

Parks and Recreation Commission
Vacancy – (Susan Pomper currently serving) 01/01/2015
Vacancy – (Nancy Anderson currently serving) 01/01/2015

IT WAS MOVED BY HALL and seconded by ELLISON to approve the appointments as recommended.

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

12. **CLOSED SESSION**

- A. Union Negotiations
- B. Performance of the City Manager

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 and personnel issues.

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

NO: 0. ABSENT: 0. MOTION CARRIED.

Council returned to open session at 8:10 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 8:13 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

James W. Hodges, Mayor

Susan S. Ullery, Deputy City Clerk