

**PROCEEDINGS
OF
CITY COUNCIL
OF THE
CITY OF LOWELL
MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 2023, 7:00 P.M.**

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

Mayor DeVore called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and City Clerk Sue Ullery called roll.

Present: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Marty Chambers, Councilmember Leah Groves, Councilmember Cliff Yankovich, Councilmember Jim Salzwedel.

Absent: None.

Present: City Clerk Sue Ullery, City Manager Michael Burns, Police Chief Chris Hurst, LL&P Charlie West and Brian Vandermulen.

2. **CONSENT AGENDA.**

- Approval of the Agenda.
- Approve and place on file the minutes of the August 7, 2023 Regular City Council meeting.
- Authorize payment of invoices for \$790,225.09.

IT WAS MOVED BY GROVES and seconded by CHAMBERS to approve the consent agenda as written.

YES: Councilmember Groves, Councilmember Yankovich, Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Salzwedel, and Mayor DeVore.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

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

Perry Beachum who resides at 924 Riverside Drive asked if the City Council could update the citizens with where we are on Recreation Park now that the Kent County Fair is in the Township.

City Manager Michael Burns stated that all the barns are going to be removed and the grounds will be seeded, the King Building is ours and will remain. The lease expires at the end of the year and he anticipates the barn will be down by then. We are looking at putting a couple extra athletic fields on the grounds and the Kent County Fair will be seeding the grounds once the barns are removed.

4. **OLD BUSINESS**

a.) Creekside Kingdom Design.

City Manager Michael read his memo regarding the restoration of the Creekside Kingdom beginning. The original firm who helped with the design has provided us a proposal for the design. The total cost is \$62,060 and the project is broken into five phases which are described in the attached proposal. These funds will be paid for by the fundraising efforts of the Lowell Rotary Club, and the City will hold the contract between the City and the Rotary Club that the City attorney will write.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by YANKOVICH that Lowell City Council approve Leathers and Associates to begin design of the new Creekside Kingdom at a cost not to exceed \$62,060.

YES: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Yankovich, Councilmember Chambers, and Councilmember Groves.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

5. **NEW BUSINESS**

a. City Hall Rubber Roof Replacement.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo regarding City Hall roof replacement and bids received. RG Enterprises is owned by Ryan Gould. Gould has worked on our roofs in our buildings for years and has done a great job for us.

IT WAS MOVED BY YANKOVICH and seconded by GROVES that the Lowell City Council approve RG Enterprises to replace our rubber roof at Lowell City Hall for a cost not to exceed \$38,800.

YES: Councilmember Salzwedel, Mayor Devore, Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Yankovich and Councilmember Groves.

b. Veterans Proclamation.

Mayor DeVore read into record the Resolution to Provide for the Designation of September 15, 2023 as “Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Recognition Day”.

c. Trail Easement.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo regarding the easement for the Trail required by MDOT.

Tyler Kent who resides at 280 Jane Ellen asked if the easement dictates where the alignment is on the east side of Hudson.

Dave Austin replied that this easement go across the southern border of the property along the river and then goes under the current underpass on Hudson, and then we are proposing to bring the trail currently along the west side of the north south gravel drive and then cross over to the east side somewhere before the entrance of the Hudson street “safe location” and then proceed up to Bowes Road.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by GROVES that Lowell City Council accept an easement with James and Rebecca Reagan at 500 S. Hudson for the trail as prepared.

YES: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Yankovich, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Groves, Councilmember Chambers.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

d. Light and Power MERS 457 Participation Agreement Update.

Lowell Light & Power's General Manager, Charlie West read his memo asking to update their MERS 457 Plan, enhancing the employees retirement benefit by asking to proceed with approving a 1% employer match on employee contributions.

IT WAS MOVED BY CHAMBERS and seconded by SALZWEDEL the Lowell City Council approve the updated 457 Participation Agreement, the MERS 457 Employer Contribution Addendum, and the Customized Definition of Compensation Addendum included in the council packet.

YES: Councilmember Chambers, Councilmember Groves, Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel and, Councilmember Yankovich.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

e. Alternative Schedule.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo regarding the City Hall staff going to an alternative schedule and explained the different options.

Perry Beachum who resides at 924 Riverside was in favor of a schedule change to keep talented staff.

Craig Fonger 827 N. Washington Street asked how much do people really use earlier or later time frames to go to City Hall.

Burns said we will still be open 40 hours and we are never busy in the beginning of the morning or at 5:00 closing time on any given day, but especially on Fridays.

DeVore thinks the 4 days would be more attractive to new employees once current staff retires.

Susan Stevens 610 N Jefferson is in favor of being open later hours.

Charlie West stated childcare would be an issue with his staff for alternative hours.

Chambers was concerned about cemetery related issues needing addressed on Friday, but the sexton would be available.

Byrl Bartkus who resides at 215 W. Main asked if everyone has to work the same time shift.

IT WAS MOVED BY DEVORE and seconded by YANKOVICH that the City Hall Staff go to 4/10's, Monday through Thursday schedule from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for a trial period until January 1, 2024 and this will start October 2, 2023.

YES: Councilmember Groves, Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Yankovich and, Councilmember Chambers.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

f. Hillside Court.

City Manager Michael Burns read memo regarding completing the paving of the apron of the cul de sac.

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by GROVES that the Lowell City Council approve for Michigan Paving to address the apron on Hillside Court at a cost not to exceed \$9,691.50.

YES: Mayor DeVore, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Yankovich, Councilmember Chambers, and Councilmember Groves.

NO: None.

ABSENT: None.

MOTION CARRIED.

6. **BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS.**

Councilmember Salzwedel stated at the LL&P meeting, Casey Mier had a 5-year anniversary already. Megan Mora and Nancy Roth have now been there 9 years already. Had a good conversation about what would necessitate LL&P turning the power off, etc.

Charlie West explained they had a good conversation of major events or a natural disaster that would impact LL&P. Most likely a flood.

Councilmember Chambers stated he had Planning Commission meeting and there was a shed approved in Big Boilers parking lot, but for the time frame of 6 months, then it must go.

7. **CITY MANAGERS REPORT.**

City Manager Michael Burns went over the following:

- Monroe Street project is moving along.
- We are now starting to have conversations about the area on Monroe between Main and Avery. We have talked about doing something to alleviate the trucks and traffic on Monroe. That a segment of the street we need to deactivate as a major street. Eliminating the left hand turn is ideal and also create an island to stop semi-truck traffic.
- Looking at putting in speed bumps.
- Grindle and Shepard will be starting soon.
- Did receive court action from CopperRock for the vacation of Horatio.

Chambers heard that the Lowell Township would like to be an authority on the wastewater treatment facility.

Councilmembers then directed Burns to have the City attorney draft a letter that the City of Lowell is not interested in creating an authority for the waste water.

8. **APPOINTMENTS.**

Nothing.

9. **COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Councilmember Yankovich said there were some miscommunications about the trail, the Reagans property is a connector to the trails and that is why it gets plowed by the City; other miscommunication he heard was the work on pensions for the City and DPW workers, someone thought it was for the City Councilmembers, not accurate, they get nothing.

Councilmember Salzwedel would like Jefferson to be closed every Friday. Did get water and sewer hooked up so that was good.

Councilmember Chambers wanted to thank our Chamber of Commerce director for everything she does. Shannon Kennedy has done a great job making the transition of Liz Baker leaving, seamless. Thank you to Cliff Yankovich for his wring in the Ledger, it is well-written.

Mayor Devore wanted to make sure the plowing is covered for the trails and wanted to thank Cliff for his writing in the ledger, he really enjoys reading it. Thank you to Shannon Witherell and the fire department for hosting his father's memorial and Chambers for the speech at the memorial, for his friendship and help and his work at the new union.

10. **ADJOURNMENT.**

IT WAS MOVED SALZWEDEL and seconded by YANKOVICH to adjourn @ 8:14 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

Mike DeVore, Mayor

Sue Ullery, Lowell City Clerk