

**PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE  
CITY OF LOWELL  
TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2024, 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 Leah Groves, Councilmember Eric Bartkus, Councilmember Jim Salzwedel.

Absent: Councilmember Marty Chambers.

Present: City Manager Michael Burns, City Clerk Susan Ullery, Chief of Police Chris Hurst, Lowell Light & Power General Manager Charlie West, DPW Director and Assistant City Manager Rich LaBombard and City Attorney Jessica Wood.

2. **EXCUSE OF ABSENCE.**

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by GROVES to excuse the absence of Marty Chambers.

YES: 4. NO: None. ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers. MOTION CARRIED.

3. **APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA.**

Mayor DeVore suggested removing item “b – Affordable Housing Plan” as a representative was unable to attend.

- Approval of the Agenda.
- Approve and place on file the minutes of the January 2, 2024, Regular City Council meeting.
- Authorize payment of invoices for \$287,015.87.

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

YES: Councilmember Groves, Councilmember Salzwedel, Councilmember Bartkus and Mayor DeVore.

NO: None. ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers. MOTION CARRIED.

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

There were no comments.

5. **OLD BUSINESS.**

There was none.

6. **NEW BUSINESS.**

a. Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Annual Audit.

Peter Haefner, representing Vredevelt Haefner LLC, provided a report of the 2023 Audit for the City of Lowell with a PowerPoint presentation. Haefner's presentation stated they have audited the financial statements of the governmental activities, the business type activities, the aggregate discretely presented component units, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of the City of Lowell, Michigan (the "City"), for the year ended June 30, 2023. Professional standards require that we provide you with information about our responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards and government auditing standards.

Haefner provided clean opinions finding the City of Lowell is following the standards that are required.

b. Monroe Street Island.

City Manager Michael Burns read his memo regarding a Monroe Street Island. He noted with the completion of Monroe, consideration is being made to implement traffic calming measures. The primary concern is the need to divert truck traffic from Monroe, traveling to and from Attwood, and direct it towards Jefferson Street. Now that Monroe is complete, we have the opportunity to install an island on Monroe between Main Street and Avery.

The Downtown Development Authority has expressed interest in financing the island project at this location, ensuring it is landscaped to enhance aesthetics.

To proceed, the City Council's support is essential for both the street designation change and approval of the budget expenditure, pending DDA approval for the final construction.

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by BARTKUS that the Lowell City Council ENDORSE THE PROPOSED TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES ON Monroe Street between Main and Avery Street.

YES: Councilmembers Salzwedel, Bartkus and Mayor DeVore. NO: Councilmember Groves

ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers MOTION CARRIED.

c. Jefferson Street Sewer Repair Engineering Proposal.

City Manager read his memo explaining during the 2013 flood event there was a sewer line that deteriorated on Jefferson Street from Kent Street to Main Street. At the time the city only replaced the line going north to the mid-block between Main Street and Kent, meaning the northern portion of the line was never addressed due to cost.

In 2023, we televised the line and it was apparent the line deteriorated to where root balls were emerging through the line. The 125-foot stretch of line needs full replacement.

Estimated construction costs for the project is \$144,679.50.

IT WAS MOVED BY GROVES and seconded by BARTKUS that the Lowell City Council approve design engineering to replace the sewer line on Jefferson Street from Main Street approximately 125 feet south towards Kent Street at a cost not to exceed \$9,000.

YES: Councilmembers Bartkus, Groves, Mayor DeVore and Councilmember Salzwedel.

NO: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers.

MOTION CARRIED.

d. HydroCorp Professional Services Agreements Renewal – Residential and Commercial Inspections.

Assistant City Manager Rich LaBombard provided a memo regarding the importance of maintaining clean, safe drinking water. As such, the City of Lowell requires water system users to comply with the Cross Connection Control program.

A cross connection is a connection or arrangement of piping or appurtenances through which backflow of non-potable water could flow into and possibly contaminate the public drinking water supply. Lowell has had an inspection program to help oversee back flow prevention devices that are designed to keep the drinking water system safe from unnecessary contamination. HydroCorp of Troy, Michigan has been providing this inspection service to the City for the past 19+ years.

LaBombard noted the service provided by HydroCorp is exempt from a formal bidding process due to the specialized nature of this service; therefore, he is recommended Lowell continue their professional relationship with HydroCorp and sign the agreements for both residential and commercial inspections.

IT WAS MOVED BY SALZWEDEL and seconded by GROVES to approve the Professional Services Agreements with HydroCorp of Troy, Michigan for the residential and commercial/industrial proposal as presented.

YES: Councilmembers Groves, Mayor DeVore, Councilmembers Salzwedel and Bartkus.

NO: None.

ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers

MOTION CARRIED.

7. **BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS.**

Councilmember Groves stated the Parks Commission meeting was canceled. She also noted the Lowell Expo is coming in March.

Councilmember Bartkus noted the Arbor Board met. Jim Reagan was elected Chair. The board has decided to meet monthly as opposed to bi-monthly. Forty nine trees have been removed over the last year. This coming year the board will review where the replacement trees should be planted. Bartkus noted the City and Lowell Light and Power provide funding for these replacement trees equally. Burns noted each entity provides \$250 each. Lastly, Bartkus stated the board is looking to celebrate Arbor Day and would like to provide a free tree to an area business.

Councilmember Salzwedel stated Lowell Light and Power has a very high efficiency rate. He reminded everyone that LCTV Application are due on February 8, 2024 by 5:30 p.m.

Mayor DeVore state Mike Burns attended the Fire Authority meeting for him as he was working. Search for a full time Chief continues. Recently an engine received an expensive pump replacement, covered under warranty.

8. **BUDGET REPORT.**

City Manager Mike Burns commented on the following:

- Budget review has started. – Ware Road expenses will not be cheap.
- Fire Authority – There will be some significant expenses

9.. **CITY MANAGERS REPORT.**

- Ware Road – 8 sites were tested. Of the 8 sites there were no PFAS exceedance's for the first batch of testing.
- January 23, 2024, 6:00 p.m., EGLE will be meeting with residents to discuss Ware Road.
- Registered voters for the City should have received their notices regarding nine days early voting.
- King Milling submitted an application for the extension of the Industrial Facility Tax Credit.
- Received lots of snow. DPW has been working hard and thanked them.
- In the process of getting in a grant application for Riverside Drive with Kent County. The City is eligible for CDBG Funds.

10. **APPOINTMENTS.**

It was a general consensus to reappoint Craig Fonger to Lowell Light and Power.

It was a general consensus to appoint Lisa Plank to the Downtown Development Authority.

11. **COUNCIL COMMENTS.**

Councilmember Bartkus commented on the great job the DPW did removing snow. Bartkus read a letter into record from Dave Powell of Enwork regarding the importance of the City and the townships working together.

Councilmember Salzwedel stated he recently met with Burns and LaBombard regarding the upcoming Expo on March 23, 2024. The City will be sharing a booth with the LPD.

Councilmember Groves thanked the DPW on the snow removal. She mentioned how great it is to see neighbors helping neighbors.

Mayor DeVore echoed the comments on the DPW and mentioned the great job LLP does.

12. **CLOSED SESSION.**

IT WAS MOVED BY GROVES and seconded by BARTKUS to go into closed session at 7:49 p.m. to consider material exempt from discussion or disclosure by state or federal statute. (MCL 15.268(1)(h))

YES: Councilmember Groves, Mayor DeVore, Councilmembers Salzwedel and Bartkus.

NO: None ABSENT: Councilmember Chambers MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY DEVORE and seconded by SALZWEDEL to go back into open session at 9:08 p.m.

YES: 4. NO: 0. ABSENT: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

13. **ADJOURNMENT.**

IT WAS MOVED SALZWEDEL and seconded by GROVES to adjourn @ 9:09 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

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Mike DeVore, Mayor

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Sue Ullery, Lowell City Clerk