

PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
CITY COUNCIL  
OF THE  
CITY OF LOWELL

For the Regular Meeting of MARCH 7, 2011.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Jim Hodges and City Clerk Betty Morlock called the roll.

Present: Councilmembers Jeff Altoft, Maryalene LaPonsie, Andrew Schrauben, Mayor Pro Tem Sharon Ellison and Mayor Jim Hodges.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager David Pasquale, City Clerk Betty Morlock, DPW Director Dan DesJarden, Police Chief James Hinton, Lowell Light and Power Boardmember, Planning Commissioner and Parks and Recreation Commissioner Jim Hall and Light and Power General Manager Greg Pierce.

Item #1. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA.**

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and supported by LAPONSIE to approve the agenda as presented.

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

Item #2. **APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 22, 2011.**

IT WAS MOVED BY LAPONISE and supported by SCHRAUBEN to approve the regular meeting minutes of February 22, 2011 as corrected.

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

Item #3. **APPROVAL OF THE ACCOUNTS PAYABLES.** Councilmember LaPonsie questioned the reimbursement for the purchase of a camera. DPW Director Dan DesJarden explained this is a camera which was purchased to take pictures of water main breaks and sewer backups.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and supported by LAPONSIE that the bills and accounts payables be allowed and the warrants issued.

YEA: Councilmembers Altoft, LaPonsie, Schrauben, Mayor Pro Tem Ellison and Mayor Hodges.

NAY: None.            ABSENT:    None.            MOTION CARRIED.

<u>BILLS AND ACCOUNTS PAYABLE (03/07/11)</u>	
GENERAL FUND	\$92,822.29
MAJOR STREET FUND	2,566.37
LOCAL STREET FUND	2,566.24
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT FUND	5,826.99
AIRPORT FUND	7,560.08
WASTEWATER FUND	5,187.01
WATER FUND	8,493.99
CABLE TV FUND	4,361.83
DATA PROCESSING FUND	206.25
EQUIPMENT FUND	834.29
CURRENT TAX FUND	14.39

Item #4.            **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.** No comments were received.

Item #5.    **OLD BUSINESS.**

- a. Streets, sidewalks plan – City Manager Pasquale mentioned the possibility of bringing to the Council an ordinance regarding sidewalk installation/repair being done upon sale. This was discussed during the January 31, 2011 worksession. By general consensus, the Council agreed to review the issue at the next meeting.
- b. Wastewater Treatment update – DPW Director DesJarden noted there are four monitors out and a range gate as well. A full report will be provided.
- c. Riverfront renovations – the City is at the point of submitting an application to the State Department of Natural Resources and Environment for a Trust Fund grant. This will be completed by April 1, 2011 with a public meeting scheduled. There will still be opportunities to make significant alterations to the plan. The main issue is to submit the application. There is an opportunity to receive up to \$300,000 in State grants for improvements.
- d. Website upgrade – An approval was received from Council to have i2Intergration to perform the web site upgrade at a cost of \$14,529.98 which will be shared by the City and Lowell Light and Power.
- e. Consumers Energy – sidewalk report – under review.
- f. Video coverage of public meetings – Video was held at the last DDA meeting of February 17, 2011.
- g. Capitalization asset threshold – a resolution will be provided at the March 21, 2011 meeting.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison commented on the plan for the amphitheater renovations. This is just a concept and there is much room to do something different regarding the final design. City Manager Pasquale noted this also shows the State that the City has had discussion and review on it. Councilmember LaPonsie was under the impression that what was being

paid for was a design based on input by the public. It seemed as though the old design was taken and integrated a couple of suggestions.

Item #6. **AUTHORIZATION TO CLOSE MAIN STREET FROM HUDSON TO DIVISION STREETS ON MONDAY, JULY 4 – WEST MICHIGAN STAGE THREE BICYCLE RACE.** Brian Bangma of the Grand Rapids Bicycle Company wishes to utilize Main Street from Division to Hudson for a section of the West Michigan Stage Three Bicycle Race on Monday, July 4. Thus, the street would be closed from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Much support has been received from the local businesses regarding the race

Police Chief Hinton noted he would work with MDOT to provide the best possible route for traffic.

Bangma stated it is his goal to bring 200 – 400 people to the City of Lowell on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

Hinton noted the LPD would be charging the group for its services.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and supported by SCHRAUBEN to close Main Street as recommended by MDOT for the West Michigan Stage Three Bicycle Race.

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

Item #7. **UPDATE ON ENERGY SAVINGS IMPROVEMENTS.** DPW Director Dan DesJarden prepared a report on energy saving improvements for various City facilities. The report covers electricity used from 2005/2006 to present for the Department of Public Works Building, the downtown lighting (DDA) as well as public street lighting. It also indicates energy cost has been lowered while at the same time have reduced the CO2 emissions.

Also, he approached the LCTV Fund to receive a grant to retrofit the 175watt mercury vapor light fixtures, which are no longer being manufactured. The grant was received and approved by Council for a little over \$10,000.

With these changes, it is estimated the energy cost have been lowered from \$15,000 to \$4,700. At the same time, CO2 emissions have been lowered by approximately 63 ½ tons per year.

The Downtown Development Authority was also approached on retrofitting the decorative street lights. This was raised because the original globes were needing replacement. Each globe is slightly over \$200 a piece. He approached the DDA for funding and their permission to retrofit these as CFL's. At the same time, the Planning Commission was working on light trespassing. A fixture was approved and all of the single light posts have been replaced. Phase Two will include the request for additional funding and permission to replace the twin poles.

With phase I being completed, the energy cost has been lowered by \$1,600 and CO2 emissions lowered by 9.95%. When phase 2 is complete, the energy cost will be lowered by another \$3,900 and again lower the CO2 by close to 25 tons per year.

Councilmember Schrauben questioned the single head lights. He noted it appears the replacement has already been paid for in one year. DesJarden responded yes.

Item #8. **PURCHASE OF HAND HELD WATER METER READING EQUIPMENT.** In order to be more efficient, Water Distribution Supervisor Bob Robinson has proposed the purchase of water meter reading equipment. These devices are compatible with the Neptune meters the City has as well as the BS&A Customer Billing software. Other readers would require substantial changes with meters and billing software.

Robinson proposed the purchase of the hand held system through Michigan Meters, Inc. at a cost of \$14,194.09 allocated through the Water Fund. Michigan Meters is the only vendor in the area to provide this system.

There are already 450 meters which are wired to this system. The City would still be able to use the current individual who reads the meters. However, basically it is more of a remote system and is ready to go.

DPW Director DesJarden explained the device will assist with human error. It is compatible with the computer system and it is downloaded to the appropriate account numbers.

Councilmember LaPonsie asked if meters will be swapped out when in need of replacement. DesJarden responded yes and will probably budget a certain amount each year.

IT WAS MOVED BY ALTOFT and supported by LAPONSIE to purchase the reading equipment for \$14,194.09 through Michigan Meters, Inc. allocated through the Water Fund.

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

Item #9. **APPLICATION TO THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND FOR IMPROVEMENTS TO THE DOWNTOWN RIVERWALK AREA – CONDUCT PUBLIC MEETING (3/21).** As discussed previously, efforts have started to improve the old amphitheater site with additional walkways, a canoe/kayak launch, a new boat/fishing dock and new riverfront open space as well as demolition of the existing amphitheater. The cost is estimated at \$450,000.

Local funding has been secured through grants from the Lowell Area Community Fund and the Downtown Development Authority of \$50,000 each. An application to the LCTV Endowment Fund of \$50,000 will be made.

An application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund for \$300,000 will be submitted by the deadline of April 1. As part of the process, a public hearing at the Council meeting of March 21 needs to be established.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON and supported by LAPONSIE to set a public meeting for March 21, 2011 regarding the application to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund for improvements to the downtown riverwalk area.

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

Item #10. **COUNCIL REPORTS AND COMMENTS.** Councilmember Schrauben noted the Airport Board will meet March 8, 2011. The Parks and Recreation Commission and LARA will be looking at submitting applications to the LCTV Fund. LARA will meet on Wednesday, March 9, 2011 to discuss more of the phase 2 for the upcoming construction as well as some expo talk.

Councilmember LaPonsie noted Lowell Area Fire and Emergency Services Authority will be meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup> at 4:00 p.m. The Planning Commission reviewed an ordinance on outdoor burning furnaces. A public hearing is set for the next meeting on March 28. Also, discussion was held regarding postponement of a meeting, if there is very little to discuss.

Councilmember Altoft thanked the DPW regarding a water leak. DPW Director DesJarden stated they have been looking for this leak for the last two months. It is referred to it as a hidden water leak, found on N. Washington.

Mayor Pro Tem Ellison had no comments.

Mayor Hodges noted Lowell Light and Power will meet on Thursday, March 10, 2011 at 5:30 p.m. Councilmember Schrauben will be attending the meeting.

The Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors will meet on Tuesday, March 8, 2011. The hot topic is Lowell Community Expo on Saturday, March 26 at the Lowell High School. Hodges also said the Fire Department will hold a pancake breakfast.

The LOOK Memorial Fund will not meet for a few more months.

Coffee with Council was held on Saturday, March 5, 2011 at the Chamber of Commerce. He understood this meeting has not been listed in the "Calendar of Events".

Hodges and Pasquale met with Jim Doyle and Pat Alchin regarding the Lowell Area Historic museum. A new lease agreement will be presented at the next meeting.

Item #11. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT.** City Manager Pasquale reported on the following:

1. The following boards and commissions meetings minutes are provided:
  - Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of January 15, 2011
  - Planning Commission meeting of January 24, 2011

The Council will hold a worksession on Monday, March 14 at 7 p.m. to have a preliminary review of the budget. Emphasis will be on the General Fund.

Also, a report regarding Lowell Light and Power can be presented at this time.

Item #12. **APPOINTMENTS**. By general consensus, the Council approved the appointment of Rachael Schwab to the Planning Commission position that expires June 30, 2013. Also, the appointment of Mark Lessens to the LCTV Endowment Fund Board which expires December 31, 2013.

IT WAS MOVED BY ELLISON to adjourn at 8:14 p.m.

DATE:

APPROVED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
James W. Hodges, Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Betty R. Morlock, City Clerk