



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: January 9, 2018

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 9 present.

Mayor Samaras presiding.

C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Craig Gates and Richard Rourke. M. Samaras recognized Mr. Gates' contributions to the community. C. Milinazzo requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for James C. Shannon, Jr.

2. CITY CLERK

2.1. Minutes of City Council Inauguration 2018 January 2nd; City Council Meeting January 2nd, for acceptance.

In City Council, minutes read, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Milinazzo, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

M. Samaras requested suspension of the rules, with no objections, to discuss recent snow removal procedures in the City. Manager Murphy commented on the recent storm and the DPW response noting the next week there will be a presentation before the Council and public outlining removal procedures. Manager Murphy noted the issue with freezing pipes in buildings throughout the City; including the Pollard Library and Lowell High School. C. Conway commented on clearing the side streets in the City and removal of cars to help with that endeavor. Manager Murphy noted that the parking ban and towing assists with the plowing of the streets. C. Conway commented on shoveling of sidewalks and preventative maintenance at the high school. C. Elliott noted the need to have parking ban and to tow cars to ensure areas are safer. C. Elliott questioned if insurance would cover losses in the library. Manager noted City was self-insured on this matter. C. Elliott noted the sustained opening of the Senior Center was critical to the community during the storm and freezing temperatures. C. Kennedy noted groups who would assist certain individuals with side walk shoveling. C. Cirillo commented on procedures to assist elderly and disabled drivers during storm events. C. Mercier



lauded the effort of the DPW. C. Milinazzo noted work of DPW and the use of snow spotters during plowing. Manager Murphy noted the policy is curb to curb plowing. C. Nuon commented on contractors going into the high school and the closing of the library. Manager Murphy commented on the work needed to be done in the library. C. Leahy requested that list of operating apparatuses to be included in DPW presentation. M. Samaras commented regarding snow removal in the City.

3. AUDITOR BUSINESS

3.1. Communication - December 2017 Year To Date Budget Report.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Milinazzo. So voted.

4. GENERAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1. Order-Abandon portion of Newell Street.

In City Council, Given 2nd Reading, hearing opened and continued to January 30, 2018 at 7PM. Speaking in favor were Sarah Brown (DPD) and John Dowling. Speaking in opposition was Mellissa Tucker. **Motion** to refer Manager' office for discussion with groups and continue hearing to January 30, 2018 at 7 PM by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

5. UTILITY PUBLIC HEARING

5.1. National Grid/Verizon NE - Request permission to install stub pole at corner of West Jenness and Rexford Streets.

In City Council, Given 2nd Reading. Hearing held. Speaking in favor was Nicolas Bosonetto (City Engineer). No remonstrants. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

6.1. Motion Response:

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Milinazzo. So voted.

A) Clay Brook Culvert – C. Kennedy noted the costs related to project and requested explanation of same. Mr. Bosonetto outlined the costs and reason for them noting the permitting and engineering required to move forward.



6.2. Informational:

B) Ameresco Contract and Obligations – C. Milinazzo commented on buildings covered by the contract. Katherine Moses (DPD) noted the buildings and commented on the contract. C. Elliott noted the savings element to the contract and requested information regarding those savings. Manager Murphy stated they would supply list of buildings and report on savings to the body.

C) MMA Municipal Website Award – Manager Murphy noted the improvement with the website and recognized Asst. City Manager Michael McGovern lead on the matter.

D) FY18 GFOA Budget Award – Manager Murphy noted that it was third time in a row for the award and recognized the financial team and City employees who have made that possible. Conor Baldwin (CFO) commented on the process. C. Elliott recognized the effective budget preparation in the City.

7. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

7.1. Vote-Declare surplus and convey Parcel 1 and purchase Parcel 2 for 1,688.96.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections, **Motion** to adopt by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Mercier. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted.

7.2. Vote – Appropriate 7.1.2017 Free Cash.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections, **Motion** to adopt by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Nuon. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. M. Samaras requested information from Manager Murphy regarding vote. Mr. Baldwin commented on free cash certification and reasoning behind the vote to pay off obligations and increase reserves. C. Elliott noted the need to let taxpayers know where the money is going and that it is sound fiscal management. Manager Murphy commented on amount of money going to the school department. C. Milinazzo questioned the effect on the bond rating and commented on free cash definition. Mr. Baldwin noted an argument could be made to upgrade rating because reserves have been increased. C. Nuon commented on the use of money for the schools and going to the reserves. Manager Murphy noted where the money would be going. Mr. Baldwin commented on the Stabilization Account. C. Kennedy commented on balancing the school budget. C. Elliott noted the increase in net school spending.



8. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

8.1. Loan Order-Additional Bridge Repairs.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on January 23, 2018 at 7 PM by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Milinazzo. So voted.

9. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

None.

10. PETITIONS

10.1. Misc. - Sandra Medeiros request installation of handicap parking sign at 49 Rock Street.

In Council, **Motion** to refer to Traffic Engineer for report and recommendation by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

11. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

11.1. C. Cirillo - Req. City Mgr. have the DPW Commissioner provide City Council a list of non-operational or disrepair items no later than August 10th, of every year which are vital to our municipal buildings working properly for our Fall-Winter season of 2018.

In City Council, seconded by C. Kennedy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Cirillo requested the procedure to ensure that equipment would be working for fall/winter season; noting a pro-active approach. C. Mercier noted that City inspects all of its buildings. Manager Murphy commented on upcoming Collins Center report which will assist with management in the area of preventative maintenance. C. Conway noted the need to address moving forward and a plan must be in place.

11.2. C. Cirillo - Req. City Mgr. direct the law department to provide the City Council with a report on the feasibility of creating an ordinance that would require the City Council to include a line item in the budget for deferred maintenance issues in all municipal buildings.

In City Council, seconded by C. Kennedy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Cirillo noted the need for preventative maintenance. C. Kennedy commented the need to be more diligent when it comes to funding for preventative maintenance programs. C. Elliott commented on Capital Plan funding and planning. Mr. Baldwin noted which items are included in the Capital Plan. C. Mercier noted Capital Plan has funding for schools.



C. Milinazzo noted need for funds to be included in every budget and have extensive plan for maintenance.

11.3. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. provide information regarding major projects in the City as well as information regarding UMass-Lowell projects.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted motion speaks for itself and awaits the report.

11.4. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. provide information regarding outreach in hiring process; including breakdown of results in following categories: race; gender; veteran status; and residency.

In City Council, seconded by C. Cirillo, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted motion speaks for itself and awaits the report.

11.5. C. Milinazzo - Req. City Mgr. report on the appropriate protocol for downtown snow removal.

In City Council, seconded by C. Leahy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Milinazzo commented on snow bank removal and protocol used for downtown. C. Leahy noted the need for businesses to be involved with snow removal process

12. ANNOUNCEMENTS

C. Kennedy noted the upcoming Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting/tradeshaw which highlights certain issues facing communities. Manager Murphy noted he would supply information for those able to attend.

13. ADJOURNMENT

In City Council, **Motion** to Adjourn by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Michael Geary, City Clerk