



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: January 21, 2020

Time: 6:30 PM

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

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 9 present.

M. Leahy presiding.

C. Chau requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Khom Tung.

2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

2.1. Presentation - Community Choice Aggregate (CCA).

In City Council, M. Leahy introduced Jay Mason, registered speaker, who made presentation regarding Community Choice Aggregate Program. C. Elliott questioned opting in or out aspect of the program. Kathryn Moses (DPD) outlined the options available to consumers. C. Rourke questioned opting in versus opting out. C. Mercier noted that Council voted on matter a short time ago. C. Nuon noted the vote of the Council and that there should be an effort to have citizens opt back into the program. Stephen Malagodi, registered speaker, addressed the Council

3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes of City Council Meeting January 14th, for acceptance.

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

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

4.1. Communication - City Manager request Out of State Travel (1) LPD.

In City Council, read, **Motion** to adopt by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Nuon. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted.



5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

5.1. Vote-Accept and Expend 100,000 from EOPSS re FY20 Municipal Staffing award Lowell Fire Dept.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Samaras. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Elliott commented on the grants and noted the use for them. Manager Donoghue noted the grants and how they would be used; including alleviating overtime costs to keep fire stations open. C. Mercier commented on the process for obtaining the grants. Manager Donoghue recognized the efforts of Maryann Ballotta for securing grants. Ms. Ballotta outlined the procedures used to obtain grants and how they are used. C. Conway commented on the effort involved and noted that it eases some budget concerns.

Motion by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Mercier bundle Items #5.2 and #5.3 and take as one. So voted.

5.2. Vote-Accept and Expend 162,500 from EOPSS re FY20 Municipal Staffing award for Lowell Police Dept.

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

5.3. Vote-Accept and Expend 634,861.81 FY20 Shannon Community Safety Initiative Grant from EOPSS for Lowell Police Dept.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Mercier. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Mercier commented on grant and how it would assist in combatting gang violence. C. Elliott commented on the amount of the grant and requested list of organizations in the City who would benefit from it. Manager Donoghue commented of efforts of Ms. Ballotta and that money would ease restraints on the budget.

6. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Order-60 Day Trial (various)

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



7. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

7.1. Wire Insp. - National Grid - Request installation underground electric conduits and a new heavy duty hand hole at 160 Middlesex Street.

In City Council, M. Leahy provided appointments to various subcommittees to the body.

In City Council, **Motion** to adopt and accept accompanying order by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted.

8. PETITIONS

8.1. Claims - (3) Property Damage.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Law Department for report and recommendation by C. Samaras, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted. C. Conway questioned the claims process including time of review; costs; payouts; and communications with petitioners. Solicitor O'Connor outlined the process for claims noting each claim may be handles differently. C. Mercier commented on thirty day limit in which to file certain claims.

8.2. National Grid - Req. installation of new handhole and 100 feet of underground electric conduit at 15-21 Surrey Lane.

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on February 4, 2020 at 7PM by C. Conway, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted.

9. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

9.1. C. Elliott - Req. City Council vote to request Statehouse delegation work with Administration to fund 4 million dollar earmark in Bond Bill - H4549 - "Act Providing for Capital Repairs and Improvements" - for the study, design and make capital improvements for a public safety facility with fire and police services in the City of Lowell.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott noted that earmarks were in place and commented on the efforts of the working group to identify them. **Motion** by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Rourke to amend to include report regarding parking bond bill. So voted. Manager Donoghue noted that a letter from the administration would be more effective than a formal resolution and that she would forward the interest of the Council. C. Rourke questioned time frame for parking lot and future plans for private parking. Manager Donoghue outlined existing project and possible private ventures concerning parking. C. Chau questioned process of earmarking funds at the State level. Manager Donoghue commented on some funds and how they were to be used. C. Samaras noted new court house is close to opening. C. Rourke noted that the opening of court house would be done in stages. C. Elliott



questioned plans for interim parking. Manager Donoghue commented on possible locations for interim parking as well as the need for it. C. Nuon commented on satellite at Cross Point.

9.2. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr./DPD report on status of properties located at 246.1 Market Street; the Power House and Coal Pocket Buildings.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager/DPD. So voted. C. Elliott requested the report noting the location is downtown and something needs to be done on the blighted properties.

9.3. C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. have Supt. Of Police provide a report regarding action taken to address violence in the downtown district at closing time of the establishments; additionally work with bar owners to develop solutions to address ongoing issues inside their respective establishments.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras commented on investigating possible change in late night closing times downtown; data should include the use of resources to patrol the area and identify trouble locations. C. Elliott noted it is time to change hours of operation for establishments. C. Conway noted that data should be used so that there can be a safety assessment as well. C. Mercier noted that the area is a neighborhood in the City and that they should be treated as such. C. Chau noted the need to research data and that problem bars should be identified and afford protection for properly manage bars. Manager Donoghue noted the issue remains and there will be an extensive report. C. Elliott noted that State Police have also provided resources to patrol downtown.

9.4. C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. provide update regarding employee incentive program offered by the City.

In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Conway requested update noting the talent pool of employees in the City. Manager Donoghue noted that there was a current ordinance and that a selection committee will be formed.

9.5. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Have City Assessor's Office Hold Community Meetings throughout the City to Help Guide Residents through the Process of Filing Abatements for Property Assessments.

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted the need to educate public regarding process.



9.6. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Have Commissioner of Public Works Take Measures to Ensure Repaving Work Done by Contractors is Done Properly.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on use of bond money to ensure work is done properly by contractors.

9.7. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Departments (Public Works, Parks) Initiate a Drop-Off Program for Unwanted Household Items that cannot be put in the Trash or Recycled under the Current Waste Management System.

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted the need to combat illegal dumping and this may be a solution. C. Elliott noted matter was addressed earlier and that there were issues with costs, location and staffing. Manager Donoghue commented that they will update report. C. Conway noted the need to better manage the issue and scale down what items are included. C. Rourke noted that costs are associated with poor recycling and that a cost analysis should be done.

9.8. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Provide Report on City Clerk's Office Efforts to Digitize Public Records and Make Them Available Online.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon requested data.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, none.

11. ADJOURNMENT

In City Council, **Motion** to Adjourn C. Rourke, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk