



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: January 23, 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.

2. CITY CLERK

2.1. Minutes of City Council Meeting January 16th, for acceptance.

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

3. GENERAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

3.1. Loan Order-Additional Bridge Repairs.

In City Council, Given 2nd Reading, hearing held. **Motion** to adopt and refer to Clerk's Office for twenty (20) days by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Conway. Adopted per Roll Call vote, 9 yeas. So voted. Referred to City Clerk for twenty (20) days. Speaking in favor was Conor Baldwin (CFO) who outlined order and reasoning behind it. No Remonstrants. C. Elliott commented on effect of future grants on this financing package. Mr. Baldwin noted possible reduction in loan amount.

4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

4.1. Motion Responses.

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

A) LHS Feasibility Cost – C. Milinazzo commented on related costs associated with Article 97 procedures. C. Kennedy commented on anticipated additional funding.



Manager Murphy commented on added fund and how the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) will dictate future costs. C. Elliott noted report gave picture of current position of the City and that accuracy in future costs will be important. Mr. Baldwin noted there are encumbered costs as well. C. Elliott questioned the reimbursement rate of the MSBA. Mr. Baldwin commented on current rates. C. Kennedy noted that remaining money could cover upcoming costs.

B) LTC – None.

C) Laotian Monument – C. Mercier commented on the report and noted that community members were meeting to raise funds for a monument.

D) High Water Costs – C. Leahy commented on estimated water bills going out. Mark Young (Ex. Director Water Utility) noted there remained a small number of estimated bills going out and that complaints are way down. C. Elliott commented on meter replacement and the use of technology to track overuse and as a safety measure. Mr. Young noted that a software upgrade will enable that to happen. C. Milinazzo questioned procedures of other cities and towns using water facility. Mr. Young commented on inter-municipal contracts in place. C. Leahy noted the oversight ability with the new meters. Mr. Young noted that would improve with implementation of new software.

E) Process of Appealing Unusually High Water and Sewer Bills – C. Kennedy questioned review process for bills. Mr. Young outlined that process along with appeal process. C. Kennedy questioned time frame for such appeals. C. Mercier questioned procedure for paying disputed bills.

F) Canal Bridge Update – C. Nuon noted report and the importance of the project. Claire Ricker (DPD) provided summary of project which included design; funding scheme; partnerships and bid procedures. Ms. Ricker noted one bridge to be eliminated to adjust to high cost associated with the project and that bridge would be bid separately. Manager Murphy commented on partnerships and the financial contributions and noted that project is fully funded with upcoming loan order. C. Nuon commented on any funding gaps. Manager Murphy noted closing those gaps and commented on availability of revolving grants. C. Cirillo commented on compliance with Complete Streets Program and having bridges be walkable and bicycle ready. Ms. Ricker commented on plans and the use of the right of way. C. Elliott commented on funding, timing and traffic management of the project. Ms. Ricker commented on traffic management and the ability to do all bridges at the same time. C. Elliott noted the advantages of having one contractor for entire project. C. Kennedy questioned bidding strategy. Ms. Ricker outlined the bidding process noting State and Federal procedures.



C. Kennedy noted loan order and commented on secure funding. C. Milinazzo noted preference for bidding procedure in place and commented on super versus infra structure. C. Elliott noted that change orders in these types of projects would increase costs dramatically. C. Leahy made note of current state of the Suffolk Street Bridge.

4.2. Informational

Informational:

G) Letter to Secretary Pollack re Rourke Bridge – C. Noun recognized the efforts of the State Delegation.

H) SolSmart Designation – Katherine Moses (DPD) commented on the recent recognition for energy saving programs.

I) Warming Center – Chief Winward (LFD) commented on safety operations during stretch of hazardous weather. C. Mercier commented on the number of people who benefited from the actions of the City. C. Kennedy questioned the amount of homeless that were helped. Chief Winward noted that assistance with homeless helped ease burdens on other shelters.

4.3. Communication-Accept Resignation of Nick Speros Lowell Cultural Council.

In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

4.4. Communication-Accept resignation of Quinn Lawrence-Sustainability Council.

In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted. C. Nuon requested that letters of thanks be provided to former members.

4.5. Communication-Appoint Donna Scannell Richards to Pollard Memorial Library Board of Trustees.

In City Council, read, **Motion** to adopt by C. Milinazzo, seconded by C. Mercier. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Milinazzo recognized the prior contributions of the appointment. Ms. Richards was present and addressed the Council.



4.6. Communication-Reappoint Jo-Ann Keegan to Board of Health.

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

4.7. Communication - City Manager request Out of State Travel (3) LPD.

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

5. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

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

In City Council, read, **Motion** to adopt and accept the accompanying order by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

C. Leahy commented on Acre Neighborhood meeting.

6. PETITIONS

6.1. Claims - (5) Property Damage.

In Council, **Motion** to refer to Law Department for report and recommendation by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

6.2. Misc. - Stephen Malagodi request permission to address Council regarding support of immigrant families.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" and refer to Environmental SC by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted. Mr. Malagodi addressed the body.

6.3. Misc. - Guillermina Rivera request installation of (1) handicap parking sign at 28B Cork Street.

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

7. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

7.1. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. review and explore other parcels of land in the downtown that may be available for the extension of Lowell High School.



In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. Adopted per Roll Call vote 5 yeas, 4 nays (C. Cirillo, C. Kennedy, C. Nuon, M. Samaras). So voted. C. Mercier commented on recent referendum and eminent domain and cited some examples of parcels in the City. C. Kennedy opposed motion as it would send a mixed message to MSBA and requested Roll Call on matter. C. Milinazzo supported motion as to fact gathering but noted he was fully in support of Option 3 (eminent domain) process. C. Elliott noted it was the MSBA request to explore all options. C. Nuon noted referendum was clear and that he would not support motion and supported Option 3. C. Cirillo stated referendum was clear and Option 3 has her support. C. Conway noted referendum and election noted Option 3 was supported but supports motion for information purposes. C. Leahy noted motion just request information and commented on changes that could affect Option 3 which would include installation of swimming pool at new school. M. Samaras relinquished Chair to Vice-Chair Nuon at 7:45 PM. M. Samaras noted opposition to motion as it does not send clear message to MSBA and that other land would be very difficult to identify, further indicating his support of Option 3. C. Mercier commented it was suggestion from MSBA to review all options and that is purpose of motion. C. Nuon returned Chair to M. Samaras at 7:52 PM.

7.2. C. Mercier - Req. City Council name the basketball court at the Butler/Shaghnessy School on Gorham Street in honor of Lawrence M. Cavanaugh, Sr.

In City Council, seconded by C. Leahy, referred to City Manager/Board of Parks. Adopted per Roll Call vote, 9 yeas. So voted. C. Mercier noted it was a request by the family and commented on the many accomplishments of Mr. Cavanaugh and further requested that it be referred to Board of Parks with a roll call. C. Elliott commented on the honoree. C. Nuon noted it was an appropriate request.

7.3. C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. meet with Supt. of Police, Supt. of Schools and other interested parties to re-establish the "Safety Task Force".

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Conway noted should always be an attempt to better things and commented on task force formation and history. C. Nuon noted task force is a manner to share information. C. Elliott noted there should be a pro-active approach to safety measures. M. Samaras commented on history and success of task force.



7.4. C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. update the Council regarding the status of the “Crime Stoppers Hotline”.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Conway commented on effectiveness of the hotline.

7.5. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. have City Solicitor meet in an Executive Session with Council to discuss all current or potential legal action to be taken against the City and any legal challenges anticipated by the administration against any entity.

In City Council, seconded by C. Kennedy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted the need to have clear picture of litigation in the City. Manager Murphy indicated that has been past practice and will continue.

7.6. C. Nuon - Req. City Council have appropriate subcommittee hold meeting to determine methods on how to best protect senior residents from being victims of fraud; said meeting should include interested entities such as Elderly Commission and the Massachusetts Attorney General Office.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on established entities that protect a certain segment of society.

7.7. C. Kennedy - Req. City Mgr. consider installing water detection devices at strategic locations in all municipal buildings throughout the City.

In City Council, seconded by C. Cirillo, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Kennedy noted the need and availability of this protective element. C. Kennedy informed Council that added funding may be available to restore Pollard Library through State channels.

7.8. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. and Building Department provide a report regarding all abandoned homes in the City.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott commented it was a good opportunity to expand on the Attorney General’s program and run concurrent one by the City. C. Kennedy requested inventory list of properties so they have a clear picture of what it entails. Manager Murphy noted he would provide list and engage Inspectional Services. C. Leahy noted burnt homes should be included as well. C. Elliott questioned if there was an ordinance to cover burnt buildings. Manager Murphy noted such an ordinance could be crafted to protect homeowner who is pro-active in resolving issue. C. Kennedy noted that property on Clark Road should be investigated. M. Samaras relinquished Chair to Vice-Chair Nuon at 8:21 PM.



7.9. M. Samaras - Req. City Council establish subcommittees to address any issues regarding senior citizens and non-profit organizations in the City.

In City Council, seconded by C. Kennedy, referred to City Manager. So voted. M. Samaras noted the important work done by subcommittees and one for seniors and non-profits would be most beneficial. C. Mercier noted that they are good areas to involve subcommittees.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Kennedy requested that parking rates be posted in garages as stated prior.

9. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Michael Geary, City Clerk