



# Lowell City Council

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** June 23, 2020  
**Time:** 6:30 PM  
**Location:** ZOOM / REMOTE PARTICIPATION

### 1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 8 present, 1 absent (C. Nuon).

M. Leahy presiding. Meeting was conducted via teleconference with audio stream by LTC as well as Zoom and recorded due to Covid-19 pandemic.

C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Joanne Ryder. M. Leahy requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Dennis Shaughnessey.

### 2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

#### 2.1. Communication Remote Participation:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's Emergency Order modifying the State's Open Meeting Law issued March 12, 2020, meetings will be held using remote participation as follows: Members of the public may view the meeting via LTC and those wishing to speak regarding a specific agenda item shall register to speak in advance of the meeting by sending email to City Clerk indicating the agenda item and a phone number to call so that you may be tele-conferenced in to the meeting. Email address is [mgeary@lowellma.gov](mailto:mgeary@lowellma.gov). If no access to email you may contact City Clerk at 978-674-4161.

For Zoom - <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-Meeting>

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

### 3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes of City Council Meeting June 9th, for acceptance.



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

#### **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. Chau. So voted.

Manager Donoghue provided breaking news regarding water main break noting the area and the work being done to resolve the issue.

**A) Motion Response - Canal Cleanup** – C. Elliott noted cleaning the canals makes a good impression in the City. Manager Donoghue commented on new ownership of the canals. Christine Clancy (DPW) commented on the efforts and the areas that are being cleaned. M. Leahy requested that new partnership try to gather monthly for cleaning the areas.

**B) Motion Response - Cleanup of Washington St, Leverrett St and Lowell Connector** – C. Chau commented on efforts of Inspectional Services and their plan moving forward.

**C) Motion Response - Installing Traffic Cameras** - C. Elliott noted cameras cannot be used to issue tickets. Supt. Richardson (LPD) noted that cameras can be used as a monitor for traffic and further noted that enforcement throughout City has increased.

**D) Motion Response - Census Response Rate** – Christine McCall (DPD) commented on the work of the committee and the progress being made noting they were close to State average for response. C. Chau questioned realistic response rate. Ms. McCall noted 80% was a complete program and noted last census produced a 62% response rate.

**E) Motion Response - Lowell High Graduation** - C. Rourke noted parents are appreciative of the effort and it was good for students and the City.

**F) Motion Response - Opening of Parks, Playgrounds and Pools** – C. Samaras commented on the opening of the playgrounds. Manager Donoghue noted that the playgrounds have been opened throughout City and that many summer camps were cancelled as they could not fit under the State guidelines however, there would be viral programs and pool program. Peter Faticanti (Parks and Recreation) outlined the lifeguard program.



**G) Motion Response - Summer Youth Programs and Activities – Manager**

Donoghue outlined various programs. Mr. Faticanti commented on video and other camps and noted that lunches and dinners would still be provided to the children. C. Conway noted the supervision of pools during the summer in terms of covid pandemic. Mr. Faticanti noted that pool water is tested hourly. C. Elliott noted DCR pools will be opened shortly.

**H) Motion Response - Youth Summer Employment – Shannon Norton (Career Center)** noted that options for employment will be available for different age groups with three components. M. Leahy noted that jobs should be available for homeless individuals. Ms. Norton noted some of those programs.

**Motion** to Suspend Rules by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Samaras to allow discussion of upcoming event. So voted. Natasha Vance (Transportation Engineer) commented on upcoming “Go Lowell” program. **Motion** to Suspend Rules by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Rourke to discuss Planet Aid boxes. So voted. C. Mercier noted that the Planet Aid boxes were not removed but merely moved to another part of the property. Manager Donoghue noted the agreement was to remove the boxes.

**4.2. Appoint B. Boughner, S. Githae and R Gofstein to Cultural Council.**

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

**4.3. Appoint Brian Gorman and Walter O'Neil Jr. to Veterans Commission.**

In City Council, **Motion** to adopt by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Samaras. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

**Motion** to bundle and waive full reading of Items #5.1 to #5.11, inclusive by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. So voted.

**5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

**5.1. Vote- Accept Gift \$10,000 from Eastern Bank Trustees to support Lowell COA.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

**5.2. Vote- Accept. Expend \$25,000 Fed COVID Relief Funds.**



In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.3. Vote-Auth CM Execute Temporary Access Agreement 179 Bridge St.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.4. Vote-Ballpark Capital Transfer Vote.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.5. Vote-Disability Commission Revolving 20K.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.6. Vote-Parking Energy Transfer Vote.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.7. Vote-Revolving Fund Spending Limits - FY21.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.8. Vote-Rideshare Funding Transfer.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.



### **5.9. Vote-Transfer Earmark - 9-11 Memorial.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.10. Vote-Wastewater Energy Transfer Vote.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

### **5.11. Vote-Year End Payroll Adjustment.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Chau. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted.

## **6. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)**

### **6.1. Finance SC June 23, 2020.**

In City Council, C. Elliott provided report outlining attendance and discussion of relocation of LPD to the Hurd Street site. C. Elliott commented on the process if the City were to take possession of the site and also noted what DCAM would do with property if it remained with them. C. Elliott noted a motion was made and adopted by the subcommittee to allow City Manager to continue discussions with DCAM regarding the site. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress and adopt motion of the subcommittee by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted.

## **7. PETITIONS**

### **7.1. Claim - (1) Property Damage.**

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Law Department for report and recommendation by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted.

**7.2. Misc. - Lowell Democratic City Committee (Judith Durant) request permission to address the City Council regarding allowing Atty. Elliott Veloso (Interim Director of Elections) be relieved of all non-election related duties from August through November 2020 so he can devote his full-time efforts to election duties, ensuring an efficient, fair and open election.**



In City Council, C. Elliott requested opinion from the City Solicitor regarding legality of the petition. Registered speakers, Judith Durant and Sally Coulter, addressed the Council. C. Mercier also requested opinion from the Solicitor and commented on possible conflicts with the petition and election commission. Solicitor O'Conner opined that the petition was not in order as such a request is not legally allowed as it pertains to management of employees. Solicitor O'Connor noted that the Council cannot dictate employment and that the Law Department has been involved with Elections Department for some time and that the interim department head is doing quality work. Manager Donoghue noted interim director is doing fine work and that they are able to run a fair and open election. C. Rourke noted end of discussion based upon City Solicitor opinion. M. Leahy noted no action taken on the petition.

## **8. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS**

### **8.1. C. Elliott - Req. Transportation/Public Safety subcommittees meet with Superintendent of Police to develop a plan to issue citations to excessively loud vehicles in the neighborhoods.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to Transportation SC and Public Safety SC. So voted. C. Elliott noted there is no easy solution and that problems have increased due to the number of people at home.

### **8.2. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. have DPD prepare plan to submit a request to MassDOT for funding under the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, for projects which will re-purpose parking to better support curbside pick-up and outdoor dining.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Chau, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott noted the program has already begun and is showing results. C. Chau noted that these are extensive grants which assist those who are in need of them.

### **8.3. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. have Animal Advisory Board report on the assistance provided by the MSPCA during Covid crisis.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Drinkwater, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott commented on the efforts of the board and the MSPCA. C. Elliott requested that the groups be brought before Council for recognition.

### **8.4. C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. have proper department see to the clean-up of Ecumenical Plaza.**



In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras noted the need for upkeep and to assist homeless.

**8.5. C. Samaras/C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. instruct Law Department draft an ordinance to establish a citizens advisory committee to help provide public input and recommendations to the Lowell Police Department.**

In City Council, second by C. Chau as C. Nuon was absent, referred to City Manager. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Nuon). So voted. C. Samaras lauded the efforts of the LPD and community policing and commented that in pressing times citizens need more involvement to assist leadership. C. Chau noted support of LPD and that tough times should bring communities together.

**8.6. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. provide a report updating the progress of the task force to end homelessness and what has been accomplished so far.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier requested the report and noted prior task forces results should be utilized as the problem continues and is increasing. Manager Donoghue noted that a report will be issued and that the pandemic has increased the problem tremendously in the City. C. Mercier commented on the growing issue at the South Common. M. Leahy noted continued resources are being used for solutions.

**8.7. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. have a coordinated effort among LPD; Tewksbury PD; Massachusetts Environmental Police; and the Mass. Dept. of Fish and Game to prevent outsiders from destroying neighborhood and river bank at end of Burnham Road.**

In City Council, seconded by C. M. Leahy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier commented on the problem area and that it is out of control. C. Mercier noted that it will have to take a multi force effort and that City should begin that process. Manager Donoghue stated they would organize that effort.

**8.8. C. Nuon/C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. have Board of Election Commissioners hold a hearing to explore preparation for the upcoming 2020 elections in September and November; to include implementation of legislative changes to Vote-By-Mail and Early-In Person-Voting due to Covid-19 pandemic, and that representatives from the Secretary of State's Office, the Lowell Elections Office, other relative State and City Departments, voting advocacy organizations and members of public be invited to testify.**



In City Council, second by C. Samaras as C. Nuon was absent, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater commented on many changes forthcoming and that a game plan should be formalized in advance. C. Chau noted information must be provided to the public. C. Elliott noted importance to get people to vote.

**8.9. C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. provide an update on the status and progress of Rt. 133 (Andover Street) in regards to calming solutions for safety and traffic.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Laura Gilmore, addressed the Council. C. Conway noted long standing problem and the dangers with speeding continue. C. Conway commented that preventative measures must be taken. Manager Donoghue noted she would provide updated report. M. Leahy noted that speed humps may have to be given a trial run on that street.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In City Council, C. Mercier commented on upcoming forum at Lowell Senior Center. Manager Donoghue commented on the event entitled "Lowell Listen". M. Leahy recognized the retirement of Henri Marchand.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

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Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk