



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: August 24, 2021

Time: 6:30 PM

Location: City Council Chamber, 375 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor, Lowell, MA
/Zoom (Hybrid)

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 8 present, 1 absent (M. Leahy)

Vice Chair Mercier presiding.

C. Elliott requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Alba Rojas. Vice Chair Mercier relinquished Chair to C. Elliott at 6:35 PM and returned on 6:40 PM. C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Francis LaPan and Theresa Chemaly.

2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

2.1. Communication Remote / Zoom Participation:

Meetings Will Be Held In Council Chamber With Public Welcome And By Using Remote Participation As Follows: Members Of The Public May View The Meeting Via LTC.Org (On-Line; Live Streaming; Or Local Cable Channel 99). 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 Issued Zoom Link To The Meeting. Email Address Is MGEARY@LOWELLMA.GOV. If No Access To Email You May Contact City Clerk At 978-674-4161. All Request Must Be Done Before 4:00 PM On The Day Of Meeting. For Zoom -

[HTTPS://SUPPORT.ZOOM.US/HC/EN-US/ARTICLES/201362193-JOINING-A-MEETING](https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-joining-a-meeting)

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

Motion to take Item #12.15 out of order by C. Chau, seconded by C. Elliott. So voted.

Motion to take Items #12.3; 12.6 to 8 inclusive, out of order and bundle by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Chau. So voted.



3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Reappoint Of Michael Q Geary As City Clerk.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Rourke. Adopted per Roll Call vote 7 yeas, 1 nay (C. Nuon), 1 absent (M. Leahy). So voted. C. Nuon questioned the City Solicitor regarding appointment. Solicitor O'Connor provided information she researched. C. Nuon indicated he would not support the vote to remain consistent with his actions concerning contract of the City Manager.

3.2. Minutes Of City Council Regular Meeting August 10th; City Council Special Meeting Joint With Lowell School Committee August 18th, For Acceptance.

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

4. GENERAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1. Ordinance- Create Position And Salary SOR-PEC Grant Coordinator In Health Dept.

In City Council, Given 2nd Reading, hearing held. No Remonstrants. **Motion** to adopt by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Samaras. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (M. Leahy). So voted.

5. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

5.1. Motion Responses.

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

A) Motion Response - McPherson Netting – C. Nuon noted the work being done in the park.

B) Motion Response - School Building Readiness – C. Drinkwater commented on the plan and the schedule. Manager Donoghue commented on work to ensure Lowell High School is proper condition after the flood. C. Drinkwater commented on the need for the City to provide services including well maintained schools. C Rourke noted the current situation at Pawtucket Memorial School and the remediation work being done. Christine Clancy (DPD) updated on the repairs and the mold removal. C. Conway noted that all systems in schools should be tested before they are opened. C. Elliott noted the efforts being put forward to maintain the schools.

C) Motion Response - Kelly Circle – C. Elliott noted the work and that the residents were pleased with results.

D) Motion Response - Upgrades to Duck Island – C. Chau commented on the report



noting the money and the impact on the environment. Mark Young (Water/Wastewater) outlined the report. **Motion** by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Conway to refer report to Environment & Flood Issues SC. So voted.

E) Motion Response - Wachusett Street – C. Chau recognized the report. C. Mercier commented on other obstructions found on the street.

F) Motion Response - Status COVID-19 and Delta Variant – C. Conway noted there was an abundance of information provided and commented on the proper number of vaccination site in the City. Manager Donoghue noted the Covid numbers are increasing and that the City is below the State average for vaccinations. C. Conway noted the proactive approach must continue.

G) Motion Response - LeLacheur Park – Registered speakers, John Kreedon and Drew Weber, addressed the body. Manager Donoghue commented on recent history of the park and operations during and after pandemic. Manager Donoghue noted that there is a procurement process that must be adhered to as tax money is invested in the public project. Manager Donoghue noted they are assessing costs and scope of work needed as well as exploring funding options.

H) Motion Response - Employee Incentive Program – C. Conway noted proposal was more in line with the business world and there is a need to tap into employee resources. Conor Baldwin (CFO) noted in the response request to increase the incentive amount and the structure of the board. **Motion** by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Rourke to refer to Law Department to amend ordinance to increase incentive amount and alter structure of the board. So voted.

I) Motion Response - Dirt Bikes, Mopeds and Scooters - C. Rourke noted the efforts of the police enforcing regulations. C. Elliott noted that there were citations being issued. Deputy LeBlanc (LPD) noted safety oversight is needed as it creates a dangerous situation.

J) Motion Response - Letter to UML Regarding Neighborhood Issues – C. Mercier noted letter was sent and that contents were proper.

K) Motion Response - Efforts to Address Homelessness – C. Nuon noted the detailed report and work with partners. Mary Shannon Thomas (DPD) outlined efforts along with partners to provide services and shelter.

5.2. Informational Reports.

L) Informational - Annual Report of the Lowell Commission on Disability – Manager Donoghue noted that Commission rescheduled for September 14, 2021.

M) Informational - Cawley Stadium Track Resurfacing – Report was filed.

N) Informational - JFK Plaza Upgrade – Report was filed.



O) Informational - Flood Plain Overlay – Motion to refer to Zoning SC by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Samaras. So voted.

5.3. Reappointment Of George Procope And Van Pech To Zoning Board Of Appeals.

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

5.4. Reappointment Of Gerard Frechette To Planning Board.

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

5.5. Communication - City Manager Request Out Of State Travel (2) LPD.

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

Motion to bundle and waive second reading Items #6.1 to 6.8, inclusively, by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Elliott. So voted.

6. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Vote- Accept And Expend 39,742.30 FY22 State 911 Dept EMD Grant To Police.

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

6.2. Vote- Accept And Expend 398,000.00 BIDLS Grant To Health Dept.

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

6.3. Vote- Accept And Expend 43,232.35 FY22 State 911 Dept FY22 Training Grant To Police.

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

6.4. Vote- Accept And Expend 460,496.00 FY22 State 911 Dept Support And Incentive Grant To Police.



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

6.5. Vote- Accept And Expend 50,000.00 ARPA Grant To Library.

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

6.6. Vote- Accept Gift Of 7,500 From Digital Federal Credit Union To Library.

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

6.7. Vote- Ratify And Approve The Execution By City Manager Of Traffic Supervisors MOU.

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

6.8. Vote- Transfer To Elections Division.

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

7. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

7.1. Order- 60 Day Trial.

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

8. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

8.1. Ordinance- Create Position And Salary Of DEI Officer In City Manager's Office.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on September 14, 2021 at 7PM by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Samaras. So voted.

9. CONSTABLE BONDS

9.1. Communication - City Mgr. Request Approval Of Constable Bonds For Jason M. Burke.



In City Council, Read, **Motion** to adopt by C. Chau, seconded by C. Drinkwater. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (M. Leahy). So voted.

10. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

10.1. Transportation SC August 24, 2021.

In City Council, C. Elliott noted attendance and commented on discussion regarding traffic construction schedule and Starbird Avenue cut-through. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Chau. So voted.

11. PETITIONS

11.1. Claim - (5) Property Damage.

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

11.2. Misc. - Frank LaMonde Request Permission To Address Council Regarding Cleanliness Of The City And Bridges Throughout The City.

In City Council, petitioner was not present, no testimony heard.

12. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

12.1. C. Elliott - Req. City Council Vote To Request Monument Committee Identify A Location For A Monument To Be Placed Representing The People Of India.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott introduced Abhijit Patel, the director Temple. C. Elliott noted contributions of the Temple and that a committee has been formed to help develop monument.

Motion by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Rourke to take out of order and to bundle Items #12.9; 11; and 13. So voted.

12.2. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. Provide A Report Regarding The 2020 Census Data And The Impact To The City On Elections, Funding, Etc.

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott noted motion.

12.3. C. Elliott - Req. Finance SC Meet With The Pollard Library Board Of Trustees For Discussion Regarding Funding Issues.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to Finance SC. So voted. Registered speaker, Katy Aronoff, addressed the Council on this Item as well as Items #6.5; 6.6; 12.6; 12.7; and 12.8. C. Elliott noted that the subcommittee and see presentation from the board noting the importance of the library as well as the need to explore a manner to fund budget gap.



Vice Chair Mercier relinquished Chair to C. Conway at 8:40 PM and returned at 8:50 PM.

12.4. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. Discuss Reasoning Behind Not Addressing The Voters On The Other Side Of The River In District 4.

In City Council, seconded by C. Chau, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Ryan Rourke, addressed the Council. C. Mercier read a statement and submitted to Council a letter by Paul Belley. C. Mercier noted that changes should be done that are in the best interests of the voters in terms of ability and convenience in voting. C. Mercier questioned the amount expert was paid during this time. Solicitor O'Connor commented on the procedure and stated that they would provide costs to date. Manager Donoghue commented on proposed location and outlined a tight time frame to inform voters in the districts. Manager Donoghue noted that the Election Commission was charged with all those decisions. Solicitor O'Connor provided update of Election Commission meetings. Manager Donoghue noted polling locations for early voting.

12.5. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. Inform City Council And The Taxpayers Of Lowell Of The Full Intentions Of The LeLacheur Ballpark And What Is The City's Financial Involvement In It.

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted the need to keep taxpayers informed of costs and plans for use of the ballpark moving forward. Manager Donoghue noted motion response Item #5.1(G) on the agenda which could be included in discussion. Manager Donoghue noted it was initial stage of process that is required under procurement laws for public projects. Manager Donoghue commented on partnership with UML as well as identifying sources of revenue outside of tax funding. C. Drinkwater noted all investment options should be explored and analyzed. C. Samaras noted costs compared to economic development should be analyzed. C. Nuon noted that Manager was directed to explore possible use and funding options for the project and that it must be done in adherence to the law. C. Conway noted all options should be discussed and vetted by the body. C. Conway commented that sports are an important part of community and proper to review costs and funding options. C. Rourke commented and questioned the partnership with UML regarding maintaining and improving the field. Manager Donoghue reviewed the current financial sharing with the University regarding maintaining the field. C. Elliott commented that all opportunities should be explored and that no chances should be lost. Manager Donoghue noted that discussions during Executive Session can be discussed as matters regarding project have become public per statute.

12.6. C. Nuon/C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. Invite The Pollard Memorial Library Board Of Trustees And The Pollard Memorial Library Foundation Members To Provide An Overview Of What The Pollard Memorial Library Has Done During Covid-19 And The Plan Post Covid-19.



In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras noted that you must understand all that the library does and the need to fund the endeavors. C. Samaras noted plan can come before subcommittee to get information and attempt to fund gaps that are needed. C. Samaras note covid operations in the library and expanding programs such as book vans that service the community. C. Nuon noted speaker from the board and that open discussions need to continue to ensure continued success for the library. C. Chau noted the library serves an important use in the community. C. Conway noted discussions with board members and that the library is used by students at all educational levels in the City. C. Conway noted the need to maintain the building as well. C. Drinkwater noted support of all library motions recognizing work of trustees and operations during pandemic.

Motion to take item #12.19 out of order by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

12.7. C. Nuon/C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. Work With The Pollard Memorial Library Board Of Trustees To Create A Five Year Financial Plan.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. Refer to discussion at Item #12.6.

12.8. C. Nuon/C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. Work With The Pollard Memorial Library To Find Funding And Create A Book-In-Van Program To Get Books To Kids In Neighborhoods That Are Distanced From Downtown.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. Refer to discussion at Item #12.6.

12.9. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. And DPW Provide A Report Regarding The Filling Of Potholes, Repaving And Possible Reconfiguration Of Vivier Way Leading Up To McNamara And LeBlanc Playing Fields.

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker Matthew LeLacheur, addressed the body in addition to Items #12.11; 12.13.

12.10. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Contact The Massachusetts Dept. Of Transportation And The Lowell Monument Committee About Naming The Intersection Of Pawtucket Boulevard And Old Ferry Road After Retired Army Sergeant Major Dors "Gene" Musgray.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke noted the motion was clear.

12.11. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have DPW Look Into Improvements In And Around Father Maquire's Park.



In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Alan Saba, addressed the Council.

12.12. C. Rourke -Req. City Mgr. Contact The Massachusetts Department Of Transportation Concerning Placement Of Pedestrian Crosswalks And Light Signals From The Rourke Bridge Across To Pawtucket Boulevard.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke noted the motion was clear.

12.13. C. Samaras/C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have The Heads Of The Proper Departments Meet With The Leaders Of The Various City Leagues To Discuss And Establish Protocols On Ensuring The Proper Maintenance Of Fields; Including, Grass Cutting, Lining Of Fields, Drainage, Etc. And Has To Who Is Responsible For Each.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras commented on the parents' concerns with the sports fields in the City and noted the many volunteers and groups involved in these sports programs. C. Rourke noted the need to set up system to take advantage of the many volunteers and coordination with the City for upkeep of the fields.

12.14. C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Ensure That Grass And Shrubs At The Joseph Pyne School Are Cut At The Boylston Entrance To The School; Including, Cutting Of The Grass And Shrubs Around Parking Areas; Also Grass And Shrubs In Picnic Area.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras noted the motion was clear.

12.15. C. Chau - Req. City Mgr. Explore Possibilities Of Identifying Affiliations Beyond Major League Baseball; Ie. Futures League, As A Move To Bring More Sporting Or Community Activities To LeLacheur Park.

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speakers, Ryan Rourke; Eric Gitschier; Maria Claudio; Corey Robinson; and Brady McCarron, addressed the Council. C. Mercier recognized local baseball team present in the Chamber returning from a New York tournament and the MVP Jallium Cortez. C. Chau recognized the team and the speakers and noted the need to ensure park is used to it highest potential.

12.16. C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. Find The Ways And Means To Add Bleacher Seating At Carney Field On The North Common.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater noted the motion was clear.



12.17. C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. Explore The Feasibility And Potential Funding Sources For A Pilot Program To Add Raised Crosswalks And Intersections At City Schools.

In City Council, seconded by C. Chau, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater noted the motion was clear.

12.18. C. Drinkwater/M. Leahy - Req. City Mgr. Explore The Feasibility Of Extending Sidewalks On Douglas Road, From Hovey Street To Rogers Street In Conjunction With The Douglas Road Wet-Weather Storage Facility Project.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater noted the motion was clear.

12.19. M. Leahy - Req. City Mgr. Provide Update To Council Regarding Bussing Situation Between The Lowell Public School And The Collegiate Charter School.

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott noted he had placed item for agenda that was not included and registered speakers, Walter McGrail and Kathleen McCarthy, addressed the body.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Mercier noted return to Casey Crane to the Chamber.

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:59 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk