



# Lowell City Council

## Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** October 19, 2021

**Time:** 6:30 PM

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

### 1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 9 present.

M. Leahy presiding.

### 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](mailto: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.

### 3. CITY CLERK

#### 3.1. Minutes Of Finance SC October 12th; Environmental & Flood Issues SC October 12th; City Council Regular Meeting October 12th, For Acceptance.

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

**Motion** to take Items #5.2 and #10.8 out of order by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.



## 4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

### 4.1. Motion Responses.

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

**A) Motion Response – Bookmobile** – Ms. Duran (Pollard Board of Trustees) addressed the body. C. Samaras commented on the importance of the service. Conor Baldwin (CFO) commented on the funding element through the American Rescue Plan. C. Nuon noted the support of the Council regarding extending services into the community. C. Elliott noted renewed services with expansion. C. Mercier commented on services being available to the community at large. C. Rourke noted relative’s involvement with prior bookmobile.

**B) Motion Response - Cupples Square** – C. Chau noted quick response to clean the area and the appreciation of the local merchants. C. Chau questioned what remains of the cleaning project. Christine Clancy (DPW) noted the work was substantially finished and there is some clean-up remaining. C. Chau noted the importance of staying on top of emptying barrels.

**C) Motion Response - Volleyball Court Opportunity at Leblanc Park** – C. Rourke noted citizens were pleased with final solution.

**D) Motion Response - Beaver Dams in Pawtucketville** – C. Elliott commented on the reports and the continued need for oversight on the animals and dam construction. C. Mercier questioned regulations regarding removal of dams. Manager Donoghue noted that the City hires an expert consultant to remove dams.

**E) Motion Response- Hunts Fall Rotary** – C. Drinkwater commented on the area and the improvements made. Ms. Clancy noted added work being done under scope of project which includes area around 1<sup>st</sup> Street.

**F) Motion Response - Campbell Field Trees** – C. Rourke noted some work has been done and there is some left to do. C. Mercier commented on Hovey Park tree damage. Manager Donoghue noted recent damage and that clean-up is happening.

**G) Motion Response - 60 Lawrence Street Crosswalk** – C. Mercier requested crosswalk be made part of the FY 22 sidewalk restoration project.

**H) Motion Response - Clemente Park** – C. Chau commented on area improvements and noted remaining issues on the punch list. Manager Donoghue noted the attempt to get CDBG funding for some projects. Christine McCall noted interaction with Clemente Commission as well as improved access to the park. Ms. McCall noted many resources go toward the park and that there is an application in for CDVG funding.



**I) Motion Response - Downtown Rapid Recovery** – C. Mercier noted there are still many empty storefronts downtown for a number of reasons and there needs to be a revitalization of the area to ensure that Lowell becomes a destination city. C. Mercier noted there needs to be a plan to remove homeless from the streets as part of the solution to the problem. Manager Donoghue commented on recovery plan and the need to revitalize the area which has been approved and needs funding. Manager Donoghue noted challenges with owners and the state of the buildings in the area and commented on need for assistance from state and federal government. C. Nuon commented on the need to assist owners to improve and update buildings to increase pedestrian traffic downtown. C. Elliott noted funding must come from state, local and federal levels.

**J) Motion Response - Upper Floor Development – Motion** by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Elliott to refer Items #4.1(I) and #4.1(J) to Economic/Downtown Development SC. So voted.

#### **4.2. Informational Reports**

**K) Informational - Park and Downtown Trash Update** – Manager Donoghue commented on challenges with staffing that current vendor has experienced and that as a result that contacted part of the operation is being transitioned to the City and that they are still in that process which also has many challenges. Ms. Clancy commented on the transition into a long and short term solution. C. Conway recognized the increased effort regarding yard waste and that problem still persists with illegal dumping in the City. C. Elliott noted the transition to the City needed to be done. M. Leahy noted the efforts of the Lowell Litter Crew which is assisted by the DPW.

**L) Informational - Resolution Regarding Amazon** – Manager Donoghue commented on the updated memo from the Law Department. **Motion** by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Elliott to take Item #7.1 out of order. So voted.

### **5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

#### **5.1. Vote- Accept.Expend 2021 GLCF Covid Phase 3 Mental Health Support Grant.**

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 9 yeas. So voted.

#### **5.2. Vote- Approve Exemption Of Arthur Calavritinos MGL C.268A S.20.**

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

#### **5.3. Vote- Auth Mgr Ex. License Agreement-7 Hanover St (Overhanging Sign).**

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



## **6. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

### **6.1. Ordinance- Create Position And Salary For Epidemiologist-Health Dept.**

In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on November 9, 2021 at 7PM by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted.

## **7. RESOLUTIONS**

### **7.1. Resolution- Urging Community Engagement And Fair Employment Standards For Any Expansion Of Amazon.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Mercier. Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 nay (C. Conway). So voted. C. Drinkwater commented on the reason to include community standard language and that the resolution urges Amazon to meet and confer with the community which does not preclude Amazon but welcomes them. C. Drinkwater recognized that the resolution includes all companies but the focus is on Amazon. C. Drinkwater noted Amazon treatment of workers and the need to improve that. C. Mercier noted resolution was non-binding and that it simply asks companies to engage with the community. C. Conway noted resolution impedes on Plan E form of government and he could not support that as it would impede on City Manager as well. C. Chau noted resolution stands behind our workforce and that it does not hinder the City Manager. C. Elliott noted it was non-binding and supports workers without stripping Manager of power. C. Nuon noted resolution was applicable just to big business and does not affect small businesses. C. Rourke questioned position of Manager. Manager Donoghue noted resolution was totally within purview of the Council.

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

### **8.1. Environment & Flood Issues SC October 12, 2021.**

In City Council, C. Samaras outlined the meeting noting the attendance and discussion Duck Island upgrades, CSO (Combined Water/Sewer) and odor mitigation; outlining a report provided by Mark Young (Water/Sewer) providing costs and benefits. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Samaras, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

## **9. PETITIONS**

### **9.1. Misc. - Sonia Dore Request Removal Of Handicap Parking Sign At 85 Moore Street.**

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

### **9.2. National Grid - Request Installation Of Handhold And 120 Feet Of Conduit For Service To Cell Antenna On Appleton Street Pole #17.**



In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on November 9, 2021 at 7PM by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

**9.3. National Grid - Request Installation Of Gas Main Extension From 35 To 79 Pratt Avenue.**

In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on November 9, 2021 at 7PM by C. Chau, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

**9.4. New Cingular Wireless (D/B/A AT&T) - Request Installation Of A Small Cell Antenna On Existing Pole At 84 University Avenue At Riverside Street.**

In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on November 9, 2021 at 7PM by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

**10. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS**

**10.1. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Refresh Faded Paint On Crosswalk From Francis Gatehouse To Variety Store On Broadway Street To Ensure Safe Passage For Residents And Elderly.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted the work had been completed.

**10.2. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. Provide A Report Regarding Public Input From Submittals Re: ARPA Project Suggestions, Include Categories, Estimate Of Costs, Title/Subject And Descriptions.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted report would give Council an idea of what suggestions exist regarding public input.

**10.3. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. Invite Representative From FEMA Meet With Environmental & Flood Issues SC To Explain The National Flood Insurance Program- "Risk Rating 2.0 - Equity In Action" That Took Effect On October 1st.; And To Ensure All Residents In Flood Zones Can Take Advantage Of This Pricing Methodology/Rating System On Their Policies.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager/Environmental & Flood Issues SC. So voted. C. Elliott noted resident input regarding motion and that there is a need to review new regulations for current and future policies so that there may be means to reduce premiums. Paul Belley addressed the body via Zoom. C. Rourke noted prior motion regarding regulations and the use of programs within the National Flood Insurance Program to assist residents along with any State agencies as well. Manager Donoghue noted that flood plains may have changed and that they need to be identified. C. Rourke noted there are different construction projects at homes that could help reduce rates.



**10.4. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. Report On Homeless Coordinating Council Meeting Regarding Finding Shelter For The Homeless.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon requested that Items #10.10 and #10.12 be discussed with this item as they address same issue. C. Elliott commented on current meeting which was short but informative with regards to shelters and working with housing authorities and HUD for needed housing.

**10.5. C. Elliott/C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have DPD Initiate Process Of Updating Pawtucketville Master Plan Adopted In 2006 And Include All Stakeholders And Previous Members Who Put Plan Together.**

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke commented on prior plan and the need to upgrade and move forward. C. Elliott noted some provisions are outdated and there is a need for new planning as times and neighborhoods change.

**10.6. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have DPD Look Into Initiatives Other Cities Utilize To Combat Rodent Infestation.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Chau, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke noted a review of all methods would assist with the fight against infestation.

**10.7. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have DPW Trim Back Tree Branches Overhanging On Varnum Avenue Before The Winter Season.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke noted the need and he would identify the areas which need pruning.

**10.8. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Have The Playground At The Pawtucketville Memorial School Repaired And Renovated.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Daniel McFadden, addressed the Council. C. Rourke commented on the need to complete project as it has been in disrepair for some time. C. Rourke noted that there have been many calls regarding this motion and it must be pushed forward. C. Elliott noted the disrepair and that it should be addressed quicker and that there should be a process in place for all of the playgrounds in the City. Manager Donoghue noted first time hearing of issue and that some playgrounds are controlled by schools some are controlled by City. C. Rourke commented on possible grant funding for repairs.



**10.9. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Replace Missing And/Or Broken Sidewalk Bumps Throughout The City.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Rourke noted the safety issue present.

**10.10. C. Samaras - Req. City Mgr. Provide A Report On The Efforts Being Made To Work With Homeless, ie; Campsites, Availability Of Beds, Health Needs And Issues With Downtown Businesses.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Samaras noted the homeless problem needs a multi facet approach to resolve and the City is making strides towards that.

**10.11. C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. Provide An Update Regarding Efforts To Mitigate Increased Traffic And Cut-Throughs In The Area Of Woburn Street And Rt. 495 Related To The Home Depot E-Commerce Warehouse Located In Tewksbury And Billerica.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater commented on the area and other surrounding towns involvement with the project as well as the concerns for the cut-through traffic that may result.

**10.12. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Invite Coordinating Council On Housing And Homelessness To Provide Report/Presentation As To The Current Status And The Path Planned Forward To Address Homelessness.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on partners needed to improve conditions which are on the local, state and federal level. C. Mercier noted the need for specific housing for some individuals and made reference to possible use of empty Coca Cola plant. Manager Donoghue commented on recent meeting with the Council and the coordinated effort of all to ease issues and that a report will be provided to convey that information. Manager Donoghue noted there are beds available. C. Mercier requested further information regarding available beds.

**10.13. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Provide Update Regarding Adding Associates And Alternative Members To City Boards And Commissions.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon requested the information.



**10.14. M. Leahy - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Contact MassDOT To Revisit And Review Traffic On Rogers Street.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. M. Leahy indicated that there needs to be calming measures.

**11. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In City Council, C. Elliott noted upcoming dedication for Saba family. C. Mercier noted that the Board of Parks approved the dedication of the courts at the park.

**12. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 PM.

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Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk