



# Lowell City Council

## *Regular Meeting Minutes*

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** February 25, 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.

### 2. MAYOR'S BUSINESS

#### 2.1. Presentation - Hoops For Hope (Jay Grasso).

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Conway. So voted. M. Leahy outlined program and its contributions. Phil Arsenault outlined the program and commented on the upcoming event. Jay Grasso commented on the Lowell connection and outlined the upcoming event. C. Elliott commented on the effort of the organization and the help they have provided. C. Chau noted the effort and commented on his organization involvement with the South East Asian Games.

### 3. CITY CLERK

#### 3.1. Minutes of Finance SC February 11th; Economic Downtown Development SC February 11th; City Council Meeting February 11th; Transportation SC February 19th, for acceptance.

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

### 4. GENERAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

#### 4.1. Ordinance-Create Grant Funded Position and Salary entitled Youth Outreach Specialist at the HHS Dept.

In City Council, Given 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading, hearing held. Speaking in favor was Lainnie Emond (HHS). No Remonstrants. **Motion** to adopt C. Mercier, seconded by C. Rourke.



Adopted per Roll Call vote 8 yeas, 1 absent (C. Conway). So voted. C. Rourke commented on the job description and proposed salary.

## **5. UTILITY PUBLIC HEARING**

### **5.1. National Grid - Request installation of ten feet of underground electric conduit to service 336 Central Street.**

In City Council, Given 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading. Hearing held. Speaking in favor David Auguare (National Grid). No Remonstrants. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

## **6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER**

### **6.1. Presentation - Lowell General Hospital.**

In City Council, Manager Donoghue introduced members of the LGH administration which included Gary Campbell, Jodi White and Amy Hoey. Mr. White introduced members of his team that were present and gave an overview of the operations of LGH. Mr. White commented on investments in the community, increased practice area, increased patient care at reasonable costs, future updates and expansion and increased commitment to the community. C. Chau commented on the operations of LGH and their ability to keep up with changes in health care. C. Mercier recognized service to the community and questioned procedures for dealing with present Coronavirus. Hospital officials outlined plan for dealing with such an epidemic. C. Samaras noted the importance of having people aware of all the services offered by LGH. C. Elliott noted the benefits of assuring the community of the commitment of LGH. C. Drinkwater recognized effort of the hospital and commented on the current closures of some ICU beds. Mr. White outlined the changes being made in the unit and the reasons for it. C. Drinkwater questioned ambulance transport services. Hospital officials outlined the procedure and the partners involved. C. Conway commented on the excellent service provided by LGH. C. Nuon commented on the number of beds in the ICU unit. Mr. Campbell, LGH board member, commented on the hospital and the benefits of its prior merger with St. John's. Manager Donoghue commented on LGH as a partner with the City.

### **6.2. Motion Responses.**

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



**A) Motion Response - Clocks at City Hall** – C. Mercier noted the effort put forth to repair clocks and complexities involved. Manager Donoghue noted they will continue to work on matter.

**B) Motion Response - Wires Hanging Overhead on Utility Poles** – None.

**C) Motion Response - Beaver St. Bridge** – C. Nuon noted the bridge has been out for some time and that large sum of money is needed to repair it. Manager Donoghue noted that design was complete and just searching for funding to repair. M. Leahy requested transportation engineer review traffic patterns on the VFW Highway.

**D) Motion Response - Affordable Housing** – C. Drinkwater noted the detailed report and commented on the effort of the City and the current development of Winn. C. Drinkwater noted this matter will be discussed at Housing SC. Manager Donoghue noted the DPD staff was working to meet requirements. C. Chau noted the strength of City in providing affordable housing. C. Elliott noted that it was good information to discuss at subcommittee and that increased efforts would mean increased grant money.

**E) Motion Response - Westford and Stedman Intersection** – C. Chau noted it was a second look at the issue and that Highlands Neighborhood Association has discussed matter. C. Rourke requested Traffic Engineer meet with group to discuss issues.

**Motion** by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Rourke to refer to Transportation SC. So voted.

**F) Motion Response - Marijuana HCAs and Revenue** – C. Elliott noted matter would be discussed in Cannabis Control SC report.

### **6.3. Communication-Accept resignation of Sheila Hegarty from the Disability Commission.**

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

### **6.4. Communication-Appoint AnnMarie Sreygov Porter to Council on Aging.**

In City Council, read, **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Elliott. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. Ms. Porter was present and thanked the Council.

### **6.5. Communication-Reappoint Lisa Golden to Board of Health.**

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



## **6.6. Communication-Reappoint Mark Briere to ZBA.**

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

## **6.7. Communication - City Manager request Out of State Travel (1) LPD.**

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

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

### **7.1. Vote-Accept.Expend Municipal Vulnerability Program Planning Grant 77,550.00.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Elliott. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Elliott noted that the funding was important for handling any flooding. Manager Donoghue noted that flooding remains an issue. Alex Magee (Manager's Office) outlined vote and grant. C. Elliott noted that use of phasing was important.

## **8. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER**

### **8.1. Order of Taking Permanent and Temporary Easements for Municipal Purposes in furtherance of Route 38 Roadway and Intersection Improvement Project.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Conway, seconded by C. Elliott. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Mercier noted that all of the people objecting to these takings for a new high school are not present or concerned for these same takings. Manager Donoghue noted the process. Christine Clancy (DPW) commented on the temporary easements and takings. C. Rourke commented on donated parcels. Ms. Clancy outlined process to value the properties. C. Elliott questioned time line for project.

### **8.2. Order-60 day trial-various.**

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 9 yeas. So voted.



## 9. CONSTABLE BONDS

### 9.1. Communication - City Mgr. request approval of Constable Bond for Ronald Bertheim.

In City Council, read, **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Rourke. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. Mr. Bertheim was present and thanked Council.

## 10. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

### 10.1. Sub-Committee Reports.

#### 1) Transportation SC February 19, 2020.

In City Council, C. Elliott provided report noting the attendance and discussion of the Pawtucket Street Bridge closing and repair as well as discussions with MassDOT regarding traffic mitigation. Manager Donoghue noted that it was a major construction project being done to ensure safety. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Chau. So voted.

#### 2) Cannabis Control SC February 25, 2020.

In City Council, C. Elliott provided report noting the attendance and discussion of Host Community Agreements and sources of revenue. C. Elliott noted that there should be more revenue from cultivation facilities. Conor Baldwin (CFO) outlined revenue sources and placement as per regulations. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

#### 3) Election Laws/Redistricting SC Joint With Rules SC February 25, 2020.

In City Council, C. Rourke provided report noting the attendance and discussions regarding charter changes relating to selection of Mayor. C. Rourke noted that the subcommittee adopted a motion inviting representatives from the City of Worcester to discuss mayoral selection in that community. C. Rourke noted the effect Consent Decree will have on the process. Manager Donoghue noted they would request City of Worcester to attend subcommittee meeting. C. Elliott noted it was the time to move forward. C. Rourke noted that some change will happen with the selection of the Mayor. **Motion** to adopt motions of subcommittee and accept the report as a report of progress by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Elliott. So voted.



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

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

**11. PETITIONS**

**11.1. Claim - (1) Property Damage.**

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

**11.2. Misc. - 160 Middlesex Street, LLC (Geary & Geary, LLP) request license for overhanging decorative balconies at 160 Middlesex Street.**

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

**11.3. Misc. - Flood Law Office, P.C. request no parking zone at corner of Rogers and Berkeley Streets.**

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Transportation Engineer for report and recommendation by C. Chau, seconded by C. Conway. So voted.

**11.4. Misc. - Steven Bickford request permission to address City Council regarding preservation of World War I Cannon Monument.**

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to March 10, 2020 meeting by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Drinkwater. So voted. C. Elliott noted that it was a World War I monument so it was important to restore.

**11.5. National Grid - Request installation of 50 feet of underground electric conduit at Bridge and French Streets.**

In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on March 10, 2020 at 7PM by C. Samaras, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted.

**11.6. National Grid - Request permission to install 10 feet of underground electric conduit at Prescott and Merrimack Streets (Kearney Square).**





In City Council, Given 1<sup>st</sup> Reading, **Motion** to refer to public hearing on March 10, 2020 at 7PM by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

## **12. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS**

**12.1. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. have the newly formed Homeless Commission put together a booklet outlining all programs, meals, hours of operations, phone numbers, free clothes, laundry service, haircuts, counseling, job opportunities, exercise etc. and whatever else agencies have to offer so that we may distribute this information through different agencies such as Living Water; The Phoenix; CTI; and Lowell House to homeless people on street.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted it was important information to provide citizens. Manager Donoghue noted that there is a lot of information that should be distributed. C. Elliott commented on recent homeless camps along Middlesex Street.

**12.2. C. Conway - Req. City Mgr. to meet with Public Health Department and contact the CDC (Center for Disease Control) and provide a report to the City Council outlining the steps we are taking to ensure our community is safe from the Coronavirus.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. Adopted per Roll Call vote 6 yeas, 3 nays (C. Elliott, C. Mercier, C. Rourke). So voted. C. Conway noted that Lowell General Hospital should be involved in discussions as it appears that they have made some preparations. C. Conway noted diversity of the City and that School Administration should take an active part in any procedures moving forward. C. Samaras requested friendly amendment to include school administration. No objection from maker of motion. C. Mercier noted that there are no public cases but information is important. C. Rourke commented on the preparations of Lowell General Hospital. Manager Donoghue commented that they would provide report and involve schools as well. C. Elliott recognized the efforts of Lowell General Hospital.

**12.3. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. have proper department clean up the waste from illegal dumping at sites across the City and to create a plan to reduce further illegal dumping.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon noted motion was self-explanatory.

**12.4. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. provide an update regarding the bicentennial planning effort of the City.**



In City Council, seconded by C. Samaras, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon requested update and noted that a lot of planning is involved.

**12.5. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. have DPD provide updated plans regarding vacant/dilapidated properties in the ACRE Redevelopment Plan.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager/Economic Downtown Development SC. So voted. C. Elliott noted there were a lot of properties involved that are vacant and that Economic Development SC could get information.

**12.6. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. have Supt. Of Police hold community outreach sessions pertaining to Level 3 sex offenders in South Lowell as well as all other neighborhood groups.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott commented on a recent incident and the need to publish information for public safety. C. Nuon commented on threat throughout City and the work of the police in this area. C. Conway noted that information should be supplied to neighborhoods. C. Rourke noted classifications of sex offenders on the website. C. Elliott noted more information is best.

**12.7. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. provide updated report regarding prior motion to remove abandoned sign structures on City property on Middlesex Street.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott noted that the work needs to be done.

**12.8. C. Elliott - Req. City Mgr. report on the status of the vacant/abandoned Hadley House on Broadway Street as well as the Francis Gate House.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Elliott commented on site and the plans moving forward. Manager Donoghue noted the Lowell Housing Authority is in control of the units.

**12.9. C. Elliott - Req. Economic/Downtown Development SC meet with small business owners throughout City's various business corridors to develop, enhance and expand business opportunities/economic opportunity zones for vacant properties, including downtown vacant storefronts.**





In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to Economic/Downtown Redevelopment SC. So voted. C. Elliott noted federal program to promote development and that sites should be identified.

### 13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, M. Leahy noted White Ribbon Day as well as the visit by the Ambassador of Cambodia. M. Leahy provided Citation to Matt Nelson of LTC for his last meeting with the City.

### 14. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

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Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk