



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: November 1, 2022

Time: 6:30 PM

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

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 10 present, 1 absent (C. Jenness).

M. Chau presiding.

M. Chau requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Joseph P. Mahoney and recognized his children who were present in the Chamber. C. Mercier commented on the life of Mr. Mahoney.

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. Scott, seconded by C. Yem. So voted.

2.2. Presentation - CTI Youth Homelessness. (Amanda Sullivan)

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Leahy, seconded by C. Gitschier. So voted. Nick Degarmo (CTI-Youth Services Director) noted upcoming event. C. Leahy commented on the event.

3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes Of Economic/Downtown Development SC October 25th; City Council Regular Meeting October 25th, For Acceptance.



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

A) Motion Response - Electric Vehicles – C. Yem noted it was cost prohibitive but the Lowell Fire Department is being responsive to the green community commitment by the City. C. Yem noted the availability of grant assistance. Chief Charron (LFD) noted the department had a full time grant writer.

B) Motion Response - GLTHS Stipend with Attachment- None.

C) Motion Response - Monument Committee Senior Center – None.

D) Motion Response - Kkonde Bench – C. Mercier commented on the area the family chose, indicating it would be at Fr. Maguire Park. C. Rourke noted park was being upgraded and that bench could be part of that upgrade.

Motion to take Item #9.5 out of order by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Yem. So voted.

E) Motion Response - VFW and Rourke Bridge – C. Rourke described what was present in the area as work continues. C. Gitschier questioned latest plans for the new construction. Manager Golden, Jr. noted it was Option 3 that was chosen and that plans are available on-line. Elizabeth Oltman (Transportation Engineer) commented on current plan and what would be happening in the area. C. Gitschier noted there may be a need for temporary solution for safety reasons.

F) Motion Response - Pawtucket St RRFB- M. Chau noted increase safety in the area.

G) Motion Response - Route 110 and 1st Street – C. Robinson commented it was a State road but the responses regarding traffic should put forth solutions regardless of regulations that have been in place.

H) Motion Response - 19 Hurd Street – None.

I) Motion Response - Dutton and Market Street with Attachment – C. Yem commented on the area and current bus stop there. Ms. Oltman noted there would be an upgrade to the bus stop but it will remain in the same place. C. Leahy commented on area and the current crossing.



4.2. Informational Reports

Informational Report - Lowell Catholic – None.

5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

5.1. Vote - Amend TIF Agreement - 330 Jackson Street, LLC.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Scott, seconded by C. Robinson. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Jenness). So voted. Registered speaker, Shaw Rosen (Lupoli Co.) (Zoom) addressed the Council. C. Gitschier questioned changes made from prior vote. Manager Golden, Jr. noted only changes to vote were the dates. Yovani Baez-Rose (DPD) noted the dates had been changed to indicate changed construction schedule by the LLC. C. Gitschier questioned if TIF would be available to another owner if property were transferred. Ms. Baez-Rose noted that would require another vote by the Council.

5.2. Vote - Transfer \$315,000 DPW.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Yem. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Jenness). So voted. C. Gitschier questioned increase in the insurance bill. Conor Baldwin (CFO) outlined the vote and noted the report included all insurances. C. Gitschier questioned budget process regarding this expenditure and noted that it made no sense due to how the account was trending. C. Robinson noted effect of premium due to the flooding at Lowell High School. Mr. Baldwin noted claims will have an effect on premiums for some time. C. Nuon commented on the library claim as well. Mr. Baldwin indicated that there is a \$500,000 dollar deductible with the policy and that could be adjusted upward to lessen premium. C. Scott noted that preventative maintenance would reduce claims and questioned if payment goes toward Net School Spending. Mr. Baldwin noted that such payments go towards Net School Spending. C. Mercier noted that new LHS gym may have issue with leaking windows. Manager Golden, Jr. noted that there some issues early buy they have been resolved.

6. ORDERS FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Order - 60 Day Trial.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Mercier. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Jenness). So voted. C. Leahy noted neighborhood should be involved in parking decision. Ms. Baez-Rose noted that neighborhoods are surveyed before action taken. C. Leahy questioned status of changing kiosks in the City. Manager Golden, Jr. commented on the kiosks plan and garage maintenance.



7. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

7.1. Economic/Downtown Development SC October 25, 2022.

In City Council, C. Nuon provided report outlining attendance and discussion of implementation of 15 minute parking in downtown, as well as the use of new kiosks and what they are capable of doing. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Scott, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted.

7.2. Housing SC November 1, 2022.

In City Council, C. Yem requested matter be put on the November 8, 2022 Council agenda.

7.3. Wire Inspector Reports:

- 1) National Grid/Verizon NE - Request Installation Of (1) JO Pole On 135-155 Chelmsford Street; And**
- 2) National Grid - Request Installation Of Underground Electric Conduit At 135-155 Chelmsford Street.**

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

8. PETITIONS

8.1. TC Systems Inc. (AT&T) (Giomare Group) - Request Installation Of 2 Inch Conduit And Pull Box At Riverside Street And University Avenue.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on November 15, 2022 at 7 PM by C. Yem, seconded by C. Gitschier. So voted.

9. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

9.1. C. Gitschier - Req. City Mgr. Update The City Council On The Trial For Three Way Stop Signs At The Intersection Of Stedman Street And Westford Street.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted.

9.2. C. Gitschier - Req. City Mgr. Give The City Council An Update On The Fire Department Overtime.

In City Council, seconded by C. Drinkwater, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Gitschier noted the need for a deeper dive in this review so report should include how overtime is divided among rank. C. Robinson noted lack of staff in the department. Manager Golden, Jr. noted department was below fully staffed. C. Mercier noted the number on staff and indicated safety for public and employees should be first priority. C. Rourke requested breakdown of the overtime. C. Gitschier noted it was not about saving money but more so better management and that other communities should be compared.



9.3. C. Gitschier - Req. City Auditor Provide City Council With A Monthly MUNIS Report Of All Accounts.

In City Council, seconded by C. Scott, referred to City Auditor. So voted.

9.4. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Look Into Feasibility Of Banning Parking On One Side Of Street Near 30 Shedd Street Due To Blocking Of Trash Pickup And Emergency Services.

In City Council, seconded by C. Yem, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson noted long term issues and that Lowell Fire Department has gone door to door to get vehicles moved.

9.5. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Explore The Feasibility Of Offering Discounted Residential Property Tax Rates To Landlords Willing To Offer Discounted Rental Prices To Incentivize Affordable Housing Costs.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Karen Frederick, addressed the Council. C. Robinson noted this was a good start to controlling rent pricing in the City. C. Yem noted hardships of landlords as well and that their interest should not be ignored. C. Gitschier questioned funding for such a program as it will decrease tax revenue for the City. C. Nuon noted partnerships, like CTI, and commented that housing is a crisis that must be addressed. C. Mercier noted there needs to be assistance for the working poor who cannot afford housing. C. Drinkwater noted the need to get conversation going and that any program should assist the people who are in most need. C. Drinkwater noted the need to engage landlords as well. C. Robinson noted there are various options for tax adjustments.

9.6. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Provide Detailed Plan Of Action To Address Leaf Removal Efforts In Public Greenspace.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Gitschier requested memorials be cleaned for Veterans Day.

9.7. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Provide Schedule Of Upcoming Community Information Sessions Regarding Accessing ARPA Funding.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson noted there are a lot of questions remaining.

9.8. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Put Together A Public Demonstration On Permitting Process SOP Involving CASE, DPW, LFD, LPD And All Other Relevant Departments Including Highlighting Costs Associated With Event Planning To Be Recorded And Placed On City's Website (Video Tutorial).



In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson noted the number of community events that organizers need to know requirements.

9.9. C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Have Parking Department Provide A Report On How Many Incidences Of Patrons Being Stuck In Parking Garages In Past Year And What Corrective Measures Have Been Taken.

In City Council, seconded by C. Leahy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson commented on number of technical malfunctions in the garages.

9.10. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Work With State Delegation To Discuss The Effect Electric Rate Increases Will Have On The Community And Advocate To The Department Of Public Utilities Regarding Same; Further, Request City Mgr. Ensure Fuel Assistance Options Are Listed On The City's Website.

In City Council, seconded by C. Drinkwater, referred to City Manager. So voted.

9.11. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Have Appropriate Department Make Kinsman Street A One-Way.

In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Mesada Jones (Zoom), addressed the Council. C. Nuon commented on the area and the resident concerns. C. Scott commented on the area. Ms. Oltman noted there should be input from neighborhood. C. Mercier commented on process to making a street a one-way.

Motion by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Mercier to refer Items #9.12 to #9.17, inclusive, per C. Jenness request, to Council Meeting of November 8, 2022. So voted.

9.12. C. Jenness/C. Noun - Req. City Mgr. Provide An Update On The Status Of The Hunger/Homeless Commission And Plans To Re-Start The Efforts Of That Commission.

In City Council, referred to City Council meeting on November 8, 2022.

9.13. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Provide A Report On The Current HR Policies Around Employee Demographic Data Collection As Well As Any Related State Requirements.

In City Council, referred to City Council Meeting November 8, 2022.

9.14. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Include Board And Commission Vacancies In The Routine Job Alert Updates That Get Sent Out Via Email And Social Media.

In City Council, referred to City Council Meeting November 8, 2022.



9.15. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Explore Creating An Office Of Housing Stability To Help Address The Needs Of Housing Insecure Families And Individuals In Our City.

In City Council, referred to City Council Meeting November 8, 2022.

9.16. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Provide An Update On The Chief DEI Position.

In City Council, referred to City Council Meeting November 8, 2022.

9.17. C. Jenness - Req. City Clerk (And/Or City Solicitor) Provide A Report On What Options May Be Available To Increase The Requirements To Have A Petition To Address The Council, I.E. Minimum Number Of Signatories On A Petition Or Other Options.

In City Council, referred to City Council Meeting November 8, 2022.

9.18. M. Chau - Req. City Mgr. Have Transportation Engineer Investigate The Installation Of A Crosswalk On Lawrence Street Between Rogers Street And Swift Street.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted.

10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Yem wished C. Rourke a happy birthday and presented card from Council. C. Gitschier noted available transportation for Election Day. C. Mercier recognized Salvation Army Event.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk