



# Lowell City Council

## *Regular Meeting Minutes*

Michael Q. Geary  
City Clerk

**Date:** March 24, 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. Meeting was conducted via teleconference with audio stream by LTC and recorded due to Covid-19 pandemic.

M. Leahy requested recognition of the passing of Jack Sheehan, Jr. and John Noreau.

### 2. CITY CLERK

#### 2.1. Minutes of Public Safety SC March 10th; City Council Meeting March 10th, for acceptance.

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

#### 2.2. Vote-Cancel Council Meeting 4.21.20.

In City Council, vote was removed from the agenda per M. Leahy as the matter would be mute as no meeting would be scheduled.

### 3. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

#### 3.1. Motion Responses.

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

**A) Motion Response – Coronavirus** – Manager Donoghue updated the response of the City regarding the virus commenting on aid from the State and the procedures of the City that have been put in place. Manager Donoghue noted the importance to protect the citizens and the efforts of all towards the result. Manager Donoghue noted several



methods of communication being used to provide information to the public, including the use of the Code Rep App. Manager Donoghue noted the many partners with the City, both public and private, who have assisted with all of the efforts. Registered speaker, Dr. Adam Westin (LGH), addressed the body commenting on the response of the hospital in its preparedness indicating that their partnership with Tufts has been a great benefit with the response to the virus. Dr. Westin commented on the virus itself and how it is progressing. Registered Speaker, JoAnn Keegan (Director of Health), addressed the body commenting the Mass DPH involvement with the City in terms of information and supplies. Ms. Keegan noted that all local health departments are united in the response efforts and commented on the number of nurses available in the City. C. Chau commented on the need for an update and questioned the facilities and supplies available at LGH. Dr. Westin commented on space and supplies available at the facility as well as the staffing in place. C. Conway commented on the response to his motion regarding the virus and noted that it was thorough and further noted the assistance of our partners throughout the City. C. Drinkwater noted the efforts of the City and stated that things are being done the best they can with what is available; further questioned the amount of ventilators that are available. Dr. Westin noted the number that would be available and how that could be increased. C. Elliott commented on the work in the City and noted the increase number of test being administered. Dr. Westin outlined the testing procedures at LGH. Ms. Keegan noted that do not need a primary care physician to obtain a test. C. Mercier commented on the use of City and school nurses. Manager Donoghue noted that school nurses can be redirected to assist in other areas per state of emergency. C. Nuon lauded the efforts of whole team including first responders and health department. Ms. Keegan noted that the State would be providing additional test units. C. Rourke questioned if there could be a City State of Emergency. Manger Donoghue noted that because there is a federal and state emergency that it would not be needed but in future it may be good to put in ordinance governing that. C. Samaras thanked all for their efforts and questioned the critical need for ventilators. C. Samaras questioned the use of UML space in this case. Dr. Westin noted that was not part of procedure at this point. Manager Donoghue thanked the speakers for their input.

**B) Motion Response - Cambodia Town – None.**

**C) Motion Response - SE Asian Festival – None.**

**D) Motion Response - Francis Gate and Hadley House – None.**

**E) Motion Response - Level 3 Sex Offenders – None.**



### **3.2. Petition Responses**

**F) Petition Response - Waite St. – None.**

**G) Petition Response - HC Spot Common Ave. – None.**

### **3.3. Communication - Accept Resignation of David Ellingson -Lowell Commission on Disability.**

In City Council, **Motion** “To accept and place on file” by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Conway. So voted. C. Mercier questioned if Jeff Wilson resigned from the commission.

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

### **4.1. Vote-Accept and Expend Urban Grant from Exec Office of Housing and Economic Dev.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Samaras. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. Manager Donoghue noted it was a DPD grant that will assist with interaction with Transitional Living Center.

### **4.2. Vote-Auth CM Ex Project Funding Agreement-MSBA.**

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

### **4.3. Vote-Auth CM Ex Tax Increment Financing Agreement-Legacy Hotel LLC.**

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Drinkwater. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. Manager Donoghue outlined the TIF and the project that would create jobs and enhance downtown. C. Elliott commented on the project and supported the investment in the downtown. C. Nuon noted it was a good area for a hotel and it would enhance economic development. C. Mercier noted it was an exciting project being done by a great family. Manager Donoghue provided time line for the project.

### **4.4. Vote-License Agreement-Jackson St-291.**

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 9 yeas. So voted. Registered speaker, Matthew Curtin (WinnCompanies), addressed the Council. C. Rourke noted Parcel 5 was currently being used for parking and questioned where



parking was going to be. Manager Donoghue noted mitigation plan for residents. C. Rourke questioned if Parcel 5 was sold. Manager Donoghue noted it was a license agreement that the City could terminate. C. Rourke requested parking report and plan for that area. C. Mercier identified the parcel. Manger Donoghue noted it was not part of the UML spaces. C. Elliott questioned Parcel 5 ability to be marketed with this vote. Manager Donoghue noted the flexibility of the agreement.

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

### **5.1. Order-60 day trial – various.**

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.

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

### **6.1. Wire Insp. - National Grid - Request installation of 50 feet of underground electric conduit at Bridge and French Streets.**

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

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

In City Council, **Motion** to adopt and accept accompanying order by C. Nuon, 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. Samaras, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

### **7.2. Misc. - Rene/Maria Carrasquillo request updating crosswalk at intersection of Keene and Gorham Streets.**

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



**7.3. Misc. - Sideth Kuch (for the benefit of Sambo Mak and Pharindy Lao) request installation of handicap parking sign 682 Broadway Street.**

In City Council, **Motion** to refer to Transportation Engineer for report and recommendation by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Conway. So voted. C. Mercier commented on legality of request as it is for two spaces.

**7.4. Misc. - Fengboa Xu (for the benefit of Jennifer Mallias) request installation of handicap parking sign at 740 Lawrence Street.**

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

**8. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS**

**8.1. C. Nuon - Req. City Council cease meeting in person for meetings and find an on-line or telephonic method to convene until the Caronavirus threat has ended.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier. C. Nuon noted the motion is mute as arrangements have been made.

**8.2. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. appoint a coordinator of services to work with non-profits and volunteer organizations who are assisting residents with needs resulting from current health crisis; coordinator would direct residents to group best suited for aid.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on the need to coordinate all groups in and outside City Hall; indicating that there would not have to be a position created for that purpose. M. Leahy recognized the many volunteers distributing food throughout the City. C. Conway noted that coordination of services would mean more effective services. Manager Donoghue noted that it may be possible to shift some responsibilities in departments. C. Samaras noted the need for assistance as well as non-profit support.

**8.3. C. Samaras - Req. City Council consider going to a Summer schedule for remaining Spring term.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Rourke, Summer schedule to begin immediately adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Samaras noted the reason for request would be to ensure best possible use of time. C. Chua indicated at first that the need is there to inform public so it would be best if schedule remained same; after further discussion he indicated that he would support motion. C. Drinkwater indicated that the



meetings were an important aspect of informing the public. C. Conway noted that the office of the Manager primary focus should be on combatting the virus and not motion responses at this point. C. Rourke noted that use of time is critical at this juncture and that any sensitive matter can always be brought before Council as a special meeting. Manager Donoghue noted that Council Rules indicate that meetings are to be held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. C. Nuon noted that emergency meetings could be called if needed. C. Elliott noted the efforts of the Manager's office should be focused on Covid-19.

**8.4. C. Drinkwater - Req. City Council adopt a resolution in support of HD.4935, "An Act Providing for a Moratorium on Evictions and Foreclosures during the COVID-19 Emergency".**

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager/Law Department. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. C. Drinkwater noted this was a public health crisis with economic circumstances and this act as well as additional State act would assist homeowners.

**8.5. C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. update the uniform Catastrophic Sick Bank Policy to make employees eligible for up to 30 days of leave due to COVID-19 infection, quarantine or isolation as directed by a physician or authorized public health authority.**

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Drinkwater noted the need to protect the workforce of the City. C. Mercier commented on sick bank pool. C. Conway noted that there will be need for resources.

**9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In City Council, C. Rourke noted that 2020 Census is in progress and questioned if procedures are changing.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

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Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk