



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: May 10, 2022

Time: 6:30 PM

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

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 10 present, 1 absent (C. Scott). C. Yem via Zoom.

M. Chau presiding.

C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Stanley Brand.

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. Mercier, seconded by C. Leahy. So voted.

Motion to suspend rules to recognize visiting group to City by C. Robinson, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted. M. Chau recognized visiting monks from New York, Maine and Rhode Island who each addressed the Council and offered blessing for the City.

2.2. Recognition - Southeast Asian WaterFestival 2022.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Rourke. So voted. M. Chau recognized Van Pech who represented the event organizer and noted the support of the City for the past 25 years supporting the event. C. Nuon noted the success of the event over the past 25 years. C. Robinson commented on the success of the event and that area should be cleaned properly beforehand.



2.3. Citations:

Eric Slagle (Inspectional Services).

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Gitschier. So voted. M. Chau presented citation to Mr. Slagle who addressed the body. C. Jenness noted the accomplishments of the department. C. Nuon commented on the success and knowledge within the department. C. Rourke commented on the effort made and that there was a good person in that position. C. Mercier noted Mr. Slagle was always available to assist.

Robert McMahon.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Gitschier. So voted. M. Chau presented citation to Mr. McMahon who addressed the Council. C. Gitschier commented on the public service Mr. McMahon provided throughout his career. C. Mercier noted it was an honor to recognize Mr. McMahon as well as his terrific family he has raised. C. Rourke commented on the honor to recognize Mr. McMahon.

Robert Boehm.

In City Council, M. Chau withdrew citation for following week.

3. CITY CLERK

3.1. Minutes Of Finance SC Joint With Lowell School Committee Finance SC May 3rd; City Council Regular Meeting May 3rd, For Acceptance.

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

4. GENERAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

4.1. Order - Abandon Portion Second Street.

In City Council, Given 2nd Reading, hearing held. No Remonstrants. Speaking in favor was petitioner, John LeMay. **Motion** to refer to Clerk's Office for 7 days by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

Motion to bundle Items #5.1 to Item #5.4, inclusive, by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

5. UTILITY PUBLIC HEARING

5.1. National Grid - Request Installation Of (1) JO Pole (17-50) On Market Street.

In City Council, Given second reading, hearing held, no remonstrants. Paulo Sather (National Grid) via Zoom spoke in favor of the petition. **Motion** to refer to Wire



Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

5.2. National Grid - Request Installation Of 4 New 4 Inch Underground Electric Conduit To Property At 555 Middlesex Street.

In City Council, Given second reading, hearing held, no remonstrants. Paulo Sather (National Grid) via Zoom spoke in favor of the petition. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

5.3. National Grid - Request Installation Of 50 Feet Of Underground Electric Conduit From Market Street To Service Property At 630 And 650 Merrimack Street.

In City Council, Given second reading, hearing held, no remonstrants. Paulo Sather (National Grid) via Zoom spoke in favor of the petition. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

5.4. National Grid - Request Installation Of Manhole, Hand Holes And (2) Underground Conduits On French And Kirk Street To Upgrade Lowell High School East Electric Service.

In City Council, Given second reading, hearing held, no remonstrants. Paulo Sather (National Grid) via Zoom spoke in favor of the petition. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Robinson. So voted.

Motion to take Item #12.1 out of order by C. Rourke, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

6. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

6.1. Motion Responses.

Motion to suspend rules to introduced new Interim DPW Commissioner by C. Gitschier, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted. Manager Golden, Jr. introduced Mr. Mark Byrne as the interim commissioner.

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

A) Motion Response - Animal Control - C. Robinson commented on the report noting all rules and regulations should be pushed out in different languages. Interim Supt. Golner (LPD) noted current program designed for that purpose. C. Gitschier commented on the report and noted that some information was not accurate. C. Gitschier questioned status of rabies clinic and how fees are paid to the kennel and requested copy of the contract. Supt. Golner noted updated information would be



provided. C. Mercier questioned the number of officers currently employed. Supt. Golner noted there were two animal control officers and one animal compliance officer. C. Mercier questioned process of mandatory reporting. Darlene Wood (Animal Compliance Officer) noted such reports concern dangerous dog hearings.

B) Motion Response - New Hires and W4 Forms – C. Gitschier noted the need to have simple instructions for the new forms supplied to employees. Mary Callery (HR) noted the existence of a simple fact sheet for new employees.

C) Motion Response - Line Striping – C. Gitschier requested time frame for completing the striping as a safety need exists. Christine McCall (DPD) commented on the procurement process and the time need to enter into contract with the vendor. Manager Golden, Jr. noted the focus on a speedy time line. Ms. McCall noted work that would be done in the interim. C. Leahy noted the need for added resources to complete this job quickly. C. Mercier noted the need for resources and staff to complete job quickly. Manager Golden, Jr. noted the current salary study would assist with hiring process.

D) Motion Response - Monument Maintenance – C. Robinson noted that residents should be pleased with work being done.

E) Motion Response - 4 Way Stop Sign High and East Merrimack – M. Chau noted the report. C. Leahy suggested that when work is done it should be made highly visible as it remains a dangerous intersection.

F) Motion Response - Stop Sign Christian and Methuen – C. Robinson recognized the quick response.

G) Motion Response - Stop Sign Wright and Columbia – C. Nuon recognized the quick response.

H) Motion Response - School Street Exit Sign – C. Nuon noted that sign is not present. Manager Golden, Jr. noted sign was removed as City did not place it there.

I) Motion Response - Transportation Engineer – C. Nuon noted that process has been ongoing. C. Gitschier noted that an apprentice program with UML would be beneficial. Manager Golden, Jr. noted there are current discussion with that approach and could be used to fill many summer positions as well. C. Rourke questioned the number of applicants for the position. Ms. McCall noted that there were none who met the base qualifications. C. Robinson noted upcoming salary study would assist in placing employees. Manager Golden, Jr. noted it is being done during the course of the summer.

J) Motion Response - Permitting and Licensing Efficiency – C. Yem commented on the report and future steps.

K) Motion Response - Pavement Prevention Treatment – C. Gitschier noted that it



was difficult to tell which kind of sealing was being done, crack or micro. C. Gitschier noted prevention process is best strategy regarding pot hole repair and least costly. Manager Golden, Jr. noted that topic would be discussed following week when he speaks with City Engineer.

L) Motion Response - Increased Trash Collection at City Parks and Fields – C. Drinkwater noted improvement with added barrels and collections. Manager Golden, Jr. noted there will be an increase in pick-up times. C. Robinson noted that there are volunteers willing to help. Mr. Byrne noted upcoming meeting with the leagues. C. Leahy suggested barrels should be cleaned periodically. C. Gitschier noted the need for workers to be active when they see issue before them.

M) Motion Response - Volunteer at Firehouses – C. Leahy noted low maintenance of buildings could be done by volunteers. Solicitor O'Connor noted that volunteer work would not require presence of City employee on site. C. Robinson noted unions would be cooperative with these requests. Manager Golden, Jr. noted those conversations with unions.

Motion to bundle Items #6.2 and #6.3 by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

6.2. Communication - Resignation Of Russell Pandres From Planning Board.

In City Council, **Motion** "To accept and place on file" by C. Jenness, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted. C. Nuon requested letters thanks be sent to these individuals.

6.3. Communication - Resignation Of Zoe Dzineku From Election Commission.

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

6.4. Communication - City Manager Request Out Of State Travel (1) LPD; (1) HHS.

In City Council, Read. **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Rourke. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Scott). So voted.

7. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

7.1. Vote - Transfer \$150,000 – Fire.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Jenness, seconded by C. Nuon. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Scott). So voted.

8. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

8.1. Ordinance - Amend Fee Schedule - Custodial Fee.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on May 24, 2022 at 7 PM by C. Yem, seconded by C. Jenness. So voted.



8.2. Ordinance - Create Position And Salary For Cadet – LPD.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading, **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on May 24, 2022 at 7 PM by C. Drinkwater, seconded by C. Jenness. So voted.

9. RESOLUTIONS

9.1. Resolution - Cambodian Genocide Remembrance Day.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections. **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Yem. Adopted per Roll Call vote 10 yeas, 1 absent (C. Scott). So voted.

10. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

10.1. Subcommittee Reports:

1) Finance SC Joint with School Committee Finance SC May 3, 2022.

In City Council, C. Scott not present at meeting item withdrawn from agenda.

2) Transportation SC May 10, 2022.

In City Council C. Rourke noted the attendance and discussion regarding electric vehicle use in the City. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Jenness, seconded by C. Mercier. So voted.

11. PETITIONS

11.1. Claims - (2) Property Damage.

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

11.2. Misc. - Nicole Gaudett Request Permission To Discuss Animal Control Stray Cat Procedures.

In City Council, M. Chau noted petition was withdrawn by the petitioner.

12. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

12.1. C. Rourke - Req. City Mgr. Work With The Residents Of The Fowler Road, Boulevard Street And Katherine Drive Neighborhoods To Look At Options To Redesign The Intersection Of Varnum Avenue To Improve Safety.

In City Council, seconded by C. Jenness, referred to City Manager. So voted. Registered speaker, Paul Belley, addressed the Council as well as submitted a signed petition by residents. C. Rourke commented on the issue in the area and that the City should make an onsite visit to get clear picture.



12.2. C. Gitschier/C. Scott - Req. City Mgr. Have The Proper Department Work On Providing Services To The Homeless On Plain Street At Target Plaza And Providing A Timeframe For Removal Of The Tents.

In City Council, seconded by C. Drinkwater, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Gitschier noted the need to remove the camp as they are endangering a protected area along rivers and streams and that the governmental bodies should not ignore that fact. C. Robinson noted the need to offer services but there should be removing the camp as part of any program. C. Mercier noted the need for services and more importantly housing. C. Rourke noted prior clean-up which should be done again. Manager Golden, Jr. noted ongoing discussions with stakeholders some of which are private land owners. C. Drinkwater noted service element is important but there is a desperate need for housing. C. Gitschier noted the urgency of the situation and action needs to be taken quickly.

12.3. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Restart Discussion With The DPD About The Feasibility Of Forming A Downtown Business Improvement District Wherein Members Contribute To A Fund That In Turn Benefits The District; Similar To The Community Preservation Act.

In City Council, seconded by C. Jenness, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented on the gathering of funds and the use of those funds for many purposes. C. Leahy noted prior attempts to establish this and that it should move forward.

12.4. C. Nuon - Req. City Mgr. Work With Appropriate Department To Improve Appearance Of Downtown Ahead Of The Lowell Folk Festival By Cleaning The Streets And Repainting Light Poles And Other Similar Structures.

In City Council, seconded by C. Leahy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Nuon commented that removal graffiti should be done as well. C. Gitschier noted all departments should be proactive before events in the City. Manager Golden, Jr. noted the activity currently happening with clean-ups.

12.5. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Provide Updated Status And Timeline For The Central Street Bridge Replacement Project.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Jenness commented on last update and the need for new information.

12.6. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Install Public Trash Barrels In The Hamilton Canal District, Specifically At The Intersection Of F & G Streets.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Jenness noted area is more populated therefor more barrels needed.



12.7. C. Jenness - Req. City Mgr. Extend An Invitation For A Representative From Clifton Larson Allen To Attend The Personnel SC Discussion Regarding Next Steps On The DEI Officer Position And Overall HR Roadmap Implementation.

In City Council, seconded by C. Robinson, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Jenness suggested person be available for subcommittee meeting. Manager Golden, Jr. noted their attempt with short notice and that would be difficult. C. Jenness suggested subcommittee meeting be moved. C. Gitschier noted he wished to move forward to begin discussion and that consultant can be part of another meeting if needed. C. Robinson commented that subcommittee should meet to begin discussion. C. Rourke noted subcommittee should not be moved and that no consultant should get paid for that service if needed.

12.8. C. Jenness/C. Robinson - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Do A Thorough Cleanup In Kerouac Park Prior To The Lowell Pride Event On June 4th & 5th.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson questioned if National Parks could assist.

12.9. C. Robinson/C. Drinkwater - Req. City Mgr. Have Proper Department Look Into Banning Parking On One Side Of Street From Area Of 37 June Street Down To End Of Block.

In City Council, no second needed, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Robinson noted the concerns of the residents.

13. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Jenness noted fundraiser for Lowell Pride Committee. C. Robinson noted tree planting event by Lowell Parks & Conservation. Clerk Geary noted distribution of 2022 City Council summer meeting calendar.

14. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk