



Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: September 11, 2018

Time: 6:30 PM

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

1. ROLL CALL

Roll Call showed 9 present.

M. Samaras presiding.

C. Mercier requested moment of silence in darkened chamber for Kathleen M. Roberge; John “Jack” Brady; and the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attack of 2001.

Motion to suspend rules to allow presentation for the “Welcoming Week Lowell” by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted. Gordon Helm commented on the event.

2. CITY CLERK

2.1. Minutes of Zoning SC August 28th; City Council Meeting August 28th, for acceptance.

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

3. AUDITOR BUSINESS

3.1. Communication - FY18 YTD Budget Report (June 30, 2018).

In City Council, **Motion** “To refer to Finance SC along with Item #4.2E (Informational – FY18 Year End) and Item #4.2F (Informational – OPEB Policy)” by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Kennedy. So voted. C. Kennedy questioned surplus noted in report for the Lowell Schools. Bryan Perry (Auditor) commented on the line item. C. Conway questioned budget report regarding public schools. Mr. Perry noted the differences between the two reports. C. Elliott noted there would be many questions regarding reports during subcommittee meeting.



4. COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITY MANAGER

4.1. Motion Responses.

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

A) Motion Response - Lord Overpass – C. Mercier commented on the response and the problems the new plan would impose and that the revisions were not meant to alleviate traffic in that area and the final result would not be worth the investment. Natasha Vance (Traffic Engineer) made the presentation regarding the revised overpass entitled “Lord Overpass 100% Design” to the body. The presentation commented on the needs that drove the project; safety history; project goals; public participation; final concept; traffic management during five construction phases; and communication to public. C. Mercier questioned some design features. C. Milinazzo noted the need to fully inform public on project and noted the importance for the infrastructure redesign in terms of the Hamilton Canal developments. C. Elliott questioned the light timing and traffic flow for the area. Ms. Vance noted the complex synchronization of the traffic light design. C. Cirillo noted project fit into the Complete Streets policy of the City. C. Kennedy questioned the amount of times the matter was voted on by the Council and noted his concern with access from the Highlands neighborhood to the downtown. C. Kennedy noted difficult to get assurances regarding amount of traffic. Ms. Vance commented on the expertise of the consultants on the project. C. Leahy commented that there should still be efforts to open up the Western Avenue to the downtown. Manager Donoghue commented on the project regarding the history, process and communication to the public. C. Conway noted many traffic concerns and the focus should be on improving traffic throughout the City.

B) Motion Response - Catch Basin Cleanouts – C. Nuon noted the issue has been resolved.

C) Motion Response - Paving Pemberton St. – C. Elliott commented on the report.

D) Motion Response - Solar Trees in the City – C. Elliott noted the report and that there still should be efforts to fund project as it would benefit the City. Manager Donoghue noted the continued effort.

4.2. Informational Reports

E) Informational - FY18 Year End – Referred to Finance SC by prior motion. Manager Donoghue noted the following policies implemented by administration to ease budget constraints; vacancy review committee, approval of expenses over \$1,000 and monitored overtime. C. Elliott noted that the policy was wise has there is stress on the



current budget and questioned funding stabilization fund. Conor Baldwin (CFO) noted the increased effort for grant re-imbusement to ease some budget constraints. C. Elliott commented on money going to public schools. Mr. Perry outlined final budget numbers for the department.

F) Informational - OPEB Policy - Referred to Finance SC by prior motion. Manager Donoghue noted funding based on percentage available from free cash at end of fiscal year.

G) Informational - Ongoing Recycling Efforts – Motion to refer matter to Environmental & Flood Issues SC by C. Leahy, seconded by C. Kennedy. So voted. Manager Donoghue noted report indicating discounts for seniors and fines. Manager Donoghue commented on bad recycling efforts effect on future trash contracts. Manager Donoghue noted possible ordinance change which should be discussed at subcommittee meeting.

4.3. Communication - City Manager request Out of State Travel (3) LPD; (1) DPW; (1) Library.

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

5. VOTES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

5.1. Vote-Accept donation of \$7,500 from Digital Federal Credit Union to Police Dept.

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

5.2. Vote-Accept donation of a piano from Paul Belley to the Cultural Affairs and Special Events Office.

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

5.3. Vote-apply.accept.expend \$64,000 MassDEP SMRP Grant to City of Lowell Recycling Program.

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



5.4. Vote-apply.accept.expend \$917,007 Assistance to Firefighters Grant.

In City Council, Read twice, full reading waived with no objections, **Motion** to adopt by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Leahy. Adopted per Roll Call vote 9 yeas. So voted. Registered speaker, Brian Poitras, and Fire Chief Winward (LFD) addressed the Council. C. Elliott noted the importance of the grant and further noted that futures grants could go to assisting with funding for engines. C. Leahy questioned work to be done at the Ferry Road fire station.

6. ORDINANCES FROM THE CITY MANAGER

6.1. Ordinance-Amend Ch. 266 Vehicles and Traffic.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on September 25, 2018 at 7 PM by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Nuon. So voted.

7. REPORTS (SUB/COMMITTEE, IF ANY)

7.1. Public Safety SC September 11, 2018.

In City Council, C. Nuon provided the report of the Public Safety SC noting attendance and discussion regarding crime prevention; emergency management; and canvassing and soliciting in the City. **Motion** to accept the report as a report of progress by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Kennedy. So voted.

7.2. Wire Insp. - Verizon NE- Request permission to install underground conduit and hand-hole for access on Pawtucket Street over the Northern Canal Bridge.

In City Council, **Motion** to accept and adopt the accompanying order by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

7.3. Wire Insp. - Verizon NE- Request permission to install 184 feet of underground conduit at 165 Thorndike Street.

In City Council, **Motion** to accept and adopt the accompanying order by C. Kennedy, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

8. PETITIONS

8.1. Claims - (2) Property Damage.

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



8.2. National Grid/Verizon NE - Req. permission to install new pole located at 23 Holden Street.

In City Council, **Motion** to suspend rules to open as a public hearing by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted. Given 2nd Reading. Hearing held. Speaking in favor was Mark Boucher (National Grid). No remonstrants. **Motion** to refer to Wire Inspector for report and recommendation by C. Mercier, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

8.3. Siena Engineering Group, Inc. on behalf TC Systems, Inc. (AT&T) request installation of telecommunications conduit in vicinity of 100 Chelmsford Street.

In City Council, Given 1st Reading. **Motion** to refer to Public Hearing on September 25, 2018 at 7 PM by C. Nuon, seconded by C. Cirillo. So voted.

9. CITY COUNCIL - MOTIONS

9.1. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. have proper department explore feasibility of making Suttle Street/Avenue one-way at the discretion of the neighborhood.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted request of neighborhood and noted that they should work with Traffic Engineer to determine direction.

9.2. C. Mercier - Req. City Mgr. have proper department install (2) 15 minute parking signs in front of the Olympia Restaurant at 453 Market Street.

In City Council, seconded by C. Cirillo, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Mercier noted the need and the request.

9.3. C. Cirillo - Req. City Mgr. contact the MBTA regarding a timeline of when they will be clearing the debris that was left by the homeless camp located near the railroad tracks, behind 50 Waugh St.

In City Council, seconded by C. Mercier, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Cirillo noted it was an ongoing issue and that perhaps a schedule set out by the MBTA would ease neighbors' concerns. C. Kennedy noted the challenges with the railroad regarding clean-up and that there are other locations. C. Mercier noted that condition interferes with the enjoyment of neighbors and that the CO-OP group has assisted with clean-ups. C. Elliott commented on the frustration in their attempts to get property clean.

9.4. C. Cirillo - Req. City Mgr. have the proper department provide the City Council with an update as to the issuance of the paperwork from FEMA that the City will



provide to the residents who will no longer be in the flood zone, so that they may send the paperwork to their insurance companies.

In City Council, seconded by C. Elliott, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Cirillo requested follow-up.

9.5. C. Cirillo - Req. City Council become a partner City with the City of Yorkville Illinois and 187 other Cities in their proclamation project in support of National Suicide Awareness, in which a member of the Lowell City Council will read the Proclamation of Prevention and Awareness during one of the City Council Meetings in the Month of September.

In City Council, seconded by C. Kennedy, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Cirillo noted contact with other communities and provided examples of proclamation for the members.

9.6. C. Kennedy - Req. City Mgr. invite representatives of the Lowell Spinners to an Economic Development SC to discuss possible infrastructure improvements and the prospect of the team's affiliation with the Boston Red Sox until the year 2022.

In City Council, seconded by C. Conway, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Kennedy noted the need for continues support especially now the Worcester will have an affiliate as well. C. Kennedy noted assistance with infrastructure and that City may benefit from that as well. M. Samaras noted the possibility of tying up with Worcester project.

9.7. C. Kennedy - Req. City Mgr. review trash contract and discounts for seniors relative to the size of their trash barrels.

In City Council, seconded by C. Cirillo, referred to City Manager. So voted. C. Kennedy noted discount should be based on being a senior and not limit the size of the barrel.

9.8. C. Elliott - Req. Finance SC meet with School Committee to discuss budget issues.

In City Council, seconded by C. Nuon, referred to Finance SC. So voted. C. Elliott noted the need for a discussion.



10. ANNOUNCEMENTS

In City Council, C. Mercier noted Easter Seal event.

Motion by C. Elliott, seconded by C. Milinazzo to suspend rules to discuss letter from Secretary of State received by Election Department regarding recent election. So voted. Manager Donoghue commented on the letter received and the response by the City indicating that all votes would be counted and that the Secretary of State's office will be assisting with recount process. Manager Donoghue indicated the procedures that were used by the City and the area of concerns outlined by the State. Solicitor O'Connor (Law Dept.) commented on the assistance with the recount and the process for same. C. Elliott noted the need to maintain integrity of the elections and commented on training available for poll workers. Eda Matchak (Elections) commented on the training element. C. Conway commented on the malfunction of the machines. Manager Donoghue noted the challenges with older equipment. C. Kennedy questioned which precincts were affected. Ms. Matchak noted maintenance contract regarding voting machine. C. Milinazzo noted response to letter of Secretary of State and questioned their reaction to the response. C. Milinazzo noted an inquiry regarding people inside of the polling place. Manager Donoghue noted that campaign poll watchers are allowed access to that area. C. Leahy and C. Mercier noted support of the Elections Department.

Manager Donoghue commented on new service which allows 911 calls to be directly responded to by the City.

11. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Michael Geary, City Clerk