

CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL MEETING
January 10, 2022
7:00 P.M.

1/10/2022 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hosmer called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Councilor Hamel lead the Salute to the Flag.

3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Cheryl Hebert, City Clerk

4. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote with the following Councilors in attendance: Bruce Cheney, Bob Soucy, Henry Lipman, Mark Haynes, Bob Hamel, and Tony Felch.

Mayor Hosmer noted all six Councilors were in attendance and quorum was established.

5. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Scott Myers, City Manager

Glenn Smith, Finance Director

Mayor Hosmer noted for the record that this is the last meeting of City Clerk Cheryl Hebert. He wished her well in her new adventure. He stated he is not happy about her leaving and how much of a pleasure it has been working with her over the past few years. He said that her office is run very well and the staff seems to always be happy. On behalf of the City of Laconia and Council, he thanked her for her services to the City. He presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

6. COUNCIL PROCLAMATION

7. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.A. Regular meeting minutes of December 27, 2021

Minutes of the meeting were distributed to the City Council on Tuesday, December 28, 2021. With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes will be accepted as distributed.

8. CONSENT & ACTION ITEMS

8.A. Acceptance of the Walmart Community Grant for the Fire Department

Councilor Cheney moved to accept the \$2,000 Walmart Community Grant for the purchase of specialized medical equipment, seconded by Councilor Felch; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

9. **CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

Karen Bassett, owner of Wayfarer - She presented an event that will be happening in May of 2022, New England Coffee Festival. She handed out a brochure. One is part of the record.

Mayor Hosmer is very excited about this event.

Councilor Felch thanked Karen and he is in full support.

Councilor Cheney is in full support as well.

Charlie St. Clair is in full support of the Coffee Festival as well. He also thanked the City Clerk for her work and stated he will miss her.

10. **INTERVIEWS**

11. **NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS**

11.A. **Wes Anderson - Requesting reappointment to the Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative**

Councilor Haynes moved to reappoint Wes Anderson to the Concord Regional Solid Waste/Resource Recovery Cooperative to a three-year term expiring at the end of December, 2024, seconded by Councilor Hamel; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

12. **COMMUNICATIONS**

13. **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

13.A. **Public hearing for Resolution 2022-01, relative to the NH State Library Services, American Rescue Plan Act sub grant**

Notice of this public hearing was made available in the December 29, 2021, edition of the Laconia Daily Sun, and posted at Laconia City Hall, SAU, Community Center, and the Laconia Public Library on December 28, 2021.

Mayor Hosmer opened the public hearing at 7:43 pm.

Hearing no comments from the public, Mayor Hosmer closed the public hearing at 7:44 pm.

14. **PRESENTATIONS**

15. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Hosmer spoke about his thoughts on the development happening in the downtown area and what the future is of the parking garage and the Main Street corridor. What the Mayor considers the Main Street corridor is the Main Street bridge, Beacon Streets East and West, New Salem Street at the railroad tracks, as well as the parking behind St. Joseph's Church. Mayor Hosmer is optimistic about the continued growth that is achievable. Mayor Hosmer spoke of a 2007 book titled US EPA Smart Growth Implementation Assistance for Laconia NH. It is a comprehensive analysis of the City of Laconia. It points out our great strengths, the future of the City, and our challenges. They identified some opportunities for growth, which included the Colonial Theatre, revitalization of Lakeport, and infrastructure of Weirs Beach. Over the past 14 years, these things have happened, almost like they predicted it. Some obstacles were pointed out, one being the parking garage. Mayor Hosmer would like the Council to consider taking a step back and asking

for assistance to take an outside look at where things could go. Does Laconia have adequate parking right now or do we not? This would also allow the community to have their voice heard and some skin in the game.

What Mayor Hosmer would like the Council to consider is to request the City Manager to put together a Request for Proposals to retain the services of a multi-disciplinary firm with demonstrated experience in preparing specific plans in downtown areas. Mayor Hosmer thinks we can enhance the downtown area all the while keeping the historic value. He thinks this could be done in parallel to the work that is already being done with the parking garage at least initially. Mayor Hosmer is hoping this is a guide for us to follow.

Councilor Soucy asked what kind of time frame?

Mayor Hosmer is thinking about six to eight months but he is not sure.

Councilor Soucy also mentioned a letter to the editor that Breanna Neal wrote, and asked if the Mayor has had any further conversations with the business owners in downtown.

Mayor Hosmer met with about 20 people a few weeks ago and they had questions and concerns about a number of different items. What he took away from that meeting is that they want to be heard.

Councilor Cheney thinks the Mayor's idea will help to include everyone that wants to have a voice.

Councilor Haynes is also in support of the Mayor's idea but he still wants the parking garage to be fixed.

Councilor Hamel does not mind this idea as long as it is in parallel with what is already happening. He doesn't want it to impede the progress that is already happening. Councilor Hamel would also like to see the parking lot behind the Church be utilized as well. He thinks letters need to be written to some of the businesses about utilizing that parking lot rather than the City Hall parking lot.

Councilor Felch is also in agreement with Councilor Hamel and the Mayor's idea, but would like to know how much it will cost and how long it would take.

Councilor Lipman thinks part of the feedback that we have received from the community is because we need to give a better explanation of what we have done and what can't be done. He thinks it is important to be more focused on this, rather than open-ended. Before a vote is taken, Councilor Lipman would like to know the time frame and costs.

Councilor Hamel noted that there was an informational meeting pertaining to the parking garage last month and only about 15 people showed up. Another meeting is scheduled for February. Councilor Hamel stated the public needs to also put in the effort to show up to these meetings.

Councilor Lipman thinks we need to have a focus on what our objectives are.

Councilor Cheney moved that the Council and Mayor work with the City Manager to put together a Request for Interest and then a Request for a Proposal in a timely fashion, seconded by Councilor Soucy;

City Manager Myers reiterated what is expected out of the request for interest.

Mayor Hosmer called the question;

the *motion passed with all in favor.*

16. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Cheney hopes that it is explained to Representative Hough that the other bill, pertaining to the Laconia State School property, is more important to the City, because if we have to move the 911 building, it could cost the tax payers millions of dollars.

The Councilors thanked the City Clerk for her work and commitment and expressed they will miss her.

17. COMMITTEE REPORTS

17.A. FINANCE (Lipman (Chair), Hamel, Cheney)

Councilor Lipman is scheduling a Finance Committee Meeting on January 24, 2022 at 6:15 pm to continue the discussion on the Welfare Guidelines.

17.A.i. WOW Trail Funding

17.A.ii. Downtown TIF Financing

17.B. PUBLIC SAFETY (Cheney (Chair), Soucy, Lipman)

17.C. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES (Soucy (Chair), Felch, Cheney)

17.C.i. Review of Chapter 167, Noise and Chapter 161 Licensing as it pertains to outdoor sound equipment and loudspeakers

17.C.ii. Ordinance Amending Chapter 221, Vehicles and Traffic/Parking on Sublawns

17.C.iii. Procedural review of grant applications

17.C.iv. Regulation of Short Term Residential Rental Businesses

17.C.v. Proposed Historic Overlay District

17.C.vi. Scenic Road Motorcycle Noise Petition

17.C.vii. Use of public property by for-profit entities

17.C.viii. Short Term Rentals

17.C.ix. Naming privilege's to public areas

17.D. LAND & BUILDINGS (Hamel (Chair), Haynes, Felch)

17.D.i. Downtown parking garage

17.D.ii. Repair & maintenance of City buildings

17.D.iii. Perley Pond Maintenance

Councilor Hamel moved to remove this item from the agenda, seconded by Councilor Felch; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

17.D.iv. Plan for the DPW Compound

17.D.v. Continuation of the discussion regarding parking in the Lakeport area

Councilor Hamel moved to remove this item from the agenda, seconded by Councilor Felch; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

17.E. **PUBLIC WORKS (Haynes (Chair), Felch, Soucy)**

17.E.i. **Retaining Wall Policy**

17.E.ii. **Discussion for converting from a manual to an automated solid waste curbside collection service**

18. **LIAISON REPORTS**

19. **CITIZENS REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Attorney Phil Brouillard, representing William Mudge - spoke of the North Street parking item. Attorney Brouillard is asking for the Council to keep the North Street item tabled until a meeting can be held separately from a Council meeting. Attorney Brouillard stated he has had communication with the Assistant Public Works Director and she said a meeting could be set up prior to the Council making a decision. But after speaking with Director Anderson, it was explained that the City Attorney and Councilor Felch has decided they wanted to go ahead with it.

Mayor Hosmer asked if he was understanding it correctly that Mr. Mudge and Attorney Brouillard are asking for this item to remain tabled until a separate meeting could be conducted.

Attorney Brouillard answered yes, that is what they would like.

William Mudge also spoke to this topic and agrees with his Attorney, that this item remain tabled until a meeting can be held.

20. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

20.A. **Financial and Operational Trends Report**

City Manager Myers reviewed the report.

20.B. **Monthly Economic Development Report**

City Manager Myers reviewed the report.

21. **NEW BUSINESS**

21.A. **Request to schedule two public hearings for the Community Development Finance Authority**

Councilor Haynes moved to schedule a public hearing on January 24, 2022, during the regular City Council meeting regarding proposed application to the Community Development Finance Authority for up to \$500,000 in CDBG Public Facility grant funds to renovate the space at 17 Church Street owned by Laconia Housing Authority. The renovated space would be leased to Partnership for Public Health NH for meeting with their clients and offering services to the community. The majority of the PPPHNH clients are of low and moderate income, seconded by Councilor Felch; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

Councilor Haynes moved to schedule a public hearing on January 24, 2022, during the regular City Council meeting regarding anti displacement and relocation assistance plan, seconded by Councilor

Felch;

City Manager Myers reviewed what this means.

Mayor Hosmer called the question.

the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

21.B. Request to appoint a Ward 2 Supervisor of the Checklist

Councilor Felch moved to appoint Elizabeth Cooper as Ward 2 Supervisor of the Checklist for a term expiring at the end of December 2023, seconded by Councilor Hamel; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

21.C. Request to appoint a Ward 2 Ward Clerk

Councilor Soucy moved to appoint David Lavoie as Ward 2 Ward Clerk for a term expiring at the end of December, 2023, seconded by Councilor Felch; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

21.D. Request to appoint a Ward 5 Moderator

Councilor Hamel moved to appoint Breanna Neal as Ward 5 Moderator for a term expiring at the end of December, 2023, seconded by Councilor Soucy;

Councilor Haynes highly recommends Mrs. Neal.

Mayor Hosmer called the question.

the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

21.E. Request from Humble Grunt Work, Inc. to hold a Veterans' Appreciation Event in Leavitt Park on Saturday, January 29, 2022, and to waive City fees associated with the event

Councilor Cheney moved to approve the request from Humble Grunt Work, Inc. to hold a Veteran's Appreciation Event in Leavitt Park on Saturday, January 29, 2022 from 11 am to 3 pm, conditioned upon approval from the Special Events Review Committee, and to waive City fees associated with the event, seconded by Councilor Hamel;

Councilor Cheney stated this is an excellent organization that does a lot for Veterans.

Mayor Hosmer called the question.

the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

21.F. First reading of Resolution 2022-02, relative to the NH DES Exotic Species Program Project Grant

Councilor Cheney moved to waive the reading of this Resolution in its entirety and to read by title only, seconded by Councilor Haynes; the ***motion passed with all in favor.***

Councilor Felch moved a first reading of Resolution RES-2022-02 relative to authorizing the City Manager to accept and expend a grant on behalf of the City in the amount of \$30,085 for the NH Department of Environmental Services Exotic Species Program Project, seconded by Councilor

Hamel; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

Councilor Felch moved to schedule a public hearing on January 24, 2022, during the regular City Council meeting to gather public input prior to any action being taken, seconded by Councilor Haynes; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

21.G. **Approval of an amendment to the 1988 agreement with Eversource for use of their land for the Opechee Boat Ramp**

City Manager Myers reviewed this item. This item has been reviewed by legal.

Councilor Cheney would like to make sure the agreement is specific to the boat ramp.

Councilor Soucy moved to approve the first amendment to the 1988 agreement with Eversource on use of the land on Messer Street for the Lake Opechee boat launch and authorize the City Manager to sign the agreement, seconded by Councilor Felch;

Councilor Hamel asked if the ramp would be used as it is now. Councilor Felch would hope that the person responsible for any spills would be held responsible.

Mayor Hosmer called the question.

the *motion passed with five in favor, one opposed (Cheney).*

21.H. **Authorize the acceptance of an Officer Oriented Policing Services (COPS) grant**

Councilor Cheney moved to accept and expend the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Grant in the amount of \$200,000 to fund de-escalation and implicit bias training, seconded by Councilor Soucy; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

21.I. **Annual City Manager Evaluation**

Mayor Hosmer suggested continuing this to the January 24, 2022 meeting.

21.J. **Request to establish rental fees for Boardwalk and Weirs Boulevard vending spaces for Laconia Motorcycle Week 2022**

City Manager Myers briefed the Council on this item.

Councilor Felch moved to approve rental fees for Laconia Motorcycle Week 2022 vending spaces located on the Boardwalk and Weirs Boulevard as presented, seconded by Councilor Cheney; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

21.K. **Proposed amendment to the Wage & Compensation Plan**

City Manager Myers reviewed this item. This is a proposal to create a new position of combining the City Clerk position with the Tax Collector position. the current City Clerk is leaving and the current Tax Collector has accepted another position within the City. This is the perfect opportunity to combine the two positions. This is done in other cities and in some towns. Work will be done to see where support needs to come in, whether it is a minute taking person or adding another person at the window.

Councilor Felch moved to approve the proposed amendment to the Wage & Compensation Plan as presented, seconded by Councilor Hamel;

the *motion passed with all in favor.*

22. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

22.A. **Second reading of Resolution 2022-01, relative to the acceptance of the NH State Library Services, American Rescue Plan Act sub grant**

Councilor Cheney moved to waive a reading of Resolution 2022-01 in its entirety and to read by title only, seconded by Councilor Haynes; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

Councilor Haynes moved a second reading of Resolution 2022-01, relative to the acceptance of the American Rescue Plan Act sub grant in the amount of \$12,103, for the Laconia Public Library, seconded by Councilor Hamel; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

Councilor Soucy moved to approve Resolution 2022-01, relative to the acceptance of the American Rescue Plan Act sub grant in the amount of \$12,103, for the Laconia Public Library, seconded by Councilor Lipman; the *motion passed with all in favor.*

22.B. **Discussion of House Bill 1032 relative to the Laconia State School property**

Councilor Soucy moved to remove this item from the table, seconded by Councilor Felch; the motion passed with all in favor.

Mayor Hosmer moved this item to be discuss immediately following Item 8.

Representative Hough discussed House Bill 1032 pertaining to the Laconia State School property. Representative Hough initially proposed giving Laconia first right of refusal, but that was turned down immediately. He is asking the Council for help getting this proposed bill passed. He explained he put this bill in as sort of a place marker. This bill is being introduced this Thursday to the Committee. Representative Hough stated he is moderately comfortable that he can get this bill through the Committee.

Councilor Lipman mentioned another bill that addresses the boundary lines to Ahern State Park and the 911 building.

Representative Hough does believe that bills speaks about sectioning the 911 building from the rest of the property. He will check into that. He also believes HB2 separated Ahern Park from the rest of the property.

Councilor Soucy asked if Representative Hough has spoken with Executive Councilor Kenney.

Representative Hough has not spoken to him as of yet primarily because he wanted to speak with the Council first.

Councilor Soucy is surprised that this is first time that Representative Hough is coming before the Council. Councilor Soucy asked if there is any support from any other members of the delegation.

Representative Hough did put this out to the other members, but he didn't want any of them to get dragged down by this if it crashed and burned. He said he knows that when the public and officials speak against bills, the Legislature seems to listen.

Councilor Hamel mentioned the space across from Robbie Mills that we have been using for parking and stated if we lose that it will be detrimental to the City.

Mayor Hosmer stated that Laconia spoke out about this nine months ago. The Council expressed

their concerns with the HB2 then, but nothing was heard from the Delegation. The only person that we heard from was Representative O'Hara who was interested in learning about it. This is the biggest piece of property in Laconia. Mayor Hosmer doesn't understand why Representative Hough is so late to filing this bill, especially without any support or co-sponsors. Mayor Hosmer explained the City was looking for support almost a year ago and we didn't get any.

Representative Hough stated that he never heard from anyone.

Mayor Hosmer stated this should have been the Delegations primarily responsibility. He explained the RSA's did not allow for the City of Laconia a right of refusal. The Council has been working really hard on this and it is and has been a big concern. It takes a lot of work to get a bill filed. This should have been brought to us last spring, not three days before a hearing.

Representative Hough stated this has been important since 2017 and nothing has been done since then.

Mayor Hosmer stated an extensive amount of work has been done by the Lakeshore Redevelopment Committee, with representatives from the City of Laconia which has enhanced the value of the property.

Representative Hough said we have a chance to do something, but it probably won't work.

Mayor Hosmer said we have taken this very seriously and made an effort to preserve this property. He is not sure this proposed bill puts us in a better situation. Mayor Hosmer asked what Representative Hough is asking the Council to do to help with this bill.

Representative Hough stated he is not asking the Council for help. He wants to know what the Council wants to happen.

Mayor Hosmer stated the Governor and Executive Council has always had the power to sell the property.

Representative Hough stated if anyone would like to contact him, they have his number.

22.C. **Request to designate a portion of North Street no parking**

This item will remain tabled.

23. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

23.A. **Master Plan**

23.B. **Milfoil Treatment funding requests**

23.C. **Sewer & Water Master Plan**

23.D. **Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-op/Solid Waste disposal cost reductions**

23.E. **Strategic Planning/Goal Setting**

23.F. **WOW Trail**

23.G. **Weirs Beach Restoration Project**

23.H. **Fair St/Court St traffic problems and accidents**

24. **Any other business that may come before the Council**

25. **NON-PUBLIC SESSION (According to RSA 91-A:3, II)**

Mayor Hosmer noted for the record that the Council will be entering into a non-meeting immediately following this meeting under RSA 91-A:2(a) Strategy or negotiations with respect to collective bargaining.

26. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to come before the Council and hearing no objection, Mayor Hosmer adjourned the meeting at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Cheryl Hebert, City Clerk

DRAFT