

# **MINUTES**

Lowell City Council

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, August 13, 2019, 7:00 P.M.

## **1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Sandy Railey called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Those attending were Councilmember Phil Bonham, Councilmember Ken Ervin, Councilmember Candy Funderburk, Councilmember Thomas Gillespie, Councilmember DeWayne Chitwood, City Attorney Jim Windham, City Manager Kevin Krouse, Public Works Director Thomas Shrewsbury, Police Chief Scott Bates, Parks and Recreation Director Cristy Cummings, Development Services Administrator Scott Attaway, and various citizens.

## **2. INVOCATION / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Councilmember Gillespie gave the invocation and led everyone in the pledge of allegiance.

## **3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR THIS MEETING**

Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to adopt the agenda for the meeting, followed by a second from Councilmember Ervin. The vote was unanimous.

## **4. SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **A. PROCLAMATION IN MEMORY OF RICKIE A. BUSH**

Mayor Railey read the proclamation in memory of Rickie A. Bush. Mayor Railey and Councilmember Funderburk presented a flag and the proclamation to the family of Mr. Bush. Family members and councilmembers said a few words about Mr. Bush.

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Bob Mullholland offered condolences to the Bush family. He thanked Chief Bates for response to shooting incident in Riverview. He stated that he was in support of the on-street parking spaces across from City Hall and stated it will slow down traffic. He stated he was also in support of the crosswalks downtown.

Pattie Bean thanked council for what is going on in Lowell. She stated that she was in support of new on street parking.

Alisa Fry is opening a coffee roastery and she was excited about proposed crosswalk. She also stated she's in support of the extra public parking.

## **6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. June 4, 2019 Special Council Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 4, 2019 Council meeting, followed by a second from Councilmember Gillespie. The vote was unanimous.

B. July 9, 2019 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 9, 2019 Council meeting, followed by a second from Councilmember Gillespie. The vote was unanimous.

**7. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Resolution in Support for Water System Asset Management Plan

B. Resolution in Support for Sewer System Asset Management Plan

C. Community Development Block Grant Self-Assessment Forms

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to approve the consent agenda, followed by a second from Councilmember Chitwood. The vote was unanimous.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

A. Public Hearing – Zoning Text Amendment

Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to go into public hearing, followed by a second from Councilmember Ervin. The vote was unanimous.

Scott Attaway stated that staff found things in the ordinance and the language needed to be cleaned up. He stated that they looked at striping, the amount of lanes and the Planning Board recommended removing some of the verbiage. The amendment will lower the height of signs in C2 district. On the street right of way dimensions, the street engineer recommended a 40' to 50' right of way. In the downtown district, the amendment added uses, for example: a dog grooming service previously would not have allowed but the new amendment would allow it. The amendment also increased allowable building height 50 to 60'.

There were questions from Larry Simonds and Sean Brafford. Those questions were addressed by Kevin Krouse and Scott Attaway.

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to close the Public Hearing, followed by a second from Councilmember Funderburk. The vote was unanimous.

Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to pass the zoning text amendments, followed by a second from Councilmember Ervin. The vote was four in favor, one opposed (Chitwood.) The motion passed with the majority being in favor.

B. Downtown Parking

Scott Attaway stated that the City was looking at the downtown plan from a couple of years ago and NCDOT agreed to give solid white line for a road diet and for parking. He stated the City has received a lot of phone calls expressing a need for more parking. He stated the Police Department had a problem without the cones with people merging so police put cones up and there hasn't been any problems since then according to the Police Department. Staff met with NCDOT to discuss many things and they agreed adding parking is a good thing to slow traffic down. The City will follow DOT specifications to avoid turning and pulling into a parked car. There will be about 55'-60' feet from the intersection to the first parked car and then 3-4 parking spaces. Mr. Attaway stated the additional parking spaces also follows downtown improvement plan.

Councilmember Ervin asked if trucks would have adequate turn space with 4 spaces.

Scott Attaway stated that he watched traffic with NCDOT and they found that there is ample turn radius but NCDOT has not sent back comments about whether to go with 3 or 4 spaces.

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to approve the additional spaces, followed by a second from Councilmember Gillespie.

During discussion, Councilmember Chitwood stated that when Shane Robinson was here, the City had parking map with the plan to put parking spaces there and the Council from then voted to not have parking there. Councilmember Chitwood thinks but doesn't think 3-4 spaces would make a difference right there. Councilmember Chitwood like to make an amendment to the original motion that we do not need the parking spaces.

Mayor Railey stated cars could be rear ended if there is no turn lane. Mayor Railey asked if there is a second on the amendment. Councilmember Funderburk seconded the amendment.

Discussion - Councilmember Funderburk stated she was on council when it was decided no before and is afraid of trucks not being able to turn so she has changed her vote.

Councilmember Ervin stated it's adequate to put those spaces in and that if it's shown that it's too tight, the City could go to three spaces. Councilmember Ervin stated that traffic needs to be slowed down and they could eliminate those situations worrying about turning problems but thinks they should approve 3 spaces.

Mayor Railey asked for a vote of the amendment. The vote was 2 in favor, 3 opposed (Bonham/Gillespie/Ervin.) The amended motion failed.

The original motion stands to add 3-4 parking spaces, the fourth space to determined once NCDOT gets back to the City on turn radius. Mayor Railey asked who was in favor of 3-4 spaces additional parking spaces. The vote was 3 in favor, 2 opposed (Funderburk/Chitwood.) The motion passed with the majority being in favor.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. Special Event Street Closing Request from Lowell Masonic Lodge**

Robert Bouldin from the Lowell Masonic Lodge spoke about the August 24, 2019 Poker Run for the Masonic Charities and requested to close road next to Masonic Lodge for the event. He stated the bikes will be parked after they register. He stated they will have a silent auction, a 50/50 raffle, door prizes, and a band. Mr. Bouldin stated the last bike will be in at 5:00pm and they will be cleaned up and gone by 7pm.

Councilmember Funderburk asked how many bikes will be in there. Mr. Bouldin stated between 300-1000 bikes. Councilmember Ervin stated the Poker Run is well attended. Councilmember Chitwood asked will they make sure to stay on Second Street. Mr. Bouldin stated they will let them out in groups but will make sure people stay in the Second Street parking area.

Scott Attaway stated this goes through a Special Event Permit to discuss some of the Department Head concerns and staffing.

Councilmember Chitwood made a motion to close Second Street for the event, followed by a second from Councilmember Funderburk. The vote was unanimous.

### **B. Public Works and Police Departments vehicle purchase and financing**

Kevin Krouse stated these vehicles were approved for in the budget. Interest rate for all 3 is really good at 2.57%. Councilmember Ervin asked if it is state contract price and Kevin Krouse confirmed it is a state contract price.

Kevin Krouse explained each vehicle and what it was replacing.

Councilmember Ervin made a motion to approve purchasing all 4 vehicles and do financing with United, followed by Councilmember Chitwood. The vote was unanimous.

## **10. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Bob Mullholland stated he is the chair of CIA committee and they are volunteers. Mr. Mullholland stated that last month they had to cancel the meeting last minute due to scheduling conflicts. Mr. Mullholland wanted to provide some updates from last month and this month. They are looking at doing murals and utilities art by using schools to help. Mr. Mullholland thanked Scott Attaway and Cristy Cummings for meeting at 7:30am recently with him and representatives with the Carolina Thread Trail to tour to find out where to connect the trail from the Riverview Trail head to George Poston Park. Mr. Mullholland stated that October is Gaston Outside GO Month and it promotes everything Gaston County. Mr. Mullholland stated they will be gearing up with restaurants and retail and will be coordinating with the CIA committee. Mr.

Mullholland stated that if anyone would like to join committee that they need more hands on deck.

## **11. CITY ATTORNEY REPORT**

Jim Windham did not have anything to report.

## **12. CITY MANAGER REPORT**

Kevin Krouse stated the flag poles will be delivered tomorrow and that Thomas and his crew will prepare the site. Mr. Krouse also stated new water meters are to be delivered soon.

### **A. I-85 Widening Update**

Kevin Krouse stated that NCDOT and consultants met and discussed incorporating traffic circles into the interchanges and showed how they would work. He stated they have worked out a solution to not take out too much property and affect business owners.

### **B. Wastewater Treatment Plant Study Update**

Kevin Krouse stated he will go over this and present at the next meeting. Mr. Krouse stated he and Thomas Shrewsbury visited engineers and were told the best thing is to move forward with the current system. Mr. Krouse stated around 2035 would be when they would make major decisions. Mr. Krouse stated the report is very detailed and that we have a lot of growth and opportunity with the current plant.

### **C. Other**

Councilmember Ervin asked to be enlightened on new police officers. Chief Bates stated an officer left for Cramerton and the City then hired a second female officer with ten years of experience and that they are back up to full staff.

## **13. MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL GENERAL DISCUSSION**

Councilmember Ervin stated that he appreciates everyone's work.

Councilmember Funderburk addressed concerns regarding taxes.

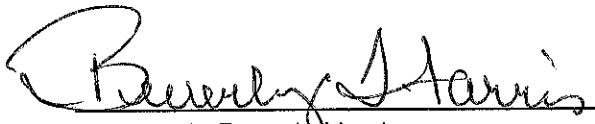
Councilmember Gillespie stated he was born on South Main Street in 1952 on a gravel road and he knew one day South Main would be something. Councilmember Gillespie stated they now have Hillbilly's and Sonic Automotive on South Main Street with more businesses coming. Councilmember Gillespie stated that regarding the Historical Committee, Lowell deserves a marker since it has changed and the council approved. Councilmember Gillespie stated that people have donated money to the marker and that it's progressing very well.

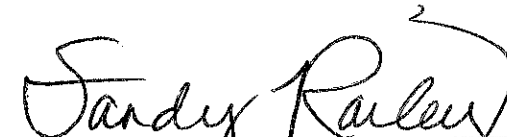
Mayor Railey asked everyone to please remember Beverly Harris and Kevin Haney in their prayers.

**14. ADJOURN**

Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to adjourn the meeting, followed by a second from Councilmember Ervin. The vote was unanimous. The meeting ended at 8:30pm.

ATTEST:

  
City Clerk, Beverly Harris

  
Mayor, Sandy Railey