

**LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
May 24, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, May 24, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. by President Phillip Kuiper. He welcomed home Spec. Jeff McNorton and asked that everyone keep the Szfranski family in their thoughts. Bob Szfranski is battling cancer, he is a Lowell Volunteer Fireman and a full time fireman at the Gary Fire Department. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed. Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters called the roll. Members present were Donald Huseman, Shane Tucker John Alessia, David Gard ,and Phillip Kuiper. Also present were Town Attorney Gregory Sobkowski, Director of Public Works Greg Shook, Town Administrator Susan Peterson, Director of Community Development Wilbur Cox, one member of the media, and fifteen interested citizens.

TREASURERS REPORT

Councilman Huseman made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report for April, 2010 as presented, seconded by Councilman Alessia. The motion carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Huseman made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 10th regular meeting, work session, and executive session. The motion was seconded by Councilman Gard and carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

President Kuiper stated that he had reviewed White Vouchers #1613-1618, Water Vouchers #2285-2312 and Waste Water Vouchers #3254-3283 and recommended them for approval. Councilman Alessia made a motion to approve the vouchers as listed, seconded by Councilman Gard. The motion carried by voice vote.

PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRANCES, PROCLAMATIONS

Letter of Resignation - Chuck Brown, Lowell Historic Review Board - Councilman Gard made a motion to accept the letter of resignation, seconded by Councilman Huseman. The position will be advertised for one month. The motion carried by voice vote.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #2010-07 - Annual transfer from Sewer Operation to Sewer Improvement in the amount of \$300,000.00 to be used for improvements, replacements, additions and extensions to the Sewage works. Councilman Alessia made a motion to approve the transfer of funds, seconded by Councilman Gard. The motion carried by voice vote.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Update - Paving - Director of Public Works Greg Shook stated that the paving project has been completed and they are putting together a punch list.

New Middle School Sewer Project - Greg Shook explained that it is about 61% complete, they have put in about 4100 feet and have about 2600 feet to go and hopefully it will be done by the end of June.

Main Street Bridge - Greg Shook stated according to the County the work on the bridge will begin around mid-June.

Powell Ditch - Greg Shook said that he was supposed to receive a couple of proposals last week, he will follow up on this tomorrow.

Proposal from Allied Waste/Republic to extend agreement for garbage service for four years - President Kuiper recommended that the Town only extended it for three years at the most. Councilman Gard stated that he met with Jim Metros from Allied /Republic and if they go with the three years, the first year will have no cost increase and the last two years there will be a 4% increase. If the Town goes with a two year agreement there will be a 3 to 5% increase. The terms are the same for the three and four year agreement. Councilman Gard made a motion to accept the three year agreement, seconded by Councilman Huseman. Councilman Alessia asked if this pricing was consistent with other companies. Councilman Gard replied that it is at or below. The motion carried by voice vote. Councilman Gard stated that there are not many entities left to bid a project the size of Lowell anymore. Clerk-Treasurer asked if the Council wanted the Town to continue to pay .70 cents of that bill from the recycling fund. Councilman Gard stated that if it is not hurting the Town he would love to continue that. Clerk-Treasurer Walters explained that it runs about \$2,000.00 to \$2,500.000 per month and they take .70 cents per household from the recycling fund to defray some of the cost. The Council agreed to continue that expense.

Tabled from previous meetings:

4/12 Enter into agreement with INDOT for curb and sidewalk grant on Route 2 - This item remained tabled.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Recycling Funds - Fire Chief Charlie Scott stated that the fire station needs new ceiling tiles, he did not have a proposal but he spoke with Clerk-Treasurer Walters about the cost from what was bought last year for the Town. He asked the Council for approval for ceiling tiles from the recycling fund in a not to exceed amount of \$4,000.00. Councilman Tucker made a

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motion to approve the funds, seconded by Councilman Huseman. The motion carried by voice vote.

Councilman Huseman said that he received a call from a man who said that he would like to put together a Vegas night for Bob Szfranski. President Kuiper asked Chief Scott if there are any accounts setup to donate to the family. Chief Scott stated there are not, they did a quick raffle and raised about \$1,800.00 for gas, parking, hotel etc. The Lowell Fire Department is looking to get together with the Gary Fire Department and do a benefit for him. Chief Scott said he will get the number from Councilman Huseman and try to incorporate the Vegas night into the benefit. The Council said they will help in any way that they can.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Kuiper announced the next regular meeting will be on Monday, June 14th at 7:00 P.M.

Councilman Gard stated that each Council member received a typed letter from someone who didn't sign their name, it stated that the Council did not practice what they preach "Shop Lowell First". The author of the letter stated they read in the paper that Lowell awarded a contract to Parkway Mechanical out of Merrillville, and Duane's Electric out of Crown Point. Councilman Gard responded to the letter by stating that the Council has to award contracts to the lowest responsible bid or quote. A Lowell contractor said that they did not bid on the electrical part because it was just too big for them. The Town Hall building has some very strange HVAC issues and when it needed to be worked on the Lowell companies wouldn't touch it. Parkway Mechanical came and tinkered with the old system and did what they could to help us keep the equipment up and running, but that did not give him any traction in the bidding process. He bid the job and he won, that's America, that's business. Councilman Gard went on to say that the letter is ridiculous, there are guidelines that the Council has to go by they have no choice in that matter, it is the lowest responsible bidder. Councilman Gard would prefer to do all of the contracts with companies from Lowell.

MEDIA QUESTIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Connie from the Lowell Tribune asked how soon is the ethanol plant going to be done? President Kuiper stated the at the last meeting they said that some of bids will take six months and then it will take a couple years to build, so about three years.

Ed Bradbury, W. 171st Ave asked if the Main Street bridge was going to be started in June 2010 or 2011. He was told 2010.

Councilman Huseman asked if there is anything the Code Enforcer can do about the car wash on Commercial Avenue, it looks terrible and it looked just as bad before the fire. Councilman Gard stated that December 18th there was a fire in that building caused by a space heater. In his

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capacity as an estimator for United Services he has been working closely with Mr. Sims. and it is his intent to repair the building, he is working with the insurance company now.

Councilman Huseman asked Director of Community Development Wilbur Cox if he had any news about the house that burnt on Burnham Street. Mr. Cox stated that the owner, Mr. Christ paid the taxes and signed the deed over to the Town. The Town Attorney will review it and after it is recorded the Town will set a date to tear it down.

Councilman Huseman also asked Mr. Cox about the old school house on Main Street. Attorney Sobkowski stated a status conference is set for July 6, 2010.

There being no further business or discussion, Councilman Alessia made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Gard at 7:20 P.M.

Phillip Kuiper, President

Attest:

Judith Walters
Clerk-Treasurer