

**LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
NOVEMBER 8, 2010**

The regular meeting of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, November 8, 2010 at 7:00 P.M. by President Phillip Kuiper. 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, Police Chief John Shelhart, three members of the media, and twenty three interested citizens.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Tucker made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 25th regular meeting, seconded by Councilman Alessia and carried by voice vote.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

President Kuiper stated that he had reviewed White Vouchers #2457-2513, White Police #4098-4111, Water Vouchers #2663-2692 and Waste Water Vouchers #3603-3628. Councilman Gard made a motion to approve the vouchers as listed, seconded by Councilman Tucker and carried by voice vote.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Councilman Gard made a motion to accept the monthly reports from October, 2010 as presented, seconded by Councilman Tucker and carried.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

Resolution #2010-15 - Transfer of Funds - Park Fund \$1,000.00 from line 341 Electric to line 231 Maintenance Supplies. Councilman Alessia made a motion to approve Resolution #2010-15, seconded by Councilman Huseman and carried by voice vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Update - Director of Public Works Greg Shook asked the Council to approve an invoice from Underground Pipe & Valve Inc. in the amount of \$3,844.00 and forward to SRF for payment. Councilman Huseman made a motion to approve the invoice for payment, seconded by Councilman Gard. The motion carried by voice vote. President Kuiper asked how we were doing on the new meters. Mr. Shook explained that so far we have changed out between 1100 and 1200 out of 3200 meters.

Councilman Huseman commended Director of Public Works Greg Shook and Street

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Superintendent Frank Lovely for the trial basis of the painted section of Mill Street by Centier Bank, it seems to be working well.

Councilman Huseman asked Director of Community Development Wilbur Cox if the 20 acres that belongs to Larry Peterson is in Town, because he has received calls about coyotes in the area. Mr. Cox responded that the property is in town and that DNR has been notified of the problem. He went on to explain that developer Todd Harbecht has also been contacted and he has agreed to take his bob cat over there and fill in the dens the coyote have made.

Fire Protection Surcharge Report - Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters explained the report from Financial Solutions Group shows the break down to move the public hydrant rental fee out of the General Fund into the Water Utility Fund. The cost will be \$4.60 per month per customer. Councilman Gard made a motion to direct an ordinance to be prepared, seconded by Councilman Alessia. The motion carried by voice vote.

Burnham Street Property - Habitat for Humanity - President Kuiper introduced Tom Grant and Dan Klein from Habitat for Humanity. He explained that they are interested in building a home on the lot on Burnham Street for a family who wouldn't otherwise be able to own a home. Dan Klein explained that there are three things required to be qualified for a home, you have to have some income, decent credit and they have to put in 350 hours of sweat equity into their home or another habitat home. They have built over 54 homes in Lake County, Indiana and 14 homes overseas in the last 20 years. Most of the homes are 1100 to 1200 square feet single family homes. The last house they built was in Gary last year and appraised at \$117,000.00. Mr. Klein stated that he is trying to move his focus from north Lake County to south Lake County because the need is great here as well. They are always looking for land, the land they usually get is free from a municipality, they in turn find a family, preferably a local family. He went on to say that they also have habitat restore, which is a store that sells new and used building supplies. The money from the store helps fund the administrative cost so every dollar that comes in helps build the homes for people in need. To find a family they will work with local churches and civic organizations. Councilman Huseman asked if the qualifying family will be from the Lowell area, Mr. Klein stated he hopes so, but they can't guarantee that. They have a selection committee that does the interviewing, they do a home visit, there has to be a need for the family to be in a home other than where they are at. One of the things the family gets for this is a zero interest mortgage, so the payments are usually between \$500.00 and \$600.00 per month. The houses are built with volunteer labor and the average cost to build it is about \$75,000.00. Councilman Tucker made a motion to have the staff do research and start the paperwork for Habitat for Humanity on the Burnham Street property, seconded by Councilman Gard. The motion carried by voice vote. Tom Grant, 634 Gatewood, explained that there is a federal grant for communities with less than 10,000 people. The government will provide \$75,000.00 to Habitat for each home that they build in those communities.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On November 11, 2010 at 11:00 AM there will be a Veterans Day service at the Memorial in

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front of the Police Department.

President Kuiper stated the next regular meeting will be on Monday, November 22nd at 7:00 PM

MEDIA QUESTIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

A member of the Post Tribune asked how long the search process is to find a family for the Habitat home. She was told that it could take up to a year to find someone who is qualified., the home should be constructed within a year.

Rich Meadows asked if the 1200 square foot was below what Lowell allows. President Kuiper responded that is why they will work with the attorney and Director of Community Development Wilbur Cox.

Ed Bradbury stated that if they built a home that was 1100 or 1200 square foot, wouldn't that open the door for others to do the same. President Kuiper responded that is why they will be working with the Town Attorney and the Building Department.

Councilman Huseman asked if everyone was aware of how big of a can of worms they opened with the smoking ban and no exceptions. He went on to say that he understands that the Moose Lodge will no longer donate to the Police Department and the Town. He asked what would the Town do if the American Legion told them that they couldn't use their land anymore. He said that the members are very upset and it is something they should think about. He stated that it is not January yet and there is still time to sit down and talk about some exemptions to the ordinance. President Kuiper stated that he has not heard from the Moose Lodge at a meeting, he had talked with them but they did not attend a public meeting. . Councilman Huseman said that they wrote a letter and President Kuiper responded that it was after the ordinance passed. President Kuiper went on to say that he spoke with everyone who contacted him or wanted to talk to him about this ordinance.

There being no further business or discussion, Councilman Alessia made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Gard at 7:25 P.M.

Phillip Kuiper, President

Attest:

Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer