

**LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING
REGULAR MEETING
FEBRUARY 24, 2014**

The regular meeting of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, February 24, 2014 at 7:00 P.M. by President Edgar Corns. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited followed by a moment of silence. Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters called the roll. Members present were Craig Earley, Robert Philpot, Phillip Kuiper, and Edgar Corns. Vice-President Donald Parker was absent. Also present were Town Attorney David Westland, Public Works Director Greg Shook, Police Chief Erik Matson, Building Official Tom Trulley, two members of the media, and twelve citizens.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Councilman Kuiper made a motion to approve the December 2013 and January 2014 Treasurer's Reports, seconded by Councilman Earley and carried with four ayes. Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters stated that the 2014 Budget that was received by the DLGF has been fully funded as proposed.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Councilman Earley made a motion to approve the February 10, 2014 regular meeting minutes, seconded by Councilman Kuiper and carried with four ayes.

APPROVAL OF VOUCHERS

President Corns stated he reviewed White Vouchers #1150 - #1187, White-Police #4030 - #4038, Water #2112 - #2139, Waste Water #3085 - #3106, Stormwater Utility #5017 - #5023, and recommended all of the vouchers for payment. Councilman Philpot made a motion to approve the vouchers as listed, seconded by Councilman Earley and carried with four ayes.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS

2nd reading - Ordinance #2014-01 - Adopt CEDIT Capital Plan - Councilman Kuiper made a motion to approve Ordinance #2014-01 by name and title only, seconded by Councilman Earley and carried by roll call vote with four ayes.

Resolution #2014-02 - Enter into Agreement with Crossroad Bank for Truck financing - President Corns read Resolution #2014-02 by name and title only. Councilman Earley made a motion to approve Resolution #2014-02 by name and title only, seconded by Councilman Philpot and carried by roll call vote with four ayes.

Resolution #2014-03 - Opposing eliminating business personal property tax - President Corns read Resolution #2014-03. In reading, President Corns stated that the Town of Lowell could lose \$174,000 annually if the tax was eliminated. Councilman Kuiper made a motion to accept Resolution #2014-03, seconded by Councilman Earley. President Corns stated in the paper it had stated that the removal of that tax would cost the Tri-Creek School system \$100,000. It is detrimental to everyone without a replacement stream of revenue. The motion carried by roll call vote with four ayes.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Public Works Department Update - Public Works Director Greg Shook stated that he did not have an update to present.

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Councilman Earley asked Police Chief Erik Matson to give an update on the Neighborhood Watch program. Police Chief Matson stated on Saturday there was a meeting of the Neighborhood Watch where there were about twenty people in attendance. We have decided to move forward with the program, which is still open for people who wish to enroll. We discussed how the training would work and have broken up the Town in to sectors for the people to patrol. He stated that the Lowell Police Department is short handed and that they appreciate any help that they can get watching the streets. President Corns asked how short the department was with people at the academy. Chief Matson stated we are short two right now, but the department as a whole is short all of the time, even at full staff. President Corns asked when the officers would be back from the academy. Chief Matson stated the academy wraps up in April, but they will probably not be street ready until July. We are doing the best that we can with what we have, but if anyone sees anything suspicious, please call. He stated that they will be posting signs once the ground thaws out a bit and that the money for those signs was donated to them by the Lowell Lion's Club.

NEW BUSINESS

Cedar Lake Sewer Bonds of 2000 - President Corns stated the Town's Financial Advisor has suggested that we pay off the bonds, which would save us approximately \$175,000 in interest costs by redeeming the bonds early. Clerk-Treasurer Walters stated that Cedar Lake does not have a pay-off amount yet for us. She asked the Council if they would like to table the matter, or give Financial Advisor Greg Guerrettaz and herself permission to redeem the bonds. Councilman Kuiper made a motion to allow Mr. Guerrettaz and Clerk-Treasurer Walters to redeem the bonds, seconded by Councilman Earley and carried by roll call vote with four ayes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Corns announced that the next regular meeting would be Monday, March 10, 2014 at 7:00 PM.

MEDIA QUESTIONS/PUBLIC COMMENTS

Councilman Kuiper stated he had received more correspondence from an attorney with Republic regarding the annexation of C&D Landfill. He asked if there could be an update given on that. President Corns stated they are in the process of scheduling a meeting with the entire Council.

Councilman Earley stated we had signed the interlocal agreement for the 911 Consolidation several weeks ago, and County has said that they will have the prices for the Motorola radios by the end of the month. We have already appropriated a good portion of our Public Safety tax in the 2014 budget, and through the negotiations of this interlocal, that money has been turned back over to the community to purchase those radios. We have to decide if we are going to change the appropriations or decide what we will do to come up with the money for those radios. Mr. Hitchcock had stated that he would like to get the radios in our hands by September or October so that they could be programmed before the consolidation. Clerk-Treasurer Walters stated we will either have to pay for it out of our Public Safety Fund, or out of one of our Cum Funds. We would probably have to lease-purchase those for a three to five year period. She stated that when the Council approved the 2014 budget, we did budget for a firefighter out of the Public Safety Fund. The Council needs to let the Fire Department know if they should hire a firefighter or not and we will need to amend our Salary Ordinance. Councilman Earley stated that we need to figure something out in respect to the Fire Department because once the Illiana is built, we have to provide service to that area, which puts more stress on an already stressed department. Discussion followed regarding the lack of funding from INDOT and a possible meeting with the townships and a representative from the County to try and figure out where additional funding could come from.

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Clerk-Treasurer Walters asked if she should move forward with telling the Fire Department that they can go ahead and hire someone. Councilman Kuiper made a motion to amend the Salary Ordinance to include a full-time fireman, seconded by Councilman Earley and carried by roll call vote with four ayes.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Kuiper made a motion to adjourn at 7:22 P.M., seconded by Councilman Philpot and carried with four ayes.

Attest:

Edgar Corns, President

Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer