

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
DECEMBER 12, 2022

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, December 12, 2022, at 5:30 P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were John Alessia via Zoom, Todd Angerman, Michael Gruszka, John Yelkich, and Shane Tucker arrived at 6:00. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney David Westland, GIS Director Greg White, and Police Chief Jim Woestman. Also present was Fire Chief Chris Gamblin. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Redistricting Discussion - The amended ward districting ordinance with legal descriptions will be acted on during regular meeting..

Legion Property - Councilman Yelkich had attended a Legion meeting and discussed the potential of the town acquiring their building and maintaining it due to the problems they are experiencing with money. The thought is the Legion would still have the control of the bar and have rooms available for meetings and activities. Mr. Hendrix stated this would allow us to consider turning the Liberty Street building for a future fire/ems building and turn the Legion into a Park office. President Angerman stated he spoke with Alice Dahl, who thinks it is a good idea, but stated they are worried about future Council's trying to get them out of building. Discussion followed on a lease for upto 100 years, with Attorney Westland stating he was more comfortable with a lease in 25 years increments. Further discussions will be held with Legion members and the building will have to be evaluated.

VFD Rent Discussion - Councilman Yelkich and President Angerman will be meeting with Ambulance Board on January 10th to discuss the increase of rent for the fire station. Councilman Yelkich said he spoke with Alice Dahl and she didn't think they would be opposed to increasing the rent upto \$1500 a month.

INDOT LPA Projects Funding Discussion - Mr. Hendrix stated that Washington has been reclassified and he has submitted a grant request for Washington Street and Mill Street. These are 80/20 grant projects and we are competing with other communities and Mr. Hendrix stated he felt theses projects would score well. He has an phone interview with INDOT on December 17th and we should get an answer by April.

CCMG Discussion - The Town had received a second round of Community Crossing Grant Funds last week in the amount of \$489,000. Mr. Hendrix reminded these are 50/50 match grants since our population went over 10,000, and stated the streets to be completed are Northview, Meadow Lane to Robin, Bluebird, Southwood and East Street. Mr. Hendrix stated in early 2023 he will apply for the next rounds of funds and apply for grant for a complete reconstruction of Union Street.

Title VI Goals and Accomplishments Report - A list of ADA projects done in the last year will need to be acknowledged during the regular meeting.

306 E. Commercial Update - A decision had been made to begin eminent domain procedures on the old garden center. The owners have come back with an offer they would accept \$75,500. The property had appraised at \$65,000 and the town had already offered them \$70,000 for the property. Discussion

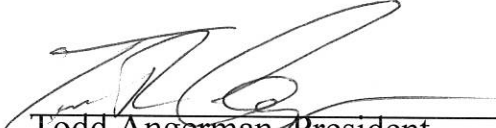
followed. To avoid additional legal fees and appraisal costs Attorney Wetland recommend to prepare a purchase agreement that is pro-rated with closing costs and taxes and to accept the offer. The item will be acted on during the regular meeting with the Town approving the purchase and assigning the contract to the Redevelopment Commission. Attorney Westland stated they should be able to close sometime in January.

106 Main Street Discussion - Town Manager Hendrix stated the new owner of the property was requesting to build another building on the property and the property is now zoned Town Center and is considered legal non conforming. The owner requested a variance of use and there was some confusion at the BZA meeting that the change of ownership changed the legal status and he would need a variance to continue operating the existing building. Attorney Bennett thought the legal non conforming use changes when ownership changes and the new owner should of asked for a use variance but it has been researched that isn't the case in the Lowell zoning. Mr. Hendrix said the Council needs to act on the BZA recommendation during the regular meeting but he was worried if they approve the variance of use that will allow the owner to build another building on the property and that isn't aligned with the town center zone and felt the town should dismiss and keep it legal non conforming. Discussion followed. Attorney Westland stated that additional information or evidence cannot be heard by the Town Council, they must act on the findings of fact and suggested tabling until the minutes of the December 8th BZA meting are ready to review for further clarification. He stated they have 60 or 90 days to act on the BZA recommendation.

Public Works Maintenance Facility Update - Mr. Hendrix stated an application has been submitted for a state release for the fully designed building. The plan is to have Peoples Bank representatives present at the January 23rd work session to discus opportunities of funding the building.

Fire Chief Chris Gamblin talked about a recent fire at Saco Industries and how cooperative the new management was. He asked about storing a fire truck at the Liberty Street building , which the Council was not opposed to as long as they understood they it may not be permanent. He stated this would allow firefighters that live on the west side of the railroad tracks to respond to fires. Chief Gamblin has other planning ideas for becoming a town fire department that he would like to discuss at a future work session.

No further discussion, the work session adjourned at 6:58 P.M.


Todd Angerman, President

Attest:


Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer