

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
DECEMBER 11, 2023

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, December 11, 2023, at 5:30 P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were Michael Gruszka, Todd Angerman, John Alessia, John Yelkich and Shane Tucker arriving at 6:02 P.M. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney David Westland via Zoom, GIS Director Greg White, Police Chief Jim Woestman, and Fire Chief Chris Gamblin. Also present was Jon Borger from Wessler Engineering, and two interested citizens. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

WWTP Engineering Report - Town Manager Hendrix stated he would like to have the preliminary engineering report updated and get it ready to submit to SRF for financing by April 1<sup>st</sup> to keep the project on schedule. He stated it was to be presented at the last JMOB meeting, but the meeting had been canceled by Cedar Lake. Discussion followed on Task Order #16 that will update the PER to incorporate revisions regarding improvements necessary for expansion of the treatment facility to average and peak design flows and to update cost estimates and figures required for approval by the Indiana Finance Authority State Revolving Fund. (SRF) Mr. Borger presented a memo that gave an update on current projects that included a new standby generator, new UV Disinfection Equipment, new Non-Potable Water System, automation of diversion valves used during wet weather conditions and improvements to the drain line from the EQ Basin to the headworks. The improvements to the EQ Basin was part of the Long Term Control Plan with IDEM and will need a 12-month monitoring period before it would be considered complete. Work on the EQ basin that will require repairs to the liner and replacement of the existing liner with a new hard surface bottom will need to be completed by 2026. Mr. Hendrix spoke of reducing the amount of water that goes into the basin to increase the peak design flow of the plant and keeping the volume of the basin as it is, which will allow the town to save money that would have been invested in the basin, and apply it towards expansion of the plant. Future WWTP Expansion need to be addressed that include current wastewater flows, biological loading, total nitrogen limits, Long Term Control Plan requirements, and current and future growth of Lowell and Cedar Lake. Mr. Borger stated that expansion is likely needed soon in order to handle the existing flows and growth.

TIF Residential Update - Councilman Gruszka stated he had been receiving comments on the new legislation from his constituents and would like to have consultants address their concerns. Town Manager Hendrix suggested at the first regular meeting in January to have consultant Corby Thompson from Krohn & Associates explain the program and answer any concerns. Mr. Hendrix explained the next step in the process is to approve a declaratory resolution at the December 27<sup>th</sup> Redevelopment Commission meeting, that is just an intent to move forward with the process. Then the overlapping tax units will have ten days to review the affect on their unit. The next step would be to go to a Plan Commission meeting and then a Public Hearing with RDC, which at that time can be accepted, amended or rejected. Mr. Hendrix will ask Mr. Thompson to give a budget 101 presentation to explain assessed value, property tax levy and how it may affect other taxing units. Discussion followed on the affect it may have on overlapping tax units, and that the intent of the recapture is to use the funds for projects that will benefit those entities, and that homeowners will not see a tax increase due to the recapture. Fire Chief Chris Gamblin spoke of the long history with the townships and the town to fund the fire department, but stated the amount they give needs increased to help with the increase in calls in all three townships. He stated by the town having put part-time staff on during the day has increased the safety in all three townships because they respond to all of the calls.

Attorney McGimpsey letter - Councilman Yelkich stated he was concerned about the \$9329 invoice received for the letter the town requested be written to Indiana American Water regarding the agreement for them to install the water line on the west side to Lake Prairie School. He was surprised about the amount and that it took 14 hours to complete. After discussion, it was agreed that Attorney Westland would reach out to the firm and negotiate the amount.

Freedom Park Dog Park Parking Lot Rehabilitation - Mr. Hendrix explained about the CDBG funding of \$50,000 that is to be used for ADA improvements and discussed how he would have had to request in writing to be able to carry over two years of funding to be used, but since it wasn't he didn't want to lose the \$50,000 from the county. The lowest bid received was for \$112,000 and the estimate of the project was \$85,000. Mr. Hendrix explained how paving the parking lot will make it handicap accessible and that it will also connect with the future trail. Discussion followed on the funding for the difference as the townships have already pledged their funds for next year for the pickleball construction. It was recommended to wait until 2024 and transfer funds from the personnel line not being used in the park fund to improvement line.

Police Security Camera - A quote from Tri-Electronics in the amount of \$137,368 had been received to replace the camera system at the Police Station. The quote also includes a server that will be the hub for all cameras that will be installed on town property. Police Chief Woestman stated the updated technology is the same system used by the Lake County Sheriff office and will allow real time access and linked to other cameras. Clerk-Treasurer Judy Walters stated funds are available for the purchase in the Cumulative Capital Development Fund. This item will be acted on during the regular meeting.


Freedom Park Dog Park 2024 Fees - An item had been added to the agenda for the regular meeting to increase dog park fees to \$75.00 annually with \$20 for each additional dog and \$125 for non-residents. There will no longer be a senior citizen discount.

RDC Grant Program Budget - Mr. Hendrix asked Council to review and consider increasing the number of facade and building grants given in 2024. Clerk-Treasurer Judy Walters stated the same amount was appropriated in 2024 as there was in 2023 of \$30,000 in facade grants and \$45,000 in building renovation grants, so you would need an additional appropriation in 2024 if increased.

Nassau Park Project Update - Bids are due on December 20<sup>th</sup>, and will be taken under advisement until the first meeting of January.

Maintenance Building RFP - Mr. Hendrix stated he has been working with the architect and plans to bid out in January. He stated he will be requesting financing quotes from local banks with Attorney Westland.

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

  
Todd Angerman, President

Attest:

  
Judith Walters  
Clerk-Treasurer