

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 12, 2022

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, September 12, 2022, at 5:30 P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were John Alessia, Todd Angerman, Mike Gruszka, and John Yelkich. Councilman Shane Tucker arrived at 6:10 P.M. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney David Westland, GIS Director Greg White, and Police Chief Jim Woestman. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Discussion followed on the Police Commission appointment of which a member had not been attending meetings. A letter had been sent that if more than three meetings were missed they were considered out. Attorney Westland will review state statute. Town Manager Hendrix brought up eliminating the Historic Board and President Angerman suggested appointing the BZA members as the Historic Board and meet prior to B.Z.A. meetings. Attorney Bennett is reviewing the guidelines of the Historic Board.

Street and Police Equipment Discussion - Police Chief Jim Woestman had received quotes on ordering new police vehicles that will take a few months to receive. After reviewing proposals from Ford and Dodge he would like to purchase two Dodge Ram trucks at \$45,000 each, and one Dodge Charger at \$44,000 from Bozak, which includes the cost of outfitting the police cars. Town Manager Hendrix stated they would like to purchase a new truck for Street Superintendent Frank Lovely, the 2004 Chevy Silverado he currently drives is being transferred to WWTP. Two proposals had been received and they would like to purchase the 2022 GMC Sierra dully from Wiers Chevrolet at \$72,000. Funds are available in the Cumulative Capital Development Fund. These items will be added to the regular meeting to be acted on.

INDOT CCMG Projects /Budget - restoration discussion - Town Manager Hendrix had applied for a 50/50 grant for Southwood, Meadow Lane to Robin, Northview, Bluebird, and East Street for the 2022 draw for work to be completed in 2023. The cost of the project is estimated at \$950,000. Discussion followed on easement restoration work completed when the contractor is done in summer months and the homeowners are not watering the grass seed; and now complaining the grass is not growing and wanting the Town to fix. Council agreed for future projects when the homeowner is notified of the project they will be told it is their responsibility to maintain. Town crews will put out grass seed on the restoration areas from this summer.

Park tree trimming - Town Manger Hendrix stated with all the improvements being made at Evergreen Park with the parking lot upgrade, new signage, and guard rail being painting, he would like to do some tree removal and tree trimming. He received one proposal in the amount of \$34,500 to remove three large dead oak trees, pine trees and raise trees hanging over pond and grind and remove all stumps. He also received a proposal to remove three dead ash trees and grind stumps at Reservation Park for \$7500. Discussion followed. Funds are available from the water reserve fund that have been transferred to the Cumulative Capital Fund for the Evergreen Project. Council members asked that Mr. Hendrix attempt to get proposals from local companies.

171<sup>st</sup> Avenue Drainage Project - Mr. Hendrix had solicited three quotes for ditch clearing and culvert repair for stormwater improvement at 171<sup>st</sup> Avenue with Austgen responding at \$80,541. Discussion followed. Councilman Alessia asked that Saco Industries be approached to pay the cost of the new culvert since their trucks did the damage. This item will be acted on during regular meeting.

IDEM Agreed Order Schedule - Mr. Hendrix showed an updated schedule for Council

review to build a new basin liner that is needed at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. When the project is completed we will be in compliance.

Long Term Control Plan Amendment - The Town had entered into the Long Term Control Plan with IDEM for the Wastewater Treatment Plant back in September 2003 and have until August 2024 to complete. Mr. Hendrix stated after review of the plan they are asking that it be amended to eliminate the Combined Sewer Overflow Plan as the Lowell plant has been able to handle all flow coming to the plant with the conventional treatment facility, and occasionally requiring the use of the Wet Weather Treatment Facility. There have been no untreated overflows since June 2020. The amendment would include EQ Basin drain back modifications. Council is to review the amendment for President Angerman to sign and when work proposed is complete the LTCP will be completed ahead of schedule.

Water Proceeds Investment Status - The committee had narrowed down the selection to three banks, Centier, Peoples, and Wells Fargo. At the last work session it was decided to ask the three banks to provide a review of their aggressive funds for the last twenty years and what they would recommend in forever funds. Mr. Hendrix said the request for additional information was not sent out and Councilman Yelkich stated he felt the committee had done what it was tasked to do and if councilmen wanted additional information they should contact the banks and request on their own. A long discussion followed. Councilman Gruszka stated he had done additional research and said that Centier Bank uses a firm called Main Street Advisors out of Chicago and he thought some wanted to stay local. Councilman Gruszka also stated that Peoples Bank had a formal complaint filed against them and didn't want to do business with a institution that had a formal complaint. He acknowledged that Jeff White of Wells Fargo was a personal friend of his, but stated Wells Fargo is a national institution and has had a local branch in Merrillville since 1976. Councilman Gruszka said of the three banking institutions, Wells Fargo has the largest holdings and if something would happen to our money they would be able to give it back. Councilman Yelkich said no one can guarantee funds. Attorney Westland said if someone made a bad decision in investing that would not be guaranteed funds. Councilman Gruszka stated that Jeff White of Wells Fargo has never had a complaint filed against him, and that he invests more than the other two banks combined. Councilman Yelkich explained that Main Street is an advisor to Centier Bank, just as Jeff White is an advisor to Wells Fargo, but Peoples Bank has investors in house that directly invest in the market. Councilman Yelkich said he understood that Jeff White works for Wells Fargo Investment not Wells Fargo Bank, so it would be the same as Centier having an advisor. They are two separate entities. Councilman Gruszka disagreed. Councilman Yelkich said he spoke with State Board of Accounts and the Town has to invest our funds with an approved banking institution which Centier, Wells Fargo, and Peoples are listed. Further discussion followed, and President Angerman asked that this item be added to the agenda on September 26<sup>th</sup> to act on.

The work session adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

  
Todd Angerman, President

Attest:

  
Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer

Town of Lowell  
Work Session  
September 12, 2022  
5:30 pm  
Town Hall

5:30 Council Work Session

Agenda topics proposed include:

- Street and PD Equipment Discussion
- INDOT CCMG Projects/Budget – restoration discussion
- Park tree trimming Water Proceeds Investment Status
- 171<sup>st</sup> Avenue Drainage Project
- Long Term Control Plan Amendment
- IDEM Agreed Order Schedule
- Other topics

7:00 Town Council Meeting