

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
JUNE 14, 2021

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, June 14, 2021, at 5:55 P.M., by Vice-President John Yelkich. Members present were Michael Gruszka, Todd Angerman, John Alessia, and John Yelkich. Christopher Salatas was absent. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Public Works Director Kevin Gray, Town Attorney David Westland, and one citizen. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Updates were given on the following projects:

Costas/Sidetrack Demolition - The bid has been awarded to GE Marshall and the project will start in the next couple of weeks. The scope of the project includes that all asphalt will be removed except on the west side of the building near the retaining wall. Mr. Dan Sutton, W. 169th Avenue, owns the property of Dicky's Dog, Century 21, the empty lot and the drive way that he acquired at a tax sale. He stated that employees and customers of Dicky's Dogs have used the Costa's lot for parking and asked for consideration to leave that portion of the parking lot until the Liberty Park site is improved with lighting and parking. He stated the people in the old hotel and employees of the Vape Shop have been parking on his drive but he asked them to find other parking so the Dicky Dog employees can park on the drive. Mr. Hendrix asked Mr. Sutton if he would be willing to sell the drive and empty lot to the Town. Mr. Sutton said if he sold he would want to sell the whole chunk including the restaurant, the house, empty lot and drive. Mr. Hendrix said the Town would have to obtain two appraisals and offer the average of the two, but said the Town would not want to be renting out any facilities. Councilman Gruszka said he was in favor of removing all the asphalt on the Costa's site as planned. Mr. Hendrix was concerned about the condition of the asphalt. Discussion followed. Councilman Alessia said it will eventually be a parking lot and didn't want to take away parking from commercial buildings. Councilman Angerman asked Mr. Sutton if he had thought about putting gravel in his empty lot for additional parking. Mr. Sutton stated he had thought of that but said it would be a short term fix. The project is to begin on June 28th and will begin with the tearing down of the Sidetrack, which will take approximately seven days and then move to Costas' site. The Council will try to come up with a solution prior to that. Mr. Sutton said he was agreeable to selling his property to the Town.

Garden Center - Mr. Hendrix said the second appraisal had been received for \$65,000. The current owner has been making improvements but won't be able to obtain a permit from DNR because it is in a flood way. The Town plans to use the property to expand the south parking lot. Mr. Hendrix also showed on the map properties that have already been obtained by the Town and properties he plans to acquire for the trail project. Council members agreed to have Mr. Hendrix and Attorney Westland make a Uniform Acquisition Offer to the property owner and he will have 30 days to accept, then eminent domain will begin.

CDBG Project Update - Two bids had been received, with the lowest bid from Garriup Construction in the amount of \$224,850. The Town has \$110,000 in block grant funds and will use park funds for the difference. ADA projects will be completed in the parks and at town hall. The project will be awarded during the regular meeting.

Water System Sale Update - Mr. Hendrix stated that testimony has been submitted and the IURC has replied back with thirteen questions that they are working on responding to. Indiana American Water has made offers to town employees, and the three projects the Town has to complete before the sale have begun.

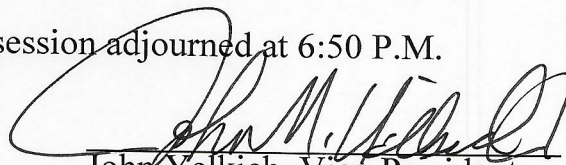
Town Maintenance facility - Agreement with Greg Gienko - Mr. Hendrix said a quote had been received from Meridan West for the next phase for building a public works facility. A pre-cast building is being proposed and the second phase of the project is to prepare an architect drawing including structural work to enable the Town to obtain construction estimates and the second task is to allow for state permits. The total estimate for the project is \$73,900 and will be acted on during the regular meeting. Mr. Hendrix said the annexation is complete and the variance of use will be acted on during the regular meeting.

Virtual Meeting Ordinance - Attorney Westland had prepared an Ordinance that will establish a policy for the Town to participate by electronic means of communication after the Executive Order of the Governor expires in July due to the pandemic. Mr. Westland said the ordinance is per state statute except where tweaked by Council that states a member may not attend more than 25% of the meetings in a calendar year by electronic means. The ordinance also states that members cannot attend by electronic means if they take action to adopt a budget, make reduction in personnel, initiate a referendum, impose or increase fees, impose or increase penalty, exercise the Council's power of eminent domain, or establish, impose or raise or renew a tax.

Cripe Detention Pond Donation - Harrison Heights Subdivision & Beverly Estates - The detention pond from Harrison Heights has been donated to the Town. The detention pond in Beverly Estates is being maintained by the Cripes, but there are no sidewalks, and the Town had questioned why there were no street lights in Beverly Estates. Mr. Hendrix said they have agreed to install the sidewalks and asked for an extension to November 1st, but they are very adamant they don't have to put the street lights in. They contend that when their subdivision was approved they were not required to put in street lights but put in coach lights at each residence instead. Mr. Hendrix said they are researching the ordinance and minutes and cannot find any agreement. Discussion followed. Mr. Hendrix said he didn't feel the Town should take over the pond maintenance until the matter of street lights is resolved. He stated he would be getting an estimate from Nipsco on the cost to place street lights at the intersections. He also noted that street lights were not installed in the Village Parkway area either.

West Meadowlane property - Mr. Hendrix stated they have received an offer from Austgen for \$7,000 an acre which he felt was too low and asked permission to reject the offer. The property has been appraised at \$370,000 for 15 acres. The property is zoned R-2 and R-3 and they have been in talks with other developers.

No further discussion, the work session adjourned at 6:50 P.M.


John Yelkich, Vice-President

Attest:


Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer