

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
AUGUST 9, 2021

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, August 9, 2021, at 5:30 P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were Michael Gruszka, Todd Angerman, John Alessia, and John Yelkich. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney David Westland, and two citizens. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Updates were given on the following projects:

Recap of Water Main breaks - Town Manager Craig Hendrix gave an update on the major water leak that occurred on Thursday, July 29<sup>th</sup> that resulted in shutting the water off in the entire town and having to issue a boil order. He stated a surge occurred in the system resulting in a water hammer that split a 10" pipe at Nichols and Main Street. Three other leaks happened along Main Street also. The town crews had trouble shutting off the valves and after draining the tower the decision to shut down the town to repair the leak was made. Mr. Hendrix stated Zieses & Sons and GE Marshall were both contracted to help repair the leaks. A discussion followed on what might have been the cause. President Angerman was concerned the Town had no way to notify the residents. Mr. Hendrix stated the previous alert system Nixel had expired in June and the new Town website, which went on line this week, has the capacity to alert citizens as long as they sign up for notification. Mr. Hendrix spoke of the digital message boards that will be purchased, and the new digital sign that is planned for Evergreen Park. Council members agreed to use the Labor Day Parade to promote the new alert system and encourage all residents to sign up. Discussion followed on the cost of the leak with the contractors, million of gallons of water loss, and overtime.

Web Site Launch - Greg White gave a review of the new website. The new alert system should be on line in a week.

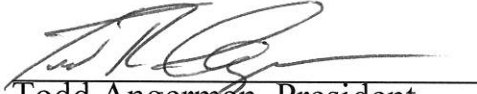
2022 Budget - Clerk-Treasurer Judy Walters asked for direction on the 2022 budget. She stated the total property levy increase for 2022 will be approximately \$185,000, due to circuit breaker credits and property tax caps. Discussion followed on line item increases for insurance, salary increased, and an additional officer. Discussion followed on increased miscellaneous revenue such as building permit fees. New garbage rates for Republic were received and discussion followed to amend the ordinance to increase the administrative charge from .25 cents to .90 cents, totaling \$20.00 a month. It was noted the sale of the water utility won't affect the tax levy until 2023. Mr. Hendrix asked if they would like Porter County to explain their endowment process and what banks will be asked for a quote.

Garden Center - The property owner was served the offer of the appraised value of \$65,000, and has countered with \$170,000. Mr. Hendrix has contacted the owner that the Town can only offer what was appraised. The owner had purchased the property last year for \$55,000 and the property is in a floodway. Mr. Hendrix said they will wait the thirty days for a respond and then will proceed with eminent domain.

Discussion of American Rescue Funds - Plan - The town has received the first installment of the Coronavirus Local Fiscal Relief Grant of \$1,121,299.30. Mr. Hendrix explained that a written plan for the use of funds must be submitted. He stated the Town is waiting to hear if the West Side Sewer Project of the improvements at the Wastewater Treatment Plant qualifies for a IFA project before we submit our plan.

Discussion followed on Harrison Street sidewalks and Mr. Hendrix stated right of ways were not purchased and that is why sidewalks are close to the street.

No further discussion, the work session adjourned at 6:45 P.M.

  
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Todd Angerman, President

Attest:

  
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Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer