

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
June 27, 2022

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, June 27, 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 6:08 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.

Sanitary Rate Update - Corby Thompson of Krohn & Associates reviewed the proposed sewer rate ordinance that had been prepared in February. He explained the ordinance was prepared on four tiered structure based on the minimum needed for operating costs, and amount needed to maintain debt service coverage and capital projects. The approximate increase in rates and charges would be 36% to 67%. Town Manager Hendrix discussed the upgrades needed at the wastewater treatment plant, with a new liner needed for the EQ Basin, and an expansion at the plant. He stated the liner costs could be shared with stormwater fees. Sewer connection and collection fees were also discussed and will be raised for developers to contribute to capital projects needed for expansion. Discussion followed. It was agreed among council members to amend the ordinance to a three tiered increase with the first being effective upon passage, the second as of July 1, 2023, and the final increase in July 2024. The ordinance will be introduced at the July 11th meeting and a public hearing will be set. Stormwater fees will also be reviewed with a possible increase in January 2023.

Evergreen Park Parking Lot Repair and Signage - Mr. Hendrix stated Grimmer Construction has been storing supplies and equipment from the water replacement project at Evergreen Park and it has done some damage to the parking lot. He said they have allotted \$10,000 for repairs and he proposed that the parking lot be rebuilt through a change order with Grimmer. Mr. Hendrix stated he would like to see this project and the new sign installed before INDOT begins the Route 2 paving project. The price quote to rebuild the parking lot is \$170,000. Discussion followed on funds to pay for project. The cost of the sign is being paid from a donation within the Park Improvement Fund. It was decided to move funds from the old water debt fund of \$500,000 to the Cumulative Capital Fund to appropriate for the Evergreen Park Project.

Building Renovation Grant Applications - 307 E. Commercial and 320-322 E. Commercial - Mr. Hendrix stated we have received two grant applications for the building renovation grant program requesting \$20,000 each to be acted on during the Redevelopment Meeting. He reminded Council the we originally appropriated \$40,000 total in the fund and have already given one \$20,000 grant. He stated he also has had an inquiry on the facade grant, which has a balance of \$5,000 left. Discussion followed if funds were available for both requests. Clerk-Treasurer Judy Walters asked about the amount needed for the Clark Street property. Mr. Hendrix stated the property appraised at \$130,000 and Mr. Bianchi was requesting \$160,000. Discussion followed among the Council. Attorney Westland stated the offer could include a \$15,000 administrative closing costs. Council agreed to make an offer of \$145,000. Clerk-Treasurer Walters will transfer balance of funds to building renovation grant appropriation line for requests.

Mr. Hendrix stated in regard to the Goodrich property, she is not interested in selling as she has plans for the property, but is willing to give the town easements that are needed.

Water Sale Proceeds Investment RFI Update - One proposal had been received from Wells Fargo. Both Centier and Chase had declined to submit a proposal. Centier stated due to privacy issues and Chase declined because they do not manager portfolios but charge per transaction. The committee of Councilman Gruszka, Councilman Yelkich and Clerk-Treasurer Walters and Town Manager Hendrix will meet to review proposal. Councilman Gruszka stated he will abstain when the vote is made because the rep from Wells Fargo is a personal friend of his.

TIF Update - Bryan Schuch, SEH, was present to review the current Lowell Allocation Area and made suggestions to make modifications in order to increase the amount of tax increment generated and to expand the allocation area. He proposed that about 23 parcels be removed from the allocation area due to their large decrement or because they are tax exempt, and then those parcels should be added back into the allocation area to reset the base assessed value of the parcels to generate the most tax increment possible. He also suggested extending the area by including right of ways and parcels that town has acquired. The process takes about three months and will have to acted on during Redevelopment Commission meeting. A Public hearing will be held through the Plan Commission and final action by the Town Council. Council agreed to begin process to have done by end of year.

No further discussion, the work session adjourned at 6:55 P.M.


Todd Angerman, President

Attest:


Judith Walters, Clerk-Treasurer