

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL
WORK SESSION
June 12, 2023

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, June 12, 2023, at 5:40 P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were Michael Gruszka, Todd Angerman, John Alessia, John Yelkich, and Shane Tucker arrived at 6:08. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney Nicole Bennett, GIS Director Greg White, and Police Chief Jim Woestman and Fire Chief Chris Gamblin. Also present was one citizen. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Sewer Plant Upgrade - Discussion followed on the need for increased capacity at the Waste Water Treatment Plant for future planning per discussions with the Northwest Indiana Forum.

Live Streaming and Archiving Meetings - HB1167 - Attorney Westland had prepared a draft of an ordinance establishing policy and procedures for access to inspection or downloading recorded public meetings. Mr. Hendrix stated the plan is to stream live work sessions and regular meetings, and record regular meetings and upload to a youtube channel on our website. Discussion followed. Council agreed to record Town Council, Redevelopment Commission, Plan Commission and B.Z.A. meetings and upload to website for 90 days. The ordinance will be amended and presented at a future meeting.

Policy for Utilizing Sign at Evergreen Park -Mr. Hendrix said the plan was to use the sign to inform citizens about what was going on in town with non-profit civic organizations, but it has become more than we can handle with some organizations and churches getting upset if their sign wasn't up when they felt it should be. Discussion followed. Councilman Alessia said it violated the open door law because if you do it for one, you have to do it for all. Attorney Bennett agreed, and recommended the sign be restricted to town functions and town sponsored events.

Pickle ball Courts - Bids had been received for four pickle ball courts at Freedom Park with the lowest bid from M&J Underground, Inc in the amount of \$355,064.30., which is \$60,000 over Mr. Hendrix's estimate. The courts would include fencing and paved parking lot. Mr. Hendrix explained that the Town, Cedar Creek Township, and West Creek Township all put in \$20,000 annually for capital improvements and they have agreed that the amount given last year, this year, and next year will go to the pickle ball project. He is asking the Town to make up the difference of \$175,065., and to front the funds to begin the project and have completed by September. Discussion followed. Clerk-Treasurer Judy Walters stated the town has earned \$367,000 in interest on the water utility sale funds. Council agreed to make up the difference with those funds and use current funds in the Park Capital Fund.

West Side Sewer Project - Update - A supplemental agreement with Wessler Engineering on an alternate design in the amount of \$103,000 will be acted on during the regular meeting. Mr. Hendrix stated plans to have a public meeting with homeowners affected by the project will be set soon and they are working on the appraisals for easements.

WWTP Capital Project - EQ Basin & LTCP Update - Mr. Hendrix stated after meeting with IDEM they have recommended since we are reconstructing the

basin, that we remain in the LTCP until it is complete so that if we have a combined sewer overflow it would still be allowable per our long term control plan. After the project is complete the LTCP would be complete.

Fire Department Business - An updated agreement for firefighting services with the Lowell Volunteer Fire Department was updated by Attorney Westland to include the new engine, and F150 truck. It was noted the F150 truck would respond to fire calls. Fire Chief Gamblin also said he hoped they would be able to get a snow plow for that truck. The agreement will be acted on during the regular meeting. Chief Gamblin also noted that a public works employee has become a certified firefighter, and he is working with Mr. Hendrix and Street Superintendent Lovely on how he will be able to respond to fire calls, except during snow emergencies.

Mr. Hendrix stated the automotive class at Lowell High School had reached out that they have a student that could work half day during the school year and work with our mechanic.


Freedom Trail - Update - INDOT will set a public hearing on the environmental document of the proposed trail in mid-July. Mr. Hendrix stated the plan is to pre-record the presentation about the project and put on our website before the meeting to help citizens understand the project.


136 W. Washington Street (Patricia's Dance) Update - A second appraiser has been hired and Mr. Hendrix hopes to have at next meeting.

Garden Center - The plan is to demolish the building by the end of the month. All the utilities have been disconnected. Mr. Hendrix said the plan is to put down gravel until design plans are approved. He stated Alex Kutanovski of Core 4 Properties would like to discuss with the council a plan for a business shared dumpsters. The fire department plans to do roof training before it is demolished, and they have been doing training at the Freedom Park house, but won't be able to have a live burn training because it is too close to the house to the south. Mr. Hendrix plans to ask Local 150 if they would like to have their apprentices do training on the house and demolish in the fall.

Discussion of Sanitary Connection Fees - Discussion has been held in the past to increase the tap fees for developers and Mr. Hendrix hopes to have more information at the next meeting from the consultant.

No further discussion, the work session adjourned at 6:52 P.M.


Todd Angerman, President

Attest:

Judith Walters
Clerk-Treasurer