

LOWELL TOWN COUNCIL  
WORK SESSION  
SEPTEMBER 25, 2023

A Work Session of the Lowell Town Council was called to order on Monday, September 25, 2023, at 5:43P.M., by President Todd Angerman. Members present were Todd Angerman, John Alessia, Shane Tucker, and John Yelkich arrived at 6:25. Councilman Michael Gruszka was absent. Also present were Clerk-Treasurer Judith Walters, Town Manager Craig Hendrix, Town Attorney David Westland, GIS Director Greg White, Police Chief Jim Woestman, and Fire Chief Chris Gamblin. Also present were three citizens. The purpose of the work session was general town business.

Discussion of GO Bonds for Nassau Park Construction - Attorney David Westland reviewed the documents received from Barnes & Thornburg. During the regular meeting tonight the first reading of the bond ordinance will be read with a public hearing being set for October 9<sup>th</sup>. The Council will also have first reading of an additional appropriation ordinance to appropriate the funds of the \$4,000,000 bond ordinance. Attorney Westland stated the plan is to sell the bonds and have the proceeds by the end of November. Town Manager Hendrix had prepared a project list for Nassau Park that the bond proceeds will be used for. He reiterated that the bond proceeds will be used for the park project and the water sale money that was going to be used for park project will now be used for the match for Community Crossing grant projects over the next few years. He stated since this project is ready it made more sense to flip the funding and leave the water fund money until needed, and earn more interest on those funds. Councilman Alessia asked when the project will be bid out, and Mr. Hendrix stated they are having the consultants add camera surveillance and alarm and no-key access and then it will be ready to bid out by end of year.

Discussion of Residential TIF - Attorney Westland had informed Mr. Hendrix that the next step is to prepare legal descriptions and a sketch of the areas they wish to capture. Mr. Hendrix will prepare and have Krohn & Associates estimate what the amount per taxing unit will be captured and then the Council will decide on a pass thru agreement to which taxing entities. The process will start with the Redevelopment Commission approval, then goes to Plan Commission and then Town Council and back to Redevelopment Commission for approval of a declaratory resolution. The time line is to have completed by the end of November.

Discussion of Downtown Projects - DLZ Agreement - Task Order #6 - \$295,700.00 - Washington Street, Liberty Street, 106 Clark Street Demolition, Parking Lot at 248 Liberty Street - Mr. Hendrix reviewed the proposed engineering services to improve Liberty Street using Community Crossing Grant in 2024. The plan is to use 2024-1 funds on Liberty Street that will be close to one million dollars and use the second phase of community crossing funds to do subdivision improvements around town. He stated Washington Street will be designed at the same time to match the two roads together with drainage, etc., but will apply for the 2025-1 CCMG funding for this project, with water funding matching. Mr. Hendrix stated Washington Street is estimated to be over two million dollars as it will have curbing, sidewalk, lighting and electric, and may have to be done in two phases. Also as part of the project a public parking lot will be designed around the 248 Liberty Street building. The building owned at 108 N. Clark Street by the Redevelopment Commission will be ready to demolish next year for a future site of an access drive. DLZ will work with Nipsco to abandoned and relocate the

gas service line and meters. Mr. Hendrix then reviewed a map of future projects to be done in the downtown areas including Fremont Street with adding bump outs and Jefferson Street in 2026 and Mill Street in 2028. He stated they are emphasizing improvements over the next few years in the downtown area, but will still be doing subdivision streets also.

Discussion fo Sequoia Sanitary Sewer - DLZ Agreement - \$37,800.00  
Mr. Hendrix stated the 12" main crosses McConnel Ditch and an emergency repair was recently done by the town, but needs to be replaced with a new carrier pipe inside a steel casing located on new piers, and the foundation needs to be rebuilt to hold the pipe. The area will need soil borings and require a DNR permit and drainage board permit.

Discussion of CO #4 for WWTP - A change order with Bowen Engineering in the amount of \$1,597.00 will be acted on during the regular meeting that reduced some cost for elimination of work that included replacement of a 8" EQ basin drain pipe outside the existing metering vault at the headworks due to high cost of dewatering required, but included controls and other electrical items to control pumps. Mr. Hendrix stated a JMOB meeting with Cedar Lake will be scheduled for sometime in October.

Northern League Baseball Presentation - Mr. Hendrix had been approached by a representative from the Northern Baseball League about bringing a team to Lowell. Councilman Yelkich explained they are looking to expand the teams in the area and stated they currently have teams in Crown Point, Griffith, Whiting. He said while it may be a wonderful idea the town would have to provide a stadium and run it for them and didn't feel Lowell was ready for that type of investment. Councilman Yelkich said a concern would be if we built it and the team didn't survive what would happen. Councilman Alessia stated it would have to be a multi-use facility like they have in Crown Point.

The representative is also pitching the idea in Valpo, Laporte and Michigan City. Councilman Alessia suggested they approach the school since they are investing in new baseball fields. Councilman Yelkich and Mr. Hendrix spoke of the meeting they had with representatives from Tri-Creek School for the town to possibly lease two parcels of property from them. Mr. Hendrix stated the soccer fields near Three Creeks Elementary School and the property where the old Oak Hill School was. Discussion followed. Mr. Hendrix stated he would like to see the town have more soccer fields and then the traveling league could pay to use Freedom Park. The area on Oakley could be used for baseball and softball fields for adult leagues that could be ran by the Park Department.

Mr. Hendrix said the school corporation also would like to partner with the park department to open their fieldhouse and pool to the public. Mr. Hendrix stated he would like to have SEH sketch a plan of the two areas and we could get a vision of what the areas could be used for. After further discussion, the Council agreed that the Northern League Baseball should contact the school corporation, and they were interested in moving forward on leasing the property near Three Creeks School, but felt the Oakley Street property could be looked at further down the road.

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

  
Todd Angerman, President

Attest:

  
Judith Walters  
Clerk-Treasurer