

CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL MEETING
March 8, 2021
7:00 P.M. (via ZOOM)

As Mayor of the Laconia City Council, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:

a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;
We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All Members have the ability to communicate during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to watch the live YouTube video at www.youtube.com/laconiaah, listen to this meeting through dialing the following phone # 1-646-558-8656 or participate by the Zoom app. Webinar ID: 810 190 4015 password 295800

b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;
We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the City of Laconia's website at: www.laconiaah.gov.

c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;
If anybody has a problem, please call 527-1265 x243 or email at: cityclerk@laconiaah.gov

d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.
In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote.

Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.

3/8/2021 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hosmer called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Councilor Lipman lead the Salute to the Flag.

3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Cheryl Hebert, City Clerk

4. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Soucy YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Lipman YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Haynes YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Hamel YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO

Councilor Felch YES, Is anyone in the room with you? NO.

Mayor Hosmer noted all six Councilors are in attendance and a quorum has been established.

5. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Scott Myers, City Manager

Glenn Smith, Finance Director

6. COUNCIL PROCLAMATION

7. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.A. **Regular meeting minutes of February 22, 2021**

Minutes of the meeting were distributed to the City Council on Tuesday, February 23, 2021. One correction was submitted to the Clerk and the minutes were redistributed to the Council on Wednesday, February 24, 2021. With one correction submitted to the Clerk, the minutes will be accepted as redistributed.

8. PRESENTATIONS

8.A. **2020 Fiscal Year Audit/Comprehensive Annual Financial Report**

This item will not be presented tonight as it was not finalized but it should be presented on March 22, 2021.

9. CONSENT & ACTION ITEMS

10. CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Charlie St. Clair - Mr. St. Clair spoke of the upcoming Motorcycle Rally. The tentative dates are June 12 through June 20, 2021. Mr. St. Clair is asking if the Council can hold off on making any final decisions until the end of April.

Angela Smith, 3254 Parade Road - Mrs. Smith is concerned with the speed limit by her house and the end of Rollercoaster Road. She would like to see the speed limit reduced and to get rid of the passing lane.

Councilor Cheney explained that himself and Charlie St. Clair have addressed the State with these concerns and they will get back to Mrs. Smith with any further information they receive.

Meghan Dopits, GM of Big House and Tower Hill Tavern - Ms. Dopits expressed her thoughts and concerns regarding COVID and the upcoming Motorcycle Rally. She stated with all of the vaccines available and with New Hampshire having 17% of the population vaccinated, she recommends holding off on making any final decisions until a later date.

Jose Dematos would like to see Motorcycle Week go forward this June, 2021. Mr. Dematos read off some statistics in regards to the COVID cases and the number of vaccines that have been administered. Mr. Dematos stated the Motorcycle Week Rally of June 12 through June 20, 2021 should go on as close to normal as possible.

11. INTERVIEWS

11.A. **Laura Ringer - Requesting appointment as a regular member of the Parks and Recreation Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024**

Laura Ringer was interviewed.

11.B. **Charlie St. Clair - Requesting reappointment as the Planning Board representative on the Historic District Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024**

Charlie St. Clair was interviewed.

12. NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS

12.A. **Mayor's reappointment of Captain Chad Vallancourt to the Highway Safety Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024**

Councilor Felch moved to reappoint Captain Chad Vallancourt to the Highway Safety Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024, seconded by Councilor Soucy;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

12.B. **Mayor's reappointment of Councilor Henry Lipman to the Highway Safety Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024**

Councilor Haynes moved to reappoint Councilor Henry Lipman to the Highway Safety Commission to a three-year term expiring at the end of March, 2024, seconded by Councilor Cheney;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

13. COMMUNICATIONS

14. PUBLIC HEARINGS

15. MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Hosmer shared that the 30 Church Street property (Buziel House) has entered into a purchase and sales agreement with the owners of Rowell's Septic, Ian and Mardee Hagan. There were a handful of offers. The asking price was \$450,000. The offer that was accepted was \$480,000. Council did request a few stipulations with the sale of the Buziel House, that the Hagans did agree to. The requests were: the structure be used as residential and/or a home office, right of first review if the Hagan's ever decided to sell the property, and that the purchase came with four parking spots along the side of the building near the Library. Mayor Hosmer thanked the City Manager and Steve Weeks. The closing documents will be added as an agenda item at the March 22, 2021 Council meeting.

Mayor Hosmer mentioned that the Governor has released his recommendation of the State Budget. Included within the budget was House Bill 2. As a trailer bill, HB2 came out a week or so ago. One of the items within this bill is the sale of the Laconia State School property. The provision in HB2 allows the Governor and Executive Council to possess sole authority to sell or lease this property, if this were to become law, this authorization would override any other provision of law. The Lakesore Redevelopment Planning Commission was formed in 2017 for this property. The Commission has put a lot of work over the past few years for that property. HB2 excludes Laconia in any decisions for that property going forward if that bill passes into law. Mayor Hosmer would like to know how the Council feels about this.

Councilor Cheney is deeply concerned with HB2 and he is hoping the Senate will delete this portion of HB2. Any effort the City can make to object to this part of HB2, would make Councilor Cheney happy.

Councilor Soucy agrees with Councilor Cheney. Councilor Soucy would like to hear from our local State Representatives and Executive Councilor Kenney.

Councilor Lipman suggested that an in person conversation be had with the Governor's office rather than a letter be sent. Councilor Lipman thinks maybe if an explanation was heard, then maybe everyone would have a better understanding of the Governor's thoughts.

Mayor Hosmer respects Councilor Lipman's position and has no problem in trying to be diplomatic. With this situation, Mayor Hosmer feels that the Commission as well as Laconia was blindsided by HB2. Mayor Hosmer does not want to wait too long before Laconia sends a response on their position.

Councilor Lipman wants us to understand the entire picture before taking a position.

Councilor Hamel agrees with Mayor Hosmer and Councilor Cheney. Councilor Hamel mentioned that years ago the City offered to purchase that property but they were refused. It was also offered to the County for a lesser price. Councilor Hamel agrees with Councilor Soucy about having Executive Councilor Kenney join one of the Council meetings to have a discussion about this.

Councilor Lipman reminded the Council that this bill still has to go through the House and Senate and this is why he suggested to have some open dialog.

Councilor Hamel would really like to know what Executive Councilor Kenney's position is on HB2.

Councilor Haynes respects Councilor Lipman's approach but at some point Laconia needs to have their thoughts heard.

Councilor Felch feels that the City of Laconia needs to reach out to their local representatives and voice their opinions. He also noted that Representative O'Hara is listening to this meeting right now and maybe we could hear his thoughts.

Councilor Soucy agrees with Councilor Felch.

Councilor Cheney does agree that dialog is a good idea but with the Senate President, not the Governor. Councilor Cheney also agrees that the local and County representatives need to be contacted and asked for their support.

Mayor Hosmer brought the Council and public up to date with what has been happening over the past couple of weeks in regards to Motorcycle Week. The Mayor, City Manager, Fire Chief, Police Chief, and John Beland from the Partnership from Public Health have been discussing Motorcycle Week and current COVID-19 data. Mayor Hosmer thinks it is prudent to discuss some contingencies. The question is still whether the 2021 Motorcycle Week can go on as normal or should it be scaled back. Mayor Hosmer is concerned with a proper balance of public health and the economic impact. Mayor Hosmer doesn't think the City is ready to make a final decision on how to move forward with 2021 Motorcycle Week. Mayor Hosmer would like this added to the March 22, 2021 agenda to have further discussion.

Councilor Felch thinks anything we do now would be premature.

Councilor Cheney does not want any rushed decisions.

Councilor Hamel stated he wished that the Motorcycle Week Association had reached out to the City before finalizing the June dates. He doesn't mind those dates, but he is not sure what the event may look like, whether ran as normal or scaled back. Some of the things that need to be looked at are the vendor permits, how many vendors will actually be attending?

Councilor Felch stated that all vendors are on board with the event moving forward.

City Manager Myers shared some background information pertaining to Motorcycle Week and other typical summer events and how they may look this season. He stated discussions have been happening over the past couple weeks regarding not just Motorcycle Week but 4th of July, summer camps, etc. In typical years, the planning for Motorcycle Week would begin as early as January. In 2020, that planning had already begun in January. It wasn't until March of 2020 that the Governor had a meeting with Superintendents of schools to close the schools. This year, there has been some planning started for Motorcycle Week but there has not been any money collected or firm commitments from any vendors. If property owners come in for site review for 10 vendor spaces, this doesn't mean they have 10 vendors lined up for those spaces, it just means they are approved for 10 vendor sites. City Manager Myers is concerned with pushing any decisions out as it is not just Fire and Police that need to be planned, there is a lot of other logistics that needs to be done as well. The April 28 date is only six weeks out from the start of the event.

18. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilor Hamel spoke of the vaccination process that was held this past weekend at the NH Motor Speedway. He explained it was run very well and he thanks all the volunteers and the State of New Hampshire that helped put this event on.

Councilor Felch has received several complaints about the condition of the roads on Jefferson Street and Massachusetts Ave.

17. COMMITTEE REPORTS

17.A. **FINANCE** (Lipman (Chair), Hamel, Cheney)
The Finance Committee will be meeting this evening following the regular Council meeting.

17.A.i. **WOW Trail Funding**

17.A.ii. **Downtown TIF Financing**

17.B. **PUBLIC SAFETY** (Cheney (Chair), Soucy, Lipman)

17.C. **GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES** (Soucy (Chair), Felch, Cheney)

17.C.i. **Review of Chapter 167, Noise and Chapter 161 Licensing as it pertains to outdoor sound equipment and loudspeakers**

17.C.ii. **Ordinance Amending Chapter 221, Vehicles and Traffic/Parking on Sublawns**

17.C.iii. **Procedural review of grant applications**

17.C.iv. **Regulation of Short Term Residential Rental Businesses**

17.C.v. **Proposed Historic Overlay District**

17.C.vi. **Scenic Road Motorcycle Noise Petition**

17.D. **LANDS & BUILDINGS** (Hamel (Chair), Haynes, Felch)

17.D.i. **Downtown parking garage**

17.D.ii. **Repair & maintenance of City buildings**

17.D.iii. **Perley Pond Maintenance**

17.D.iv. **Plan for the DPW Compound**

17.D.v. **Continuation of the discussion regarding parking in the Lakeport area**

17.E. **PUBLIC WORKS** (Haynes (Chair), Felch, Soucy)

17.E.i. **Retaining Wall Policy**

18. LIAISON REPORTS

Councilor Hamel updated the Council on the Colonial Theatre.

19. CITIZENS REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

Representative Travis O'Hara - Representative O'Hara would like to hear from the Mayor and/or Councilors to discuss House Bill 2.

20. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

20.A. **Financial and Operational Trends Report**

City Manager Myers reviewed the report.

City Manager Myers stated with the weather hopefully warming up at the end of this week, Jefferson Street and Mass Ave should see some patch work done. These two roads are part of the Elm Street road work upgrades.

City Manager Myers reappointed Lenny Miner to another three years for Board of Assessors.

City Manager Myers reported that the Atlantic Broadband Franchise Agreement is due for renewal. There is a formal process in Federal Law that will need to be followed. There will be public hearings to allow for public input. Having said that, the channel packages and price packages are not a part of the franchise agreement and the City has no say in those two items.

City Manager Myers reached out to Comcast and Comcast is still on track to have the City completed by the end of 2021.

Councilor Cheney requested if the City Manager could adjust the font size for the overtime report and also give a comparison of departments in regards to overtime.

21. NEW BUSINESS

21.A. **Request to submit a grant application to the State's Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) for the design and construction of a multi-use trail and sidewalk improvements on Elm Street from the Elm Street Bridge to Hickory Stick Lane**

City Manager Myers explained this would be done in conjunction with the sewer and street repairs on Elm Street.

Councilor Lipman would like to know if the Schools would be willing to contribute to any of this match as well. The City Manager will look into that.

Councilor Felch moved that the City Council authorize the City Manager to sign and submit a grant application to the NH DOT for the Elm Street pedestrian accessibility improvements project, seconded by Councilor Hamel;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

Councilor Felch moved that the City Council authorize the Mayor to sign a letter of support from the City Council for the Elm Street pedestrian accessibility improvements project, seconded by Councilor Cheney;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

21.B. **First reading of Resolution 2021-04, relative to the acceptance of the New Hampshire Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$250,000 to fund a Command Vehicle for the Laconia Police Department and to schedule a public hearing for March 22, 2021**

Councilor Cheney moved to waive a reading of Resolution 2021-04 in its entirety and to read by title only, seconded by Councilor Haynes;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

Councilor Cheney moved a first reading of Resolution 2021-04, relative to the acceptance of the New Hampshire Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant in the amount of \$250,000 to fund a Command Vehicle for the Laconia Police Department, seconded by Councilor Felch;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

Councilor Felch moved to schedule a public hearing on March 22, 2021 during the regular Council meeting to gather public input prior to adoption, seconded by Councilor Cheney;

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

22. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

23. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

23.A. Master Plan

23.B. Milfoil Treatment funding requests

23.C. Sewer & Water Master Plan

23.D. Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-op/Solid Waste disposal cost reductions

23.E. Strategic Planning/Goal Setting

23.F. WOW Trail

23.G. Weirs Beach Restoration Project

23.H. Fair St/Court St traffic problems and accidents

24. Any other business that may come before the Council

25. NON-PUBLIC SESSION (According to RSA 91-A:3, II)

Mayor Hosmer noted for the record that the Council will recess briefly to discuss bargaining agreements and then move to the non-public meeting. Once the non-public meeting has adjourned, the Council will go back into public session for the sole purpose of adjourning the meeting. No further business will be discussed. The Finance Committee will be meeting after this meeting.

Councilor Cheney moved to go into a non-public meeting regarding 91A:3, II (d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale, or lease of a real or personal property which, if discussed in public, would likely benefit a party or parties whose interests are adverse to those of the general community, seconded by Councilor Haynes:

City Clerk Hebert took a roll call vote:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Soucy YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

Councilor Cheney moved to seal the minutes for six months, seconded by Councilor Hamel;

A roll call vote was taken:

Councilor Cheney YES

Councilor Soucy YES

Councilor Lipman YES

Councilor Haynes YES

Councilor Hamel YES

Councilor Felch YES;

the motion passed with all in favor.

26. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Council and hearing no objection, Mayor Hosmer adjourned the meeting at 10:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Hebert, City Clerk

MINUTES OF THIS MEETING WERE APPROVED BY COUNCIL ON MARCH 22, 2021