

**City of Lowell, Oregon  
City Council  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
August 20, 2024**

The Lowell City Council held a regular meeting on August 20, 2024. The meeting location was Lowell Rural Fire Protection District Fire Station 1 at 389 N. Pioneer Street, Lowell, OR 97452. Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

**City Councilors present:**

Mayor Don Bennett, Gail Harris, Tim Stratis, Maureen Weathers, Jimmy Murray

**City Councilors absent:**

None.

**Staff/others present:**

City Administrator Jeremy Caudle; Public Works Director Max Baker; Library Director Peggy O’Kane

Following the pledge of allegiance, Mayor Bennett recognized Public Works Director Max Baker for 10 years of dedicated service to the city. Mayor Bennett offered words of praise for Baker’s accomplishments and presented him with a plaque that states: “In recognition of 10 years of dedicated service. Presented August 20, 2024 by the Mayor and City Council.” The meeting recessed at 7:05 pm for everyone to enjoy a piece of cake.

Mayor Bennett reconvened the meeting at 7:12 pm.

**Approval of the agenda:**

No changes.

**Consent agenda:**

1. July 16, 2024 regular meeting minutes
2. August 6, 2024 regular meeting minutes
3. July 2024 check register
4. June 2024 financial report

Councilor Weather’s motion to approve the consent agenda was seconded by Councilor Murray.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

**Public comments:**

None.

**Council comments:**

Councilor Murray stated his interest in serving on the Library Committee to fill a vacant seat.

**Staff reports:**

City Administrator

- ePermitting is scheduled to go live in October.
- Filing deadlines for the municipal election are approaching.
- Approved a Type II application for a property line adjustment.

- Met with a contractor who's interested in building an ADU and approved a hillside development permit.
- The audit of the annual financial statements has begun.
- The wastewater treatment master plan is still undergoing DEQ review.
- We hired a new employee for the Public Works Department.
- The city's contract accountant manually adjusted the CA's vacation leave to correct the error that was reported at the July 16 meeting.
- The city's request for .GOV migration funding was approved by the Oregon Department of Emergency Management.
- Submitted the City Council's preferences for the LOC legislative ballot priorities.
- Met with Lane County Mobile Services.
- Lane County Parks and Recreation is scheduled to inspect the covered bridge in the fall.
- Staff ordered new signage for City Hall.
- USDA and USACE are still coordinating work on our ECWAG grant related to cultural resources studies.
- The CA covered several items reported in the summary financial report.
- Code enforcement activities – numerous noxious vegetation letters were sent out and one property did not comply with an abatement order regarding rubbish.

#### Public Works

- Waiting on quote to repair the stage roof at Rolling Rock Park.
- Staff are working on pothole and crack repairs throughout the city.
- Park restrooms remained closed indefinitely.
- The new PLC/SCADA program is up and running.
- The water treatment plant is operating more efficiently due to the new system.
- More programming tweaks are needed to complete the configuration process.
- Staff participated in a meeting with state and federal officials to receive updates on the dam drawdowns this year.
- The new Utility Worker Trainee started working on August 5.
- Staff are planning for a bio-solids removal from the WWTP drying beds.

#### Library Department

- Received notice of a new grant at the first of July.
- There has been much progress on the digital repository program.
- The book sale and summer reading were major activities in July.
- The library has received a donation of around 1,000 children's books. Staff have been organizing and weeding these donations.
- The library made around \$1,000 from the book sale.
- Books not sold will be processed through Thrift Books or donated.
- Summer reading had over 50 children signed up with at least two craft projects each week.
- Thrift Book has about 500 city books listed for sale.
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#### **Old business:**

1. Follow up on "Charging and fueling infrastructure grant" opportunity with Lane County. – Discussion/ Possible action

Councilor Weathers provided the following updates:

- After the 5-year grant period, the city owns the chargers and can do with them whatever the city wants.
- The grant would pay for five level 2 chargers with 2 chargers each.
- Maintenance responsibilities remain to be determined.

- The maintenance agreement with the servicer does not cover vandalism.
- It's uncertain if the grant would pay to pave for a parking spot.
- The city will set user charge fees after the 5-year grant period.
- The estimated useful life of a charging station is still unknown.
- The school district is interested in obtaining chargers.
- The deadline to apply is this Friday.

Councilor Stratis's motion "that we move forward with the grant for these charging stations" was seconded by Councilor Murray.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

**New business:**

1. Presentation by Parks and Recreation Committee on Paul Fisher Park swing set and gaga ball court recommendations. – Discussion

Presenters: Committee members Tony Moreci and Meesa Anders

Committee member Moreci introduced this item by stating that the committee has met its fundraising goals for a swing set and gaga ball court.

Committee member Anders discussed the project budget, including donations and SDCs. The budget includes anchors and wood chips. The total budget is around \$12,000.

Moreci added that an accessible swing set is part of the project.

The swing set would have 4 swings, one of which would be an accessible swing.

Anders explained the gaga ball pit and its popularity among children.

Councilor Harris moved to accept the Parks and Recreation Committee's recommendations and to authorize the purchase of the swing set and the construction of a gaga ball court at Paul Fisher Park, which Councilor Murray seconded.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

2. Review applications to fill vacant positions on the Library Committee. – Discussion/ Possible action
  - Tony Moreci
  - Ann Wopat

Mayor Bennett recognized Ann Wopat, who shared her personal and professional background.

Councilor Stratis moved to appoint Tony Moreci, Ann Wopat, and Jimmy Murray to the Library Committee, which Councilor Harris seconded.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

3. Motion to approve a sole source procurement for "Oral historian consulting services," based on the findings presented in the agenda item sheet, and to authorize the City Administrator to sign a contract in the amount not to exceed \$8,000 with Christoffer Eric Petersen for these services. – Discussion/ Possible action  
Presenter: Peggy O’Kane, Library Director

Library Director O’Kane emphasized the depth of personal experiences within the city that should be documented to record the community’s history. In her research, she identified the recommended consultant as an expert within the State of Oregon on how to conduct oral histories.

Councilor Stratis’s motion to approve a sole source procurement for "Oral historian consulting services," based on the findings presented in the agenda item sheet, and to authorize the City Administrator to sign a contract in the amount not to exceed \$8,000 with Christoffer Eric Petersen for these services was seconded by Councilor Weathers.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

4. Review quotes for E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street paving and repairs. – Discussion/ Possible action
- Wakeview Construction LLC - \$37,871.06
  - Wildish – \$74,879.00
  - RiverBend Construction – \$45,206.00

CA Caudle explained the scope of the project. This is intended to be a short-term fix pending the outcome of the E. 1<sup>st</sup> Street issue. The contractor will excavate 6 inches and pave 4 inches. In case repairs to the underlying infrastructure are needed, saw cuts would be made to the new pavement to access that infrastructure. Once those repairs are completed, a paving contractor would come back in the future to finish paving the remaining top 2 inches. That way, saw cuts are not visible on the street at the conclusion of the project. The saw cuts are also a weak spot on the road.

CA Caudle further explained the bid tabulations. The Wildish quote in the packet has a bid alternate for the 2 inches of asphalt, which needs to be subtracted, since we’re not doing the 2 inches right now. So, Wildish’s quote is \$57,179 with the 2 inches of asphalt subtracted. The other two quotes only had the 4-inch paving. This clarification is necessary to ensure an evaluation of the quotes based on the same scope of work.

Public Works Director Baker referred the council to a visual presented on the screen. The visual showed the work area. The width is 24 feet and extended slightly past the damaged area for an approximate 7,200 square feet area. The scope includes speed humps at both ends to encourage adherence to the speed limit, as well as to ease the transition between the different elevations between the existing street and area to be repaved. Compaction testing is also part of the project scope. Councilor Murray asked about the impact of speed bumps on emergency vehicles.

Baker responded that the speed humps are intended to be gradual.

Councilor Harris’s motion to approve the quote by Wakeview Construction LLC in the amount of \$37,871.06 to repave E. 1<sup>st</sup> St. was seconded by Councilor Weathers.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

5. Review process for sale of old City Hall/107 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.. – Discussion/ Possible action

At this time, the City Council may vote to authorize the City Administrator to proceed with the sale of 107 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. using the for sale by owner method.

CA Caudle introduced this item by referring to an information brochure in the council's packet, which listed the process and timeline for submitting offers. He added that an appraisal will be required prior to a public hearing to consider offers. The cost of an appraisal is around \$3,800. If the buyer doesn't have their own representation, the city will need to engage the services of a professional to provide contract documents and assist with the escrow process.

Councilor Weathers observed that state allows analyses other than appraisal that can indicate market value. For that reason, other methodologies, such a market analysis, would be sufficient. She also stated that the timeframe for accepting offers may need to be extended and additional flexible language may need to be added in the informational packet.

After some discussion, the City Council stated that a due date of October 10 for offers is reasonable. The City Council also agreed that a market analysis, as opposed to an appraisal, is sufficient for now to establish the market value of the property.

Councilor Weather's motion to authorize the City Administrator to proceed with the sale of 107 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> St. using the for sale by owner method was seconded by Councilor Stratis.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

6. First reading and public hearing on Ordinance 313, "An Ordinance Amending the Lowell Building Department Permit Fees; Adopting Appendix J "Grading" Of the 2024 International Building Code; and Amending the Section on how Building Permit Fees are Established."

The public hearing opened at 8:37 pm.

CA Caudle gave his staff report as follows:

- The fee schedule is the same as what was presented at previous meetings.
- The ordinance adopts grading rules.
- The ordinance deletes the word "resolution" in the subsection of the city code relating to how building inspection fees are to be adopted. That way, building inspection fees can be adopted by resolution or ordinance.

There were no public comments.

Council Weathers asked if local builders are aware of the pending fee updates.

Public Works Director responded that City Hall has been open in communicating the pending changes to contractors who are currently working on projects within the city.

The public hearing closed at 8:40 pm.

CA Caudle read Ordinance 313 in its entirety.

Councilor Harris's motion to schedule a second reading for Ordinance 313 at the September 3, 2024 regular City Council meeting was seconded by Councilor Murray.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

- 7. Motion to approve an intergovernmental agreement with Lane Council of Governments for an external market compensation analysis at the member rate of \$7,791, and to authorize the City Administrator to sign. - Discussion/ Possible action

Councilor Harris's motion to approve an intergovernmental agreement with Lane Council of Governments for an external market compensation analysis at the member rate of \$7,791, and to authorize the City Administrator to sign was seconded by Councilor Murray.

Mayor Bennett: YES; Stratis: YES; Harris: YES; Weathers: YES; Murray: YES.

APPROVED: 5-0.

**Other business:**

- 1. Thoughts on September 3 work session at 6:00 pm to discuss code enforcement abatement, City Administration evaluation process improvements, annual City Council planning session.

Due to scheduling conflicts, CA Caudle stated that he would distribute a meeting poll to decide on a date that works for everyone.

**Mayor comments:**

None.

**Councilor comments:**

None.

**Community comments:**

None.

**Adjourned at 8:48 pm.**

APPROVED:

  
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Don Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
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Jeremy Caudle, City Recorder