

PROCEEDINGS OF LOWDEN CITY COUNCIL –REGULAR  
MONDAY, APRIL 4, 2016 5:30PM CITY HALL MEETING ROOM

The regular meeting of the Lowden City Council was called to order by Mayor Ashley Hansen.

Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Council members present on roll call: Stewart, Hamdorf, Dewell, Kim Jones, and absent Conrad

Visitors: Dale Axline, Lana Axline, Marla Quinn, Jack Burham, Joseph Steffen, Kevin Lange, Austin Lange, John Mouw, Abbey Kramer, Laurie Millam, Kathleen Baumer, Beth Schuttler, Savannah Sieren.

M/S Hamdorf, Stewart to approve Consent agenda including minutes, bills and financial reports  
Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen introduced special guest, Marla Quinn, ECIA. Marla spoke to council about the role of ECIA. ECIA can assist with grant writing, strategic planning, budget preparation, financial reports, ordinances, annexation and many other functions. Her goal at this meeting was to discuss the current code used by the City of Lowden. Lowden's code is outdated and her recommendation to council was that they consider updating to a newer model of code for the city. Marla said Lowden's current code is pieced together, so the new code would help Lowden to get up to date and would assist the city to enforce laws. City Clerk, Carlson asked Marla what the cost would be for this project. The cost would be approximately \$3,000. Marla gave council paperwork and a copy of the new model code to look at. Marla said she will discuss and show council and mayor some additional information when they attend the training session organized for them on April 19<sup>th</sup> in Maquoketa. Councilman Hamdorf asked who can help to write grants, Marla indicated that Mark Schneider assists with community block grants, he may also be able to help with grants regarding the sewer plant. Mayor Hansen, asked council to consider a late bill presented by the fire station for air packs at a cost of \$1603.50. After a brief discussion the bill was approved by council. M/S Hamdorf, Stewart to add the bill to the current bills for payment. Ayes: All.

Jack Burnham - Engineer, Hart-Frederick Consultants PC introduced himself to council and visitors. He informed council of what his company could do for the town with regards to engineering. His company handles small to big projects and they can also work on grants to help with costs of projects. Jack handed documentation to council for review.

Mayor Hansen said the city had received its annual insurance renewal package from Niermeyer – Maurer. The cost of insurance for the city, fire station, library, sewer plant and little home daycare was \$32,551.00. Councilman Hamdorf asked if this was a large increase. City Clerk, Carlson reported that it was very minimal increase of approximately 1%. M/S Dewell, Jones to approve payment of city insurance. Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen said 2 Alcohol permit requests had been received by City Clerk, Carlson. J&J Grocery to extend its license to carry native wines and Cedar Country Stores for its annual license renewal. Council discussed the 2 requests. M/S Hamdorf, Stewart to approve J&J Grocery and Cedar Country Stores alcohol permit request. Ayes: All. Beth Schutterle asked council to consider her request to become a rural customer for garbage and recycling. Kirk Steinke, Public Works informed council of the process and that if approved she would need a key to bring her garbage in to town, no pick up services could be offered. Beth asked if she could just do recycling. Councilman Stewart said this would not be possible she would need to commit to the garbage and recycling together, services cannot be split. Councilman Hamdorf asked Kirk Steinke, Public Works to coordinate details with the customer. M/S Stewart, Jones to approve Beth Schutterle to bring garbage and recycling in to town. Ayes: All.

Little Home Daycare – Mayor Hansen informed all present that repairs had been requested by Bill Norton for the Little Home Daycare’s parking lot. A large hole had appeared and needs to be fixed. Mayor Hansen said the contract Bill Norton had provided her with indicated we are responsible for the repairs and we should fix it. Kirk Steinke said the handicap parking signs also need to be taller, he also thought the repairs to the parking area would be approximately \$1022.20. The area is approximately 16ft x 22ft wide, and they would need to patch and then add a sealcoat which would be in region of an extra \$200.00. Austin Lange asked council if anyone had spoken to the school about buying the daycare. Councilman Stewart said we need to do some research still. Kirk Steinke, Public Works asked if we are supposed to be paying the school \$1.00 per month as rental, he said we are not currently doing this, he also said it’s not fair to residents that the city is paying for the Little Home Daycare’s water bills at \$100-\$120 per month and that money could be used towards the sewer plant. Councilman Hamdorf said Little Home Daycare has money in savings to assist the city with these expenses. Councilman Stewart asked Mayor Hansen what other items are in the contract. Mayor Hansen said a number of things are listed. Laurie Millam asked who had signed the contracts, Mayor Hansen said Reuben Wenndt, had signed the contract along with Bill Norton. Councilman Hamdorf said road works crews will be here in June. Councilman Dewell asked when the Little Home Daycare parking lot was last fixed, Kirk Steinke, Public Works said it was a number of years ago, probably when it was built. Mayor Hansen will talk to Bill Norton about the repairs and who will be responsible for them. Councilman Hamdorf informed Kirk Steinke, Public Works to add it to the list of city streets to be fixed in June and the cost to be tabled for now until resolved at the May meeting when Bill Norton will be available to discuss. M/S Dewell, Jones to fix the parking lot with an exception noted for Bill Norton to come to the next meeting in May to discuss who will pay for this fix. Ayes: All.

Nuisances – Laurie Millam discussed with council that she had cleaned up most of the problems noted on her recent nuisance abatement. She said the fridge was now gone and everything except the bricks which are still on her yard. She said her husband was having surgery soon so she asked for an extension regarding the bricks, Laurie said they are redoing a foyer area. Councilman Hamdorf said as long as the bricks were neatly stacked he would extend her

nuisance abatement completion date and asked her if it will be completed this year. Laurie said it would be. City Clerk, Carlson read out to all present a list of address that were issued notices for Nuisance Abatements and asked Kirk Steinke, Public Works for the latest status of each one. 705 Jefferson Ave, 904 Hall Avenue, 809 Jefferson Ave, 306 McKinley Ave, 505 Jefferson Ave, 205 Hall Ave, 202 Main Street, 304 McKinley Ave, 702 McKinley Ave, 96 1<sup>st</sup> Street, 807 McKinley Ave, 401 Washington Ave, 743 Hoover Highway, 200 5<sup>th</sup> Street, 614 Main Street.

Kirk Steinke, Public Works reported most had cleaned up as instructed those who did not will be reviewed and addressed and further action will follow. Mayor Hansen said a letter from Dennis Sloan's attorney had been received and he is requesting a hearing and appeal. Mayor made a suggestion to council on a date and time and council discussed options. A date of Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at 5pm was set. City Clerk, Carlson will send out necessary paperwork and work with the city attorney.

Austin Lange asked about the roads in town, and why the city was dumping money in to the daycare and not the roads. Kirk Steinke asked council if an offer comes in for \$300,000 for the Little Home Daycare building would the city sell it. Councilman Stewart said we need to ask the school if they would be interested in purchasing it. No further discussion occurred. Visitor, Joseph Steffan said he understands the budget constraints of the city and that Lowden has flooding issues. He said the bridge south of him is all silted in. Councilman Hamdorf said it has to do with the railway track, Joseph asked if we have anyway to improve that area for the flow of water. Councilman Hamdorf said we cannot route any water under the railway tracks, it is not allowed. Councilman Stewart asked if we able to discuss with the railroad. Councilman Hamdorf said good luck with that. Joseph said he had water in his basement recently and when he purchased the home he was not informed of that. Councilman Hamdorf suggested he talk with his realtor to see if can pursue anything with them and the prior homeowner.

Visitor Abigail Kramer, Engineer from MSA, introduced herself and offered her services to the town of Lowden for any upcoming projects. She provided business cards to council and a brief overview of what her company does.

Permits: Conrad Construction submitted a permit to build 10 storage sheds on land that he had recently purchased at 87 1<sup>st</sup> Street, which is where the old E & I Telemarketing Company used to be. Council reviewed the documents and discussed. It would be 10 storage sheds to begin with and then later maybe 10 more. Council discussed that the setback should be 7.5 not 7 as indicated on the drawing. Kirk Steinke, Public Works will discuss the slight modification with Conrad Construction. This area is zoned as commercial. M/S Stewart, Hamdorf to approve the building permit for Conrad Construction with the 7.5 set-back. Ayes: All.

Building Permit request was received from 401 McKinley Ave, this permit was tabled from the March meeting. Mayor Hansen and Councilman Hamdorf visited the property to look at the area to decide if a portable building could be placed on the property. M/S Hamdorf, Dewell to

approve the building permit which will be inspected by Kirk Steinke, Public Works to make sure the building is portable. Ayes: All.

Kirk Steinke, Public Works reported that LL Pelling met with him recently to discuss road work needs. He said chip seal has a life expectancy of approximately 3-5 years. They will be making repairs on 8<sup>th</sup> Street - Grant Ave, Jefferson - 7<sup>th</sup>, 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Augusta Drive and Yankee - Main, Little Home Daycare parking lot, 10<sup>th</sup> Street – Washington and then regrinding 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> street and seal coat. Approximate cost of all the projects would be \$29,819.95. Kirk reported that the 1 ton truck plow blade was bad, he had called a couple of places for estimates to replace or fix. \$550.00 plus shipping was the best estimate for repair, we could get a patch to fix it, which would last perhaps another year or so. Councilman Hamdorf said he has a blade the city could have if it fits. Kirk will work with Councilman Hamdorf on this. Kirk Steinke also told council that the city needs a new truck. Kirk discussed the softball lights at the park and a recent quote he had received from Musco Lighting, this would be for 4 poles delivered to our lot, 2, 60ft and 2, 70ft metal poles at a cost of \$39,250.00 this would not include assembly or wiring. The lights would cost approximately \$7400.00. City Clerk, Carlson said that a discussion with Aaron Horman had occurred earlier that day and the park and school can assist with the bleacher costs, which also need attention. He said the school has a budget of \$10,000 - \$11,000 available. More research needs to be completed on both items. Discussion tabled. Kirk also reported on the Sewer plant, he reminded council that we are on a short list with the DNR and that we would have 90 days to find an engineer to come up with the plans and submit to the DNR when requested by them. We would then have 52 months approximately to implement the plans. Councilman Hamdorf challenged this information, Kirk said we need to move the sewer plant to a new location, we will need grants and we should begin to review options such as model, design and location. Councilman Hamdorf recently went to look at Solon's plant and it was not much hands on. More discussion, research needs to occur on the Sewer plant. Discussion tabled.

Kirk Steinke, Public Works reminded council that we share some resources with Mechanicsville, we normally use the street sweeper from them and in exchange they use the city leaf vac. This arrangement will continue again this year. Councilman Hamdorf asked about the fuel tank and its containment area. Councilman Hamdorf said the entire area should be contained, Kirk said he didn't feel this was necessary. Councilman Hamdorf and Kirk Steinke, Public Works will look at the best way to secure the tank.

Mayor Hansen read out loud to all present a letter she had received from Jan Olsen regarding the recent Nuisance Abatement notices sent out to some residents. Jan Olsen said that she is pleased the city is working on resolving these issues and to keep moving forward. Mayor Hansen also reported that she wanted to clarify some verbiage in an article that was written by the Sun News recently, she said that when she spoke about an issue with the attorney not contacting her back regarding a questions that council had asked her, she was not referring to the Nuisance Abatement notices. She was referring to a different question that had been asked

and that the attorney had not been able to speak with her prior to the meeting. Mayor Hansen also reported that she, Stewart, Steinke, Jones, Dewell and Carlson would be participating in TIF training on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Councilwoman Jones, reported that she had completed her FEMA training courses.

City Clerk Carlson reported that she had received an email and phone call from the television show American Pickers. American pickers is headed to Iowa at the end of April/ beginning of May, and are looking for leads throughout the region. Specifically, they are looking for interesting characters with interesting items and lots of them. If you would like to be considered for the show, please contact Olivia Grabar Sage, Casting Production Assistant at [ograbarsage@cineflix.com](mailto:ograbarsage@cineflix.com) or call 646-873-6402. City Clerk, Carlson also showed council a document she had prepared to educate people regarding laws for the city with regards to animals. A copy will be placed on the website and posted at the post office. Mayor Hansen said she will check with the Friends of the Animals to see if they can now accept animals.

M/S Dewell, Jones, to adjourn meeting at 7.20pm. Ayes: All.

Next regular meeting will be Monday, May 2, 2016 at 5:30pm at City Hall.

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Ashley Hansen, Mayor

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Sarah Carlson, City Clerk