

PROCEEDINGS OF LOWDEN CITY COUNCIL –REGULAR & PUBLIC HEARING MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2016 5:30PM CITY HALL MEETING ROOM

The regular and public hearing 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 – Absent Jones, Conrad

Visitors: Sue Hall, Joh & Barbara Muhs, Brent Kreinbring, Jan Olsen, Abbey Kramer, Steve Gottschalk, Aaron Horman, Rex & Barb McCreight, Ginger Pruess, Lana Axline.

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

Mayor Hansen began with welcoming everyone to the meeting. She asked for a motion to close the regular meeting and open the public hearing for the proposed sale and conveyance of 503 Hall Avenue. M/S Stewart, Hamdorf. Ayes: All. Mayor Hansen announced the purpose of the public hearing to all present regarding the offer received by the city to purchase 503 Hall Avenue from Joh & Barbara Muhs in the amount of \$9001.00. Mayor Hansen asked if any comments/objections on the proposed sale and conveyance of this property – None received. Mayor Hansen read out to all present **Resolution 16-09 – A resolution approving the sale and Conveyance of 503 Hall Avenue by the City of Lowden for the lot legally described as: Lot 2, Block 1, Hall’s Addition to Lowden, Cedar County, Iowa and for the City Clerk to finalize the sale in the amount of \$9001.00.** M/S Stewart, Hamdorf to approve the resolution 16-09 and for the City Clerk to finalize the sale in the amount of \$9001.00. Ayes: All. Motion Passed. Mayor Hansen asked for a motion to close the public hearing and open the regular council meeting. M/S Hamdorf, Dewell. Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen asked the City Clerk to explain the Levy Report (Annual Urban Renewal Report) with council and visitors. City Clerk Carlson informed all present the intention of this report – It indicates how TIF money is allocated to the City of Lowden during the prior fiscal year and used towards approved urban renewal projects. The report is submitted to the Department of Management each year. A copy of this report will be available on the Department of Management website in due course and City Hall. M/S Stewart, Dewell to approve the annual report prepared by the City Clerk and to submit to the department of management for final review and approval. Ayes: All.

Mayor Hansen discussed a tabled item from the prior month in regards to the Library roof leaking – Conrad Construction inspected the roof area and determined that the peak was leaking. The fix needed will be small and under \$500.00 to repair the area. M/S Hamdorf, Dewell to approve Conrad Construction to repair library roof. Ayes: All.

Lowden Tree Committee and Park Board discussed 2 Ash Trees at the park and 2 other trees on City sidewalks on Jefferson Avenue that were removed recently by Turkle Tree Services. Jan Olsen said a tree committee was in place and asked why the city took down the trees in secret. She said Lowden has an ordinance in place establishing the tree committee. Aaron Horman asked the Mayor about her involvement and said they had waited 20-25 years for those trees to grow to the height they were. Mayor Hansen said she approved the cost of the tree removal but did not realize the park and tree committee were not involved in the decision. Councilman Hamdorf and Stewart said this was the first they had heard about the tree removals, other than one of the trees on Jefferson. Mayor Hansen said that Coach Jackson had also been communicating with Kirk Steinke, Public Works after Coach Jackson said the 2 trees were creating problems with lightning for the players. An option was to trim the trees at a cost of \$600.00 or remove the trees at \$800.00 plus a total of \$200.00 for stump removal. Kirk Steinke, Public Works had asked Turkle to provide him with recommendations for the best solution and that Turkle had informed him that other cities are being required or planning to cut these trees down due to the outbreak of the Ash Borer, so we may have to do this at some point in the near future as well. Aaron Horman said Coach Jackson should not have not communicated to the City and he should have discussed with the School board. Councilman Hamdorf added that we don't just cut down trees because we want to. We have an inexperienced Mayor and going forward we should ensure that better judgement and communication will occur but that nothing was intended to be a secret, the city was acting on advice and recommendations from the tree service and communication between the coach and public works. City Clerk Carlson said she had been out of the office and had learned of the tree removals upon her return and explained that the 2 trees on Jefferson Avenue had carpenter ants and were damaged to the point that they needed to be removed and were becoming a danger and that Turkle Tree Services recommended they be removed. The tree committee had reviewed one of the trees recently and agreed this was indeed the best solution but the tree service had noticed the same issue at the property opposite when they were removing the first tree on Jefferson and said this tree was worse than the one they were assigned to take down. The decision to remove the 2<sup>nd</sup> tree was completed at this point to avoid possible injury to people and property. Jan Olsen said the trees on the city sidewalks are to be looked at by the tree committee before removal and even those in people's yards and we have an ordinance. Councilman Hamdorf said the ordinances are pieced together and will be rewritten. Jan disagreed with this and Councilman Hamdorf said that all the ordinances need to be rewritten and this will be occurring soon. City Clerk Carlson reminded council and visitors that Councilman Conrad who was absent said no new trees should be planted on city sidewalks at the last meeting in his opinion. Jan Olsen said you can plant certain types of trees on the sidewalks. City Clerk Carlson asked Abbey Kramer, Engineer if planting trees on the sidewalks is a good idea. She said it creates a big problem with sewer lines. Restrictions on where the lines are placed in the road is now closer to the curb area and tree roots damage the sewer lines. Councilman Hamdorf agreed that this is a problem he has seen first-hand on many occasions. Barbara Muhs asked council if a list of the tree committee could be put in the new residents welcome pack as new people may not know they

need to discuss anything with the tree committee. Public Works, Dale Axline said normally people ask them about issues with any trees. He also said the homeowner is responsible to keeping tree limbs trimmed 8ft above sidewalk and 14ft above roadside. Letters would be going out to homeowner's who are not currently in compliant in the near future.

Mayor Hansen brought up the need to set the Trick & Treat Hours for Lowden. A discussion occurred between council and visitors on the options and City Clerk Carlson asked about Trunk and Treat event this year. Barbara Muhs, suggested that the Trunk and Treat event be moved to the Memorial Park. Council said they preferred its current location. M/S Dewell, Hamdorf to set Trick and Treat date and hours to October 31<sup>st</sup> 5pm-7pm for residents and businesses, and that Trunk and Treat will also occur on the same date.

Nuisances – No new nuisances were reported.

Visitors Comments: Rex McCreight discussed with council a meeting with the DNR to ask questions about the need of a new sewer plant. This would help council to get up to speed on the new regulations. Rex had been in contact with Chuck Gipp, Technical Advisor for the DNR to help with questions and suggestions on how we might finance a new plant. Rex discussed 2 dates with council in September for a work session meeting, 9/19 or 9/26. Members of the public will be able to attend this meeting. The DNR would like council to come up with some questions in advance that they might have so they can prepare. One question that the city should be aware of is what it can borrow at this time. Dale Axline brought information to the meeting and gave copies to council about an option to build a pre-packaged plant. The anticipated date of the meeting council felt would work better for all was September 26<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm, which will be confirmed and advertised once the DNR can confirm they will be able to attend this date and time. Jan Olsen asked about the mowing at the front entrance to the City of Lowden, this is land that belongs to Cedar County. Mayor Hansen said she had investigated this and was told it's handled by a contractor and they can come when they want to mow. A brief discussion occurred on this item.

Building Permits – No new permits.

Public Works – Dale Axline reported leaf pick up will begin October 10<sup>th</sup> – Monday's and Thursday's through mid to late November depending on weather. The wing wall at 5<sup>th</sup> Street is eroding some properties and needs to be extended with a 10ft –15ft pad estimated cost \$2075.00 and FEMA funds can be used to pay for this as preventive work. The dump truck blower motor for the heating and a/c fan is not working and the light on top of the truck keeps blowing the fuse. Kenmann Chevrolet can do this work and Councilman Hamdorf told Dale to take care of it and get it fixed. A discussion occurred on occasional assistance to help with recycling/garbage when the maintenance people were off. Councilman Hamdorf asked the City Clerk to find out who is on the approved list and options. Public Works, Axline had a resident help him during recycling on labor-day week while public works Steinke was on vacation. Councilman Hamdorf asked Axline when the barricade post and rails at 5<sup>th</sup> Street were going in.

Axline said with help he could do it this week. Councilman Hamdorf volunteered his services to get the installation completed. Mayor Hansen asked about some moldy tar area they had seen east of the baseball field. Public Works, Axline said it's not sewer its just moldy standing water that comes out of a tile. John Muhs said he also has an issue with plugged plastic tile connected to a pipe near his property. Councilman Hamdorf said this was not sewer either, so he is not sure who put that in but it would not be the cities responsibility. Public Works, Axline said if council to also think about raising sewer rates soon in preparation of a new sewer plant. Councilman Hamdorf said we will talk to the DNR before anything is decided about possibly raising rates and have discussions in the future, he added he doesn't want to just raise rates it requires discussions.

Mayors Report – None

Clerk Report – None

M/S Dewell, Hamdorf, to adjourn meeting at 635pm. Ayes: All.

Next proposed meeting is September 26<sup>th</sup> 5:30pm to be confirmed for a work session with the DNR. M/S Dewell, Hamdorf for the City Clerk to coordinate.

Next regular Council meeting will be Monday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016 at 5:30pm at City Hall.

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Ashley Hansen,

Mayor \_\_\_\_\_

Sarah Carlson, City Clerk