

City of Lowell, Oregon
Minutes of the City Council Meeting
November 18, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Mayor Paulson

Members Present: Mayor Paulson, Gary Reese, Judith Rennert, Jim Burford

Member Absent: Melody Knokey

City Attorney, Milo Mecham present

Public Comments: Bob Burr 566 E 1st St., wanted to let the public know about a free service being provided for Senior Citizens at the Lowell Fire Dept. regarding saving money on insurance.

Council Comments: Councilor Rennert read a statement on the City's position to insolvency.

Approval of Minutes: October 30, 2014 Special Meeting, approved by consensus.

November 3, 2014 approved by consensus.

Approval of Expenditures: 7:07 PM

Council Reese made note of the Voucher Directory discrepancy. Bonnie Graham, Accounting Clerk explained process of creating the summary voucher directory for council and that the detail voucher directory reflected expenditures from 1st and 2nd council meeting. Ms. Graham will have a corrected voucher directory ready for them in the morning. **Mayor Paulson move to conditionally approve the voucher directory for November 18, 2014, conditioned on the Mayor and Council President reviewing the revised voucher directory reports and assuring that the summary matches the detailed voucher directory. Councilor Burford seconded.**

PASS 4:0

Discussion followed on the financial reports. Ms. Graham gave an update on changes that have been made per council and auditors recommendations.

Old Business: 7:27 PM

- **Financial Oral Report** – Tiffany Couch, Acuity Forensics, gave a report on her findings. Good documentation was noted on the Utility payment process, from customer to the bank. She was able to locate the questionable missing funds. She found errors in the process and reports that had been done. Ms. Couch presented information to the council to help them understand the issue. She made some recommendations: to have appropriate staff, accounting system and a councilor looking at the cancelled checks each month.

Public Comment: Andrea Larsen asked what recommendations Ms. Couch had for the future?

Ms. Couch recommended looking at the software program, making timely bank reconciliations. Ken Hern, asked if the software was made specific for the City of Lowell? Mayor Paulson responded that No, that it was not made for only the City of Lowell. Ken asked if QuickBooks would be appropriate? Ms. Couch said that for the city of our size it may be appropriate. Hall O'Regan made a comment about the difficulty of the software. Idella Stinson made a comment stating that it would be economically wise to get QuickBooks in place. Andrea Larsen questioned if we really know what happened? Was it the computer program or someone? Ms. Couch responded that she is comfortable knowing that the money is there, from her years of professional experience. Bill George stated that at the time of the incident, it was explained to the council. Ms.

Couch stated she was confused by the minutes. Mike Galvin asked if the auditors were satisfied when they left that year? Ms. Couch stated that they were satisfied, or they wouldn't have given a clean audit. Ms. Couch also encouraged that in the future ask your auditors questions and have them explain issues. Mia Nelson commented that she had experienced embezzlement at her nonprofit organization, and requested if Ms. Couch had suggestions for the City of Lowell. Ms. Couch stated she had a list and will put a summary together. Idella Stinson would like to move forward as a community. Councilor Rennert asked if recommendations from last audit have been implemented yet? Ms. Graham gave an update, is checking into a locked cash drawer, bank statements are being reconciled every month and money will be moved over to LGIP for FDIC Insurance.

- **Public Works Staff/ Code Enforcement/ Animal Control Services** – CA would like to defer this item to January, after the new council is seated and he gives the Council a State of the City Message. CA stated that all the required licenses are covered currently. Discussion followed with Council who would like to see something happen sooner than January. Councilor Rennert would like to see a written breakdown of current personnel expenses. Public Works Superintendent Max Baker gave a staff report and stated they are doing good handling the work load. Mr. Baker responded to councils questions.

- **Permanent City Administrator Recruitment** – Mayor Paulson gave the intended contract with Mike Kelly to the council for their review. Discussion followed. **Councilor Burford made a motion to not go into contract with Mr. Kelly at this time, seconded by Mayor Paulson.** Discussion followed. **Councilor Burford made a motion to amend the original motion to say 'but to revisit this in February'. FAIL 2:2 Councilor Rennert and Councilor Reese opposed. FAIL 2:2 Councilor Rennert and Councilor Reese opposed.** Mayor Paulson will proceed with Mr. Kelly to sign the contract and see if he could attend next council meeting to discuss moving ahead.

Recess

Reconvened: 8:51 PM

- **Land Donation (Mia Nelson)** – CA read a statement on behalf of Mr. Hovis. CA would recommend not accepting land donation because of lack of staffing and funding. Public Comment: Don Bennett 540 Sunridge Lane, commented on the need for more information before accepting this donation. Mia Nelson 40160 E 1st St., commented that she made a commitment to the people she sold property to and that she wants to follow through with what she promised. Discussion followed. **Councilor Rennert moved that the city decline the donation of Roy Nelson's 3-acre property located south of Sunridge Subdivision. I further move to direct the CA to initiate revisions to the city's parks master plan, parks capital improvement plan, and parks SDC fee, to remove references to the proposed donation property and any improvements thereon. I further move that the city waive the application fee for property line adjustments between Roy Nelson's property and the adjacent Sunridge lots, and the application fee for vacation of the pedestrian easement between Sunridge lots 47 through 50. Seconded by Councilor Reese.** Discussion followed. **Fail 2:2 Councilor Reese and Mayor Paulson opposed.**

Councilor Reese moved that the city accept the donation of Roy Nelson’s 3-acre property located south of Sun ridge Subdivision for use as a public park, consistent with the city’s adopted parks master plan, parks capital improvements plan, and parks SDC fee. I further move that the city’s acceptance of the land donation is contingent on receipt by the city of an additional cash donation of \$10,000 from Roy Nelson. I further move that the city agrees and promises to use the cash donation, as well as any interest earned therefrom, solely for mowing and other needed maintenance of the donated property. I further move that the donation of land and cash be closed at Cascade Escrow in Eugene, that closing cost and title insurance be paid by Roy Nelson. Seconded by Mayor Paulson. PASS 3:1 Councilor Burford opposed.

New Business: 9:27 PM

- **Resolution 612 – Paid Holiday Benefit** – CA explained the Friday after Thanksgiving is a designated Holiday in lieu of Columbus Day. Since office is closed on Friday’s, it would make it a floating holiday, to be used between Thanksgiving and December 31, of that year. **Mayor Paulson moved to adopt Resolution 612, Resolution Amending the City of Lowell’s Personnel Policies & Procedures Employee Manual Relating to Paid Holiday Benefits, seconded by Councilor Reese. PASS 4:0**

- **Portable Toilet for Winter use at Rolling Rock** – CA introduced item, the Parks Advisory Committee would like to place a portable toilet at Rolling Rock Park while the bathroom is closed for the winter. Public Comment: Idella Stinson 26 E 3rd St., asked if the portable toilet will only be at Rolling Rock Park? If the portable toilet is vandalized, who is responsible for damages? Bob Burr 566 E 1st St., supports the idea of having a portable toilet. Discussion followed. Public Comment: Maggie Osgood 152 Cannon St., made a comment that the traffic from Paul Fisher Park comes into City Hall. Council returned the item to staff, to handle.

Reports: 9:42 PM

- **CA Staff Report** - CA reported that the staff chose a gift certificate, oppose to a Christmas Party. Council agreed, including Head Librarian, if there is past precedent. CA has spoken with Jerry Bjornstad for a recommendation of who will monitor the security camera’s, and once he gets that information, he will finish writing the policy and procedure. Starting December 1, 2014, CA will have a sign in sheet for all City Council, Board Members and city volunteers, to track hours for insurance purposes. CA will be taking time off, he will be out of the office until December 1, 2014, as unpaid leave.
- **Police Report of Patrols and Activities** – CA presented a report to the Council from the Oakridge Police Department.

Other Business: 9:51 PM

- Councilor Rennert asked if anyone has looked at the roof at City Hall, to evaluate the leak? Especially now, that we are coming into the rainy season. CA stated that Public Works will evaluate and report back at next meeting.

Adjourn: 9:55 PM

Approved: _____
Don Bennett, Mayor

_____ Date