

**City of Lowell, Oregon
City Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2024**

The Lowell City Council held a regular meeting on August 6, 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

Approval of the agenda:

CA Caudle requested addition under "Other business" of League of Oregon Cities legislative priorities ballot.

Public comments:

None.

Council comments:

None.

New business:

1. Review "Appendix J: Grading" from the 2024 International Building Code. – Discussion/
Possible action

CA Caudle explained that Ordinance 227, adopted on February 3, 2004, established grading and excavation regulations for the city. This ordinance is codified into Section 8.001 of the Lowell Revised Code. This section references Appendix Chapter 33 of the Uniform Building Code. This reference is outdated and is no longer in effect. The 2022 Oregon Structural Specialty Code with Amendments Effective Oct. 2023 references Appendix J, "Grading." However, the link to this document states that: "Appendix J is not adopted by the State of Oregon, Building Codes Division, as part of this code. A municipality may have authority outside of this code to regulate these matters locally, where not preempted."

Staff request direction from the City Council on preparing an ordinance to update the reference to adopt Appendix J. Adoption of these grading and excavation standards is required if we want to keep the grading and excavation fees on the building permit fee scheduled. If we don't want to update our ordinance to adopt Appendix J, then we need to remove grading fees from the proposed new building fee schedule. The City Engineer has reviewed Appendix J, and they recommend having up-to-date grading and excavating regulations within the city.

After discussion, the Council indicated their approval of including Appendix J in an update to the City's building code ordinances.

2. Review proposed fee schedule for structural, electrical, mechanical, plumbing, grading, and related permits. – Discussion/ Possible action

CA Caudle explained that the BCD ePermitting staff have reviewed the fee schedule presented in the packet. This schedule reflects the final version, with some minor changes compared to the original from May. These changes are based on feedback from ePermitting staff to ensure compliance with the state's methodology.

CA Caudle referred to before and after comparisons of building and electrical fees in the packet that NW Code Professional prepared. The new fee schedule results in an average \$1,080.98 increase for these three projects. The average increase for electrical projects is \$167.62. The city has not updated these fees since 2012.

Councilor Weathers stated that it would be helpful to list a percentage increase for the fees.

Councilor Murray asked about how this increase compares to other jurisdictions.

Mayor Bennett asked if the city is absorbing the estimated \$1,000 that the new fee schedule would impose but that the city is currently not collecting.

Councilor Stratis stated that higher training and certification requirements might affect the higher percentage increase for these fees.

Councilor Murray stated that, based on his look at the City of Creswell's website, their permit fees are higher than Lowell's.

Councilor Murray moved to authorize the City Administrator to send the proposed fee schedule to the Building Codes Division to start the notice period, which Councilor Harris seconded.

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

APPROVED: 5-0.

3. Direction on the process for sale of the old City Hall building. – Discussion

The City Council directed the City Administrator to prepare materials to sell the old City Hall building using the "for sale by owner" method without materials testing at this time. He will prepare an informational packet at a future meeting for review and approval by the Council to start the process.

4. Motion to approve a purchase order for "general collection services" with Professional Credit Service based on State of Oregon price agreement #DASPS-3360-20 and to authorize the City Administrator to sign. – Discussion/ Possible action

CA Caudle explained that the city's contract with longtime debt collection agency, Professional Credit Services in Springfield, has expired. Staff recommend renewing the contract using the terms and conditions of Oregon Price Agreement #DASPS-3360-20. This agreement, as well as the city's agreement for participation in the Oregon Cooperative Procurement Program, require the purchase order, and language included on that purchase order.

Councilor Harris moved approve a purchase order for “general collection services” with Professional Credit Service based on State of Oregon price agreement #DASPS-3360-20 and to authorize the City Administrator to sign. which Councilor Weathers seconded.

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

APPROVED: 5-0.

5. Motion to accept Annette Brieske Beiderwell’s resignation from the Library Committee. – Discussion/ Possible action

Councilor Harris moved to accept Annette Brieske Beiderwell’s resignation from the Library Committee, which Councilor Murray seconded.

Councilor Weathers inquired about volunteer turnover at the library.

CA Caudle explained that several volunteers have left, impacting the level of staffing that’s needed to provide for extended open hours.

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

APPROVED: 5-0.

6. Direction on “Charging and fueling infrastructure grant” opportunity with Lane County. – Discussion/ Possible action

CA Caudle explained that Lane County has approached the city about being part of a grant that pays for electric vehicle charging stations. Specifically, the county has offered to include the city in a grant to purchase and maintain for 5 years electric vehicle charging stations. The charger would have to be placed on public property that is available 24/7. Since we’re along Highway 58, the county identified Lowell as an ideal charging point for electric vehicles. A level 2 charger (a charger that takes 3 to 4 hours to charge an EV) costs about \$6,000 per year to maintain. The city would be required to cover those costs once the grant period expires. Since Lane County has approached the city about this project, staff believe that it is appropriate to bring this opportunity to City Council for discussion and direction.

After discussion, the City Council stated that they need more info on the city’s obligations after the 5-year period for the city to continue providing and maintaining the charging station.

Councilor Weathers volunteered to investigate and report back to the City Council.

Other business:

League of Oregon Cities – legislative priorities ballot

After reviewing the LOC’s legislative priorities voter guide, the City Council directed the City Administrator so submit a ballot for the following priorities:

- Community and economic development - infrastructure funding
- Recreational immunity
- Cybersecurity and privacy

- Water and wastewater - infrastructure funding
- Water and wastewater - place-based planning

Mayor comments:

None.

Councilor comments:

None.

Community comments:

Bob Burr. Offered comments on the electrical vehicle charging station.

The regular meeting adjourned at 8:06 pm.

The City Council entered executive session shortly thereafter pursuant to ORS 192.660(2)(i) – to review and evaluate the employment related performance of an employee who does not request an open hearing. – City Administrator performance evaluation

APPROVED:



Don Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:



Jeremy Caudle, City Recorder