



**LACONIA CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
MARCH 12, 2012  
CITY HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 200A  
7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mayor Seymour called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

**SALUTE TO THE FLAG:**

Councilor Brenda Baer led the Salute to the Flag.

**ROLL CALL:**

City Clerk Reynolds called the roll with the following Councilors present: Councilor Doyle, Lahey, Lipman, Baer, Hamel and Bolduc. Also present City Manager Scott Myers and Finance Director Donna Woodaman.

**Mayor Seymour advised that he would be moving the Council Presentation immediately following the Consent and Action Calendar.**

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

- **Regular and Non-Public Minutes of February 27, 2012**

Councilor Bolduc moved to approve the regular and non-public minutes of February 27, 2012. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**CONSENT AND ACTION CALENDAR:**

1. **Request by the WOW Trail for a fundraising event on the Trail on May 5, 2012 from 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. for the benefit of the WOW Trail and the Laconia Police Department’s K-9 program**
2. **Request by the National Multiple Sclerosis Society to raise funds at Opechee Park on May 12, 2012 from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**
3. **Request from the March of Dimes to raise funds at Opechee Park on May 6, 2012 from 7:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**
4. **Request from Laconia Parks & Recreation, Lakes Region Child Care, Project Extra and the Boys’ and Girls’ Club for “Walk for Youth”, a fundraising event on the WOW trail (held in conjunction with the Autism Walk), on May 19, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Councilor Lahey moved to approve the Consent and Action Calendar as presented. Seconded by Councilor Bolduc. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**PRESENTATION:**

Mayor Seymour invited Senator Jeanne Forrester to address the attendance. Senator Forrester read a Senate Proclamation honoring the Girl Scouts of America and there 100 year anniversary.

Mayor Seymour read a Council proclamation acknowledging the 100 year anniversary of Girl Scouts of America and proclaimed 2012 as the Year of the Girl. Representatives from the local Girl Scout troops accepted the proclamations on behalf of Girls Scouts of America.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA:     **NONE****

**INTERVIEWS:**

- **Building Code Board of Appeals:** *(4 at-large vacancies; Planning Department is hoping to reinstate this Board this year)*

1. Robert Durfee - seeking reappointment as a full member for a 5-year term expiring 2017

Mr. Durfee stated he is seeking reappointment because he wants to give back to his community. He is a licensed professional engineer in New Hampshire and seven other states with a specialty in structural engineering of bridges and buildings. A goal for Mr. Durfee would be to assist in implementing bridge construction standards to go along with the current road construction standards.

2. Dennis Robitaille - seeking appointment as a full member-at-large for a 5-year term expiring 2017

Mr. Robitaille relocated to the City from Saugus, Massachusetts. He is a Licensed Home Inspector in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire and has a lot to offer the City.

- **Zoning Board of Adjustment:** *(3 alternate vacancies)*

1. Dennis Robitaille - seeking appointment as an alternate for a term expiring August, 2012

Mr. Robitaille was interview for this position in conjunction with the Building Code Board of Appeals.

- **Putnam Fund:** *(1 vacancy)*

1. Charles Bradley - seeking reappointment as a full member for a 5-year term expiring 2017

Mr. Bradley shared a conversation from the Council that occurred a few days prior. Mr. Bradley received a phone call from a woman in Connecticut that was excited from learning that the upcoming Andy Cooney show is free and expressed her pleasure with the shows the Putnam Fund is able to put on. Mr. Bradley advised the Council that situations like this are why he enjoys working with the Putnam Fund and would like to continue to do so.

2. Don Vachon - seeking appointment as a full member for a term expiring 2017 (Mr. Vachon is unable to attend and will be interviewed at the 3/26/12 Council meeting.)

- **Parks & Recreation Commission:** (2 vacancies)

1. George Hawkins - seeking reappointment as a full member for a 3-year term expiring 2015

Mr. Hawkins expressed that he is seeking reappointment because he feels that he has more to give to the Commission.

Councilor Hamel thanked Mr. Hawkins for the construction of the storage shed at Memorial Park, which he led the efforts on with the assistance of Alan Blakely.

2. Don Vachon - seeking appointment as a full member for a 3-year term expiring 2015 (Mr. Vachon is unable to attend and will be interviewed at the 3/26/12 Council meeting.)

- **Trustee of Trust Funds:** (1 vacancy)

1. Jon Nivus - seeking reappointment as a full member for a 3-year term expiring 2015

Mr. Nivus explained that he has 35 years' service in trusts and investments and has now retired. He has been a Trustee of the Trust Funds for six years and would like to continue that service.

2. Donald Brough - seeking appointment as a full member for a 3-year term expiring 2015

Mr. Brough has removed his application from consideration.

3. Richard Breton - seeking appointment as a full member for a 3-year term expiring 2015 (Mr. Breton was previously interviewed by the Council on 2/27/12 as he was unable to attend this meeting)

Mayor Seymour explained that the vacancies will be filled at the Council meeting on March 26 and thanked all of those interviewed.

**COMMUNICATIONS: NONE**

**PUBLIC HEARING: NONE**

**PRESENTATIONS:**

- **Laconia Rotary Club - Day Lily Beautification Project**

Warren Clement from the Laconia Rotary Club presented the Council with a proposal to plant up to 10,000 day lilies along the main corridors into the City this year and requested Council permission to plant the day lilies on City property, specifically the grassed areas between the sidewalks and curbs.

Councilor Bolduc asked if the planting would interfere with the mowing of the grass. Mr. Clement replied that they will work with the Department of Public Works and the Parks & Recreation Department to determine the best placement of the lilies.

Councilor Hamel moved to allow the Laconia Rotary Club to plant day lilies on City property as part of the Day Lily Beautification Project.

- **Community Aspirations - Carol Pierce**

Ms. Peirce presented the Council with the Community Aspirations statement that has been adopted by the Laconia Human Relations Committee (see Attachment #1).

Councilor Lipman asked if acceptance of this statement was in anyway politically motivated or affiliated. Ms. Peirce replied that it is not.

Councilor Hamel asked where the idea of the statement came from. Alan Robichaud, member of the Laconia Human Relations Committee representing the Lakes Region United Way, explained how he came across the statement in a Moultonborough school and brought it before the Committee for review. The statement was altered to represent the City and was adopted by the Committee.

Mayor Seymour thanked Ms. Peirce for the efforts made in bringing this statement forward and asked for the petition to sign in acceptance of the statement.

- **Lakes Region Listens – Downtown Mobility Update/Michael Persson**

Mr. Persson reviewed the Discussion Reports from our Community Conversation about “What changes, if any, should be made to Downtown Laconia in order to improve overall mobility for everyone?” This discussion was held on March 5 at the Belknap Mill (see Attachment #2). Mr. Persson acknowledged that mistakes were made in the process because it was rushed and that the communication was not adequate.

Mr. Persson expressed the conclusion of the conversation was that there are mobility improvements that should be considered by the City, including signage and razing the former Laconia Police Department Building. This report was presented to the Planning Board on March 6 and they are prepared to make formal recommendations this evening.

Mayor Seymour thanked Mr. Persson and the Lakes Region Listens for their efforts with this study.

Councilor Lahey commented that the City has just undergone a significant two-way traffic study and it was not met favorably according to public input; however, looking at the findings from this conversation there are comments and notes regarding the traffic patterns on the one-way streets. Councilor Lahey asked what the answer to the traffic pattern issues is. Mr. Persson replied that some of the comments made about the current traffic pattern could be cured by appropriate signage and that discussion was steered away from two-way traffic because that was not the focus of the conversations, although it was mentioned by some of the groups.

Councilor Lahey asked if a Master Plan for Downtown is needed, as indicated in the conversation report, and if it was already done with the Main Street program and EPA studies; the same recommendations are being brought forward with each study. David Stamps replied that a Downtown Master Plan was never done and has always been wanted by the Main Street program. When the City Master Plan was done it was noted that there should be a Master Plan developed for the villages, including Downtown

that would focus on the needs of each area. There have been comprehensive looks but nothing was actually ever tied together.

Planning Director Shanna Saunders agreed that although there have been “looks” at Downtown a Master Plan has never been done and it is needed, as is for the Lakeport and Weirs areas.

Warren Clement addressed the Council. Mr. Clement referred to the TIF district that exists for Downtown and recommended meeting with the Land & Buildings Committee to determine what can be done with the existing TIF funds, including razing the former Laconia Police Department building.

Councilor Hamel stated that he does not understand the need for all of the studies that have been done because they are not going anywhere. The Master Plan included Downtown and there may not be much more the City can do for Downtown and spending the money on more plans is not the answer. Councilor Hamel recommended having the City Manager get together with the Lakes Region Listens committee and finally put the minor issues to bed, such as the signage.

Councilor Lipman commented that a meeting should be set with the Land & Buildings Committee. Councilor Hamel agreed and will schedule one at the appropriate time on the agenda.

Councilor Lahey asked how the TIF money can be used. City Manager Myers explained that the TIF Advisory Board has met and they will be making recommendations to the Council on the use of the funds and at that point the Council can prioritize and give direction on how to proceed.

- **Planning Board Recommendations - Warren Hutchins**

Mr. Hutchins, Vice Chairman of the Planning Board, addressed the Council as the Chair of the Planning Board for the purpose of the two-way traffic and mobility conversations that were brought before the Planning Board. Sitting Chair Kyril Mitchell recused himself from the conversations out of conflict of interests.

Mr. Hutchins explained that the Planning Board reviewed the Downtown Mobility study, as well as other recommendations, at the meeting held on March 6 and chose to make recommendations to the Council. This has been done as a Notice of Action (the Notice) to the City Council from Director Saunders on behalf of the Planning Board (see Attachment #3). The Notice recommended the razing of the former Laconia Police Department building and the endorsement of designs of the Main Street Bridge depicting widening to accommodate two-way traffic and consider changing a portion of Beacon Street West to two-way, as well as several miscellaneous items including coinciding traffic lights and bike racks for downtown.

Mr. Hutchins explained that the recommendation on the razing of the former Laconia Police Department building was not being recommended in conjunction with the two-way traffic study that was previously looked at. This is being recommended to open the access to parking in the main municipal parking lot and to ease the access from the Weirs and Lakeport areas to Downtown.

Mr. Hutchins further explained that the recommendation of the Main Street Bridge widening came forward with a long term use in mind. The useful life of the bridge is expected to be 50 to 70 years and it would be beneficial to the City to look at the long term, and the possible future of two-way traffic in the Downtown area, and not limit the resources we have available. This does not mean that the Planning Board is recommending immediate action on the two-way traffic on Beacon Street West and they agree

that there are additional hearings needed to resolve the issues; the widening of the bridge is the stepping stone for the process to take place at some point.

Mr. Hutchins reviewed the miscellaneous items recommended.

Councilor Lahey asked if Director Saunders had information to offer. Director Saunders stated she did not. Councilor Lahey noted his surprise that the Planning Board was recommending two-way traffic on Beacon Street West rather than Beacon Street East which would allow eased access to the largest parking area in the Downtown area, as well as the connecting streets to Main Street. Mr. Hutchins advised that this issue has not been resolved yet. Director Saunders added that with Beacon Street East the original design plan had many issues and the contract was up before they could continue to research a solution. Councilor Lahey asked if the Planning Board and Council are capable of accomplishing a solution without contracted service. Mr. Hutchins stated that he thought the two are capable and there are only limited options.

Councilor Lipman asked what the incremental cost increase would be to the City if the proposal for the widened bridge was approved. City Manager Myers explained that there are three plans submitted to the Department of Transportation (DOT) at this time. The first would be to keep the same design, at a cost of \$1.8 million. The second would be to widen a portion of the bridge for safety, at a cost of \$2.2 million, with the third being to widen for safety and future two-way traffic, at a cost of \$2.4 million. The City would be responsible for 20% of the cost of the project; therefore the impact would be approximately \$60,000 additional for the third option. The State DOT would have to approve any of the options for increased work or the City would be responsible for the extra cost in its entirety.

Mr. Hutchins discussed current issues with allowing commercial trucks to travel on Main Street and the need to route them around Downtown; this was item is in discussion with the Planning Board and still needs to be worked out. Mr. Hutchins explained that by allowing commercial trucks to travel on Main Street it is creating inhibitions for possible tenants for the store fronts.

Councilor Lipman asked what the time frame would be for the Council to take a position on the bridge widening. City Manager Myers advised that if the Council was to take a position on any of the recommendations this evening the widening of the bridge is the most urgent because the State will be making a decision soon. City Myers reiterated that the Council would need to support the project for the State to consider the option.

Councilor Lipman stated that preserving the option that could open the possibility for the future of Downtown should be considered because it would allow for the ultimate flexibility. The cost is not immensely different and is worth considering keeping the option open.

Councilor Bolduc stated that the Council has voted to discontinue discussions on two-way traffic and he does not understand why it is even being discussed further. Mayor Seymour replied that they are not discussing two-way traffic but the widening of the bridge. Councilor Bolduc replied that it is the same thing and should not be discussed further.

Councilor Doyle commented that the Council needs to look at the future and the possibilities for Downtown. Something could happen and Downtown could need to be redesigned for two-way traffic and the City should be prepared for it.

Councilor Hamel stated that two-way traffic was voted down by the Council. Councilor Lahey advised that the Council voted to not expend any further funds on the study. Councilor Hamel commented that if we start re-routing the commercial trucks up Beacon Street West it would have a negative impact on the existing businesses, especially Laconia Savings Bank and the Landmark Inn. Director Saunders advised that she has been in touch with the Landmark Inn and they are open to any impacts with the widening of the bridge.

Councilor Hamel asked if the widening will delay the project. City Manager Myers stated that the funds will be available July 1 and the project will begin the initial phases.

Councilor Lahey moved that the Council vote to support the third option which is the reconstruction of the bridge to allow for future two-way traffic. Seconded by Councilor Lipman.

Councilor Bolduc asked how old the current bridge is. Councilor Hamel stated it was done in 1969. Councilor Bolduc stated that the bridge has lasted this long and it should be decided when it is needed and not now. Councilor Lahey stated that it is a safety issue.

Councilor Lipman stated he supports this to preserve the option for the future.

**Motion passed with Councilors Doyle, Lahey, Lipman and Hamel in favor and Councilors Baer and Bolduc opposed.**

Regarding the additional items, Mayor Seymour suggested City Manager Myers review them and bring them back to the Council at a later time.

- **Laconia Parks & Recreation – Weirs Community Park & July 4<sup>th</sup> updates/Kevin Dunleavy & Amy Lovisek**

Director Kevin Dunleavy and Asst. Director Amy Lovisek reviewed the proposed outline and plan for the Weirs Community Park on 22 acres of land that was purchased on 1978 (see Attachment #4).

Councilor Baer asked if there are funds being designated for this project. Director Dunleavy advised that there were previously appropriated funds for the initial phases still available. Councilor Baer noted that a bathroom is being proposed for this project; when there was a proposal for a bathroom at Wyatt Park it was stated that you cannot have a bathroom without an attendant. Councilor Baer asked if there would be an attendant for this facility. Director Dunleavy replied that the Weirs Community has requested and this is an issue that could be worked out at a later time.

Councilor Lipman asked what the estimated cost of Phase 1 would be. Director Dunleavy stated that he does not have the break down, but the entire project was projected to cost \$900,000. They are hopeful to receive CIP funding for the project.

Councilor Hamel asked why the City was investing in bathrooms in the first phase of the project when they are available for use at the Weirs Community Center. Director Dunleavy replied that these are not set in stone and that option can be looked at.

Director Dunleavy advised the Council that the July 4<sup>th</sup> Committee is looking at the timing of the July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration. With the holiday falling on a Wednesday this year, the Committee has been considering having the parade, carnival and fire works on Saturday, June 30 to maximize attendance. Director

Dunleavy asked the Council to express any concerns with this plan so the Committee could be aware. No Councilors expressed opposition to this idea.

- **Laconia School District – Huot Technical Center Project**

Superintendent Champlin presented a slide show presentation of the proposed renovations to the Huot Technical Center as well as the athletic field (See Attachment #5).

Councilor Baer asked how the water main repair would affect the proposed field work. Superintendent Champlin explained that it would depend on which option was chosen and that has not been determined at this time.

Mayor Seymour thanked Superintendent Champlin for this presentation.

**MAYOR’S REPORT:      NONE**

**CITIZEN REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS:      NONE**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. **FINANCE: (Lipman, Hamel, Baer)**
  - a) WOW Trail Fund
  - b) Special Item Budget Requests Procedural Review
  - c) Huot Center

**No report on any item in committee.**

2. **PUBLIC SAFETY: ( Baer, Doyle, Lahey)**
  - a) Fair St./Court St. traffic problems and accidents

**No report on any item in committee.**

3. **GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES: (Doyle, Bolduc, Lahey)**
  - a) Energy Committee
  - b) Vending and Licensing Fees
  - c) Chapt. 119, Building Construction regarding signed architectural plans for residential units

**No report on any item in committee.**

4. **PUBLIC WORKS: (Bolduc, Baer, Lahey)**
  - a) Ordinance Amending Chapter 221, Vehicles and Traffic/Parking on Sublawns
  - b) Proposed ordinance regarding vehicles over 18,000 lbs. and engines idling between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.
  - c) Proposed ordinance regarding large vehicles parked on City streets and sidewalks

**No report on any item in committee.**

5. **LAND & BUILDINGS: (Hamel, Lipman ,Bolduc)**
  - a) Repair & maintenance of City Buildings

b) Former Laconia Police Department Building

**No report on any item in committee.**

Councilor Hamel requested to schedule a meeting for March 26 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the Downtown

**LIAISON REPORTS:**

**MANAGER'S REPORT:**

City Manager Myers presented the Project Updates, Financial & Operational Trends and Recycling Challenge update (see Attachment #6).

City Manager Myers advised the Council that he will be looking to discuss the Transfer Station options and disposal costs.

It was also advised that there Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will be coming to the City to test some areas of possible contamination from dry cleaning chemicals in the area of Henry's Dry Cleaning on Pleasant Street. The EPA invites anyone with questions to visit there mobile labs and see the process.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**1. Memorandum of Understanding for Winnepesaukee River Basin Project**

Councilor Bolduc moved to approve the Memorandum of Understanding for the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project and to authorize the City Manager to sign the document on behalf of the City. Seconded by Councilor Lahey. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**2. Appointment of Council Members to the Huot Technical Center Joint Building Committee**

Mayor Seymour appointed Councilors Lahey, Lipman and Hamel to the Huot Technical Center Joint Building Committee.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:**

1. Council membership on the CIP Committee
2. Milfoil Treatment Funding Request
3. WOW Trail
4. Master Plan
5. EPA Update
6. Sewer & Water Master Plan
7. Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-Op/Solid Waste Disposal Cost Reduction
8. Strategic Planning/Goal Setting

**NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS:**

- **Highway Safety Commission:**

These appointments are at the recommendation of the Mayor with the approval of the

Council. Terms are for three years, expiring in March 2015:

1. Paul Moynihan, representing the Department of Public Works - requesting reappointment for a 3-year term expiring 2015
2. Henry Lipman, representing LRGHealthcare- requesting reappointment for a 3-year term expiring 2015
3. Captain Kirk Beattie, representing the Laconia Fire Department - requesting appointment for a 3-year term expiring 2015

Mayor Seymour made the above appointments with no opposition from the Council.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS: NONE**

**NON - PUBLIC SESSION: NONE**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilor Bolduc moved to adjourn at 9:31 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Hamel. **Motion passed unanimously.**

A True Record Attest:

Mary A. Reynolds  
City Clerk