

Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting

101 W. First Street, Lowell, North Carolina 28098

May 14, 2024, 5:57 PM - May 14, 2024, 8:46 PM

Roll Call: *(The following members were in attendance)*

- **Larry Simonds**, Mayor
- **Scott Bates**, Mayor Pro Temp
- **Phil Bonham**, Councilmember
- **DeWayne Chitwood**, Councilmember
- **Shane Robinson**, Councilmember
- **Travis Smith**, Councilmember

1. General

1A. Call To Order- 5:57 PM

Mayor Larry Simonds called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. City staff present were City Manager Scott Attaway, City Attorney John Russell, Police Chief Moore, Police Asst. Chief Harrison, Planning Director Tyler Cobb, Interim Public Works Director Thad Buchanan, Finance Director Lisa Nolen, and City Clerk Cheryl Ramsey. A quorum was determined at the beginning of the meeting. The meeting was teleconferenced on YouTube for the public and the agenda and meeting materials were made public on the city's website as well as in person. Members of the public were also in attendance.

1B. Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance- 6:02 PM

Joe Heffner, Pastor of the Lowell Church of God gave the Invocation. Mayor Simonds then asked for a moment of silence for the fallen Police Officers in Charlotte, NC. Mayor Simonds then led the audience with the Pledge of Allegiance. Mayor then welcomed Steve Rhyne back from a military deployment.

1C. Adoption of Agenda for this Meeting- 6:02 PM

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 5-0-0-0

1D. Public Comments- 6:03 PM

1. Wayne Buchanan of 620 Geer St, Lowell stated we need the audit [additional audit proposed by the Mayor] to see where our money is going. He said if it was taken care of by the last city council, we wouldn't have to do this. He said the mayor is trying to help the City of Lowell and he's never seen it as bad as it is right now.

2. Candy Funderburk of 600 Rogosin Blvd, Lowell said an audit is to ensure financial statements are accurate and in compliance with the county's standards and regulations. She said during her eight year tenure on council [previous council] they were in compliance and approved by the State. She stated "a forensic audit is an in depth investigation scrutinizing financial records, transactions to identify fraud or misconduct. He's [pointing to Mayor

Simonds] implying the past council was fraudulent. At that time, Mr. Chitwood was on there [council] and Mr. Robinson and we accepted the audits as presented and never had a problem." She said it is going to cost \$30,000-50,000 per year or 14 years the mayor has recommended. She said the total is \$300,000-\$500,000 the city would have to pay and citizen's tax dollars. She said another audit is ridiculous and mentioned that the current mayor was mayor in 2014 to 2015 and suggested council do that one year.

She asked about the budget and particularly the bulk pickup suggestion to be changed from quarterly to monthly. She said that could possibly end up being more money in the long run with more repairs to the trucks, tires and more gas. She said they also need to be thinking of the employees and how that will be a lot of work on them and they could be injured. She suggested they [Public Works] needed a big raise.

She said the General Fund revenue is up by 13.7% and that is wonderful and out of that is the Administrative salaries. She said she heard council wants to cut six (6) positions. She said last year when she was on council she admitted she didn't agree with about three of them but now that they are here and if they are cut, you're cutting off their livelihood to their families. She said the COLA was suggested at 3.5% but you want to cut it to 2.5%. She said that is only \$1749 or not a lot difference. She said cutting the positions will make it difficult to get and administer grants and asked who will do that if they are gone because it will be too much work? She said she saw that the stormwater fee is going to be reduced from \$6.75 to \$4.75 and that is going to have to be increased in the future for the needs of the stormwater repairs. She said the "water bills are going to go up even if those 6% or 7%, even though some of you guys are out there promising lower bills. That is going to go up. The old saying is 'don't cut your nose off to spite your face'. The tax cut, tag fee and everything yall are proposing, then with the water rate increase is only going to save my family \$16 a month. Seems like yall want to cut cut cut to make yourself look good with all the promises you made, but setting up future council to look bad as a tax increase may have to happen to fund future projects, but I hope not."

3. John Cato 109 Walnut St, Lowell, NC - asked about the audit and if it was passed. Mayor Simonds said it hasn't been passed. Mr. Cato asked council to do it because the people want to know how much money was spent and where it is going. He mentioned [previous council] spending \$300,000k for church property and he wants to know where the money is going. He said he heard what Candy just said but he wants to know where the money is. He also said council needs to vote on making it a three lane road by the middle school for the residents to be able to get in and out.

4. Bill Knox 5105 Meadow Run Dr. Lowell, NC - stated he is against having a forensic audit. He asked when the topic comes up that each councilmember express their individual thoughts on the issue for example "yes you believe criminal activity has taken place and you want an investigation done, or you don't." He said let's put this to rest one way or another. He said we are all about saving money and the audits are online except the one from this past January where he said it was up for a motion to accept but not sure why this council did not do so. He said this is a distraction going back 14 years which is at least \$200-300 thousand dollars. He again asked each councilmember to comment to let the citizens know how they feel.

5. Paul Williams, 703 McAdenville Rd, Lowell NC - he said with the exception of Scott [Bates], all remaining council members have been on the council at some point in the past 12, 14 years that the forensic audit has been proposed. He said if you suspect criminal wrong doing then that is going to reflect back on yourselves. He said he doesn't think anything has been done wrong, even if he doesn't agree with how the money has been spent but to

insinuate criminal activity and to pay \$250-500 thousand is a bold move. He said he'd love to see his taxes cut but doesn't see how we can cut everyone's taxes without making significant cuts in fire, police, safety, personnel, etc. and somehow fund a \$250,000 audit for example, That money has to come from somewhere.

He also wanted to thank city officials and personnel for recent tornado and there hard work to help the citizens.

6. Ed Jackson [does not reside in Lowell but has property and pays taxes here] - he wanted to speak on the audit. He said he has had 60 years of experience with Butler & Stowe (external auditors for the city) and thinks there is no one better nor ethical than that group. He said Ms. Thornton (of the firm) has had no problems and the State has already agreed to that audit. He ended with "don't waste our money."

Mayor Simonds said he "asked the Clerk to put the firm [auditing firm] at the beginning of the meeting so we can talk about it because he came from Lexington, NC. That way you don't have to wait until the end of the meeting to find out what we are speaking about or what I'm speaking about or asking council to do. It's up to the council to vote up or down on anything. Here's the thing about it, and I understand that yall have a lot of myths in front of you, you don't know anything about a budget. I'm not fussing to the citizens, I'm just letting you know. For the past years since he's [pointing at Mr. Attaway] been here, when he sets a budget, he overstates expenditures and understates the revenue. If you look at our audit, it justifies what I'm telling you. We take in more money every year than what is proposed to be taken in. That's what throws a red flag to me. And listen, it's not our place to pass the audit from last year. They should've passed it instead of doing all these special meetings in December and it should have been taken care of as business. From what I understand, I have never met Mr. Caric, with the CPA firm from Lexington, NC but I would like council to have the decency to move it up to the top of the agenda and let's discuss in front of the people and let's ask questions like the guy said earlier. Here's the thing about it Ed, and I'm not calling you out, I'm just talking to you directly. I understand Butler and Stowe's a good company but think about this, we paid \$43,000 for the audit for ARPA whatever it was and Mr. Caric charged Ranlo \$4000 and for the whole year at Ranlo from what I understand they were just charged \$15,000. Look what we've paid. It's just not, you have to compare apples...look this is a small town and we're looking on monies that we have. I'm asking the council to allow us to talk with Mr. Caric about potential audit or whatever. It's up to the council. We don't need to back no further than 5 years in my opinion but it's up to the council. Can I have a motion that we move this to the top of the agenda so we won't make the man wait until 11 o'clock tonight. Is that feasible. Do we have a motion to do that?" He apologized to Mr. Caric for the item being at the end of the meeting.

Councilmember Chitwood said it is under New Business and we could've have moved it up... Mayor Simonds interrupted and said he asked the Clerk to do that two weeks ago. Councilmember Chitwood said "I gave you a chance to speak." Mayor Simonds told him to go ahead. Councilmember Chitwood said "what I was going to say is that we could have amended the agenda before we adopted it and you..." Mayor Simonds agreed and said he admits that when he's wrong, he'll say he is. Councilmember Chitwood said "good let's move onto the next agenda item." Councilmember Bonham said "that's assuming anyone wants to even have this discussion."

2. Approval of Minutes

The item was motioned To Approve by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 4-0-1-0 Abstained by Shane Robinson

2A. Approval of Minutes 04-09-2024- 6:17 PM

There was a brief confusion by the Mayor on whether the minutes had already been approved. It was determined that they had not and a motion was made. Councilmember Robinson abstained from the vote since he was absent during this meeting.

3. Special Presentation

3A. Citizen Academy Graduation- 6:18 PM

Mr. Attaway mentioned that we had four participants this year and three of them are in attendance. He briefly described the Citizen Academy and some of the things the class got to do and departments they were able to hear from. Cheryl Ramsey then recognized them all and presented them with a framed certificate signed by the Mayor. Participants included Tamika Hopper, Laura Lovelace, and Kelly Busher and Scott Wilson (absent). Mayor Simonds thanked all for participating and wanting to learn more about their city.

3B. Proclamation National Public Works Week May 19-25, 2024- 6:20 PM

Councilmember Robinson made a motion to accept the Proclamation. The Proclamation was then read by Mayor Simonds. It was then seconded by Councilmember Smith. Mayor Simonds lead the audience to an applause for the Public Works department and thanked them for their hard work.

The item was motioned To Adopt by Shane Robinson and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-0-0

3C. Proclamation of National Police Week - May 12-18, 2024 and Peace Officers Memorial Day May 15, 2024- 6:23 PM

The Proclamation was read by Mayor Simonds. Mayor Simonds lead the audience to an applause for the Public Works department and thanked them for their hard work.

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 5-0-0-0

4. Consent Agenda

The item was motioned To Accept by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Phil Bonham with a passing result 5-0-0-0

4A. Finance Update- 6:26 PM

4B. Stormwater Report- 6:26 PM

4C. Planning Report - 6:26 PM

4D. Police Report- 6:26 PM

4E. Communications Report- 6:26 PM

4F. Public Works Report- 6:26 PM

4G. Geographic Information System (GIS) Report- 6:26 PM

4H. Parks and Recreation Report- 6:26 PM

5. Unfinished Business

5A. Public Hearing - Map Amendment (General, Rezoning) - 603 Groves Street - JPFJ LLC- 6:26 PM

Mr. Attaway apologized to the audience for the technical difficulties and stated Mr. Cobb is at the desk with the City Clerk to help navigate the items being presented. Mr. Tyler Cobb, Planning Director, then discussed the rezoning application received. He stated this is to have 603 Groves St rezoned for the back five acres of the property from Mixed Use 2 (MU-2) to Industrial (see agenda packet) so that Choice, USA can expand their business. Mayor Simonds asked if they are wanting to just add onto the facilities? Mr. Cobb said currently in the Mixed Use criteria, bottling is not allowed, so in order for them to expand their business, they need to have the back 5 acres rezoned to Industrial in order to do so. Mayor Simonds asked if the Zoning Board has already approved this. Mr. Cobb said yes. There were no public comments. Councilmember Chitwood asked if it was just the brown portion (of the map in the agenda packet) that was being considered. Mr. Cobb said the blue checkered section is the property to be rezoned. Councilmember Chitwood asked if it only effects this area, nothing around it? Mr. Cobb said yes and that staff is recommending it as it is consistent with the town's Comprehensive Land Use plan.

Councilmember Robinson asked if they just purchased this land by section. "That full parcel is there, and basically they are asking to rezone their land. So I'm assuming when we went to the LDO, we took a section of their land and zoned it to MU-2?" Mr. Attaway said he doesn't recall exactly as it was a few years ago when this was done but the city found some areas where there were parcels that had split zoning and when they were found, you kept the split zone. He said we wouldn't have gone in and split a parcel and was not positive this was recombined since then. Mr. Cobb said to his knowledge it has not been recombined.

Mayor Simonds asked if anyone had any questions. John Russell reminded council that when they make a motion they need to have a consistency statement noted on pg. 34 of your packets. Basically anytime you are doing a rezoning to your map, you have to have a statement of consistency. The Mayor asked if that has to be part of the motion? Mr. Russell said you have to approve the rezoning and also to find that that approval is consistent with the Comprehensive Land Use plan.

After Councilmember Bonham's motion to approve the rezoning, Mayor Simonds asked if he was combining the two motions? Councilmember Bonham said yes. Mr. Russel said this was ok. The motion and subsequent vote stands.

The item was motioned To Approve by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-0-0

To go into public hearing

The item was motioned To Approve by Phil Bonham and seconded by DeWayne Chitwood with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Larry Simonds

To come out of the Public Hearing

The item was motioned To Approve by Phil Bonham and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Larry Simonds

To approve the rezoning application and the proposed application is consistent with the City of Lowell's 2040 Comprehensive Land Use Plan and will result in the development of the IND, the Planning and Zoning board considers and affirmative vote to be reasonable and in the public's interest.

5B. Public Hearing Spencer Ridge Development Agreement - 6:32 PM

Mayor Simonds made a recommendation that since this is so large [of a property] and he can't read the names of the surrounding neighbors that need to be contacted [to have another meeting]. He said "you can't even make out

your map and I have to have bifocals to make it out. We need to have another meeting to where the council can first of all look at this thing and the neighbors need to be involved because it's going to effect them and the citizens forever. First of all when you approve something this massive, it needs to be done 100% correctly. I can't read the names, can you [to council regarding the names of the citizens]." Mr. Attaway said "we can definitely provide maps where you can see that but I will say that the surrounding community were notified when the rezoning came through when this development was approved but that's not what this is. That was done quite some time ago. This is a development agreement more so to spell out the phasing and utilities coming there, amenities, etc. but it's up to the council for what you wish to do." Councilmember Smith asked if this has all been approved with the Catawba River Keeper with donating the 60+ acres to stay off the river? Mr. Cobb said "going back to everyone being notified, the surrounding neighbors were notified. It was public.." Mayor Simonds interrupted asking what the date was on that? One of the Councilmembers said July 2022. Mayor Simonds said "it was a different time back then and all the promises and things in this agreement...this council is new. All of us are new and I think we need to take our time and look over this and study it hard and make sure that every 'i' is dotted and every 't' is crossed. Councilmember Smith asked the mayor to allow the Planning Director to finish what he was saying. Mr. Cobb said the rezoning request was set March 8, 2022 and the community meeting was set March 30, 2022. It was taken to the Planning Board on April 2, 2024, the public hearing was requested April 9, 2024 for today.

Mr. Attaway added that council received an edited version of the request late today because it was getting hatched out between the two attorneys. He thinks the intent was to review this in the public hearing that if there are any substantial changes in that, that is what will be brought to light for discussion. Mayor Simonds said "we are in a public discussion about this and in the agreement, in the very beginning, whenever Belmont and (inaudible) came to council and asked to be brought into Lowell, there was nothing required for us to do anything." Councilmember Chitwood said "as far as that goes, it's already been said and done. That's not what we are here for, it's said and done. But what I was trying to say was this was just giving to me today and I would prefer to wait, before I vote on anything, to read the changes." Mayor Pro Tem Bates agreed. Councilmember Chitwood said he understood attorneys have to hash out things but he doesn't like getting items the day of the meeting and would prefer getting them beforehand. Mayor Simonds said there is no need to rush into it and thinks it should be tabled until they had an opportunity to study it. Councilmember Chitwood said he doesn't have a problem setting it to the next meeting. Mr. Russel said "to do that, since you are still in the public hearing, you would just need to make a motion to continue the public hearing until you want to have the date of the June meeting at 6pm at Lowell City Hall. That way it doesn't need to be re-advertised to do anything further, just have it continued."

After the motion to continue to the June 11th council meeting, Mayor Simonds asked what was the purpose of the public hearing? He said "if it's already set in place, what the hell are you voting on?" Councilmember Chitwood said "excuse me." Mayor Simonds asked again "why are you voting on it if it's already set in place? Just because it is a public hearing, you have an opportunity just like you got blindsided today, I got blindsided." Councilmember Chitwood said there is a motion on the table to continue it until the next meeting. Councilmember Smith then seconded the motion. Mayor Simonds said "under the discussion, you look at what all needs to be said, and you think in your mind you can, but why would we be having a public hearing if this is already passed?" Councilmember Smith said "do you want us to go over it, [after] just now getting the information?" Mayor Simonds said "it's so wrong it's not funny and it needs time to be studied because this effects every citizen in Lowell." Councilmember Smith asked the Mayor if he can't read 30 pages in 30 days? Mayor Simonds said we "got blindsided today and you

got a motion and second to table it to the next regular meeting, is that what you are saying?" Councilmember Chitwood said yes. Councilmember Chitwood said he would like to see if any of the public here wanted to speak on this. Mayor Simonds asked the audience. There were no public comments.

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Larry Simonds

To go into the public hearing

The item was motioned To Table by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Larry Simonds

To continue the public hearing to the June 11th meeting at 6pm.

5C. Consideration to adopt the City of Lowell 2024 Legislative Advocacy Agenda- 6:39 PM

Mr. Attaway reminded council that this was discussed in the last City Council work session and that there were no changes recommended. He said he mentioned then that he would bring to council correcting the name misspelling of a councilmember and it is before you to adopt. During the discussion, Mayor Simonds asked if "this includes all that new impact money as far as different things you have encompassed in here right?" Mr. Attaway said "this is a request for federal, state, and county government advocacy . This is an advocacy for certain projects, certain grant funding to continue at the state level, such as Part F or things that we are currently benefitting from or hope to benefit from in the future, road improvements, etc." There was no further discussion.

The item was motioned To Adopt by Travis Smith and seconded by Phil Bonham with a passing result 5-0-0-0

6. New Business

6A. Presentation of the Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget- 6:41 PM

Mr. Attaway said he submitted the City Manager's Budget Ordinance and budget document to council today as well as it was submitted on the city website, social media account. There is a copy available for public review at City Hall and the Lowell Branch library. He thanked all staff for their help on the FY24-25 goals. He mentioned the dates of the retreats and Councilmember Chitwood stated that March was skipped due to conflicts. Mr. Attaway agreed and stated he will amend the City Manager Ordinance. He began to go through the message and budget.

Mayor Simonds interrupted and asked if it is correct [amount] about the Bob Bolick park funding of \$1,800,000. Mr. Attaway said yes. Mayor Simonds asked how we are going to do that, where is that money coming from? Mr. Attaway said that we are not, it is a project that is not funded. We are just showing that they are outstanding projects. Mayor Simonds said "you have a lot of stuff on here that we just got today and I don't appreciate this just coming today. You've had the amendment since the last time we had a meeting to bring stuff to the council. All this money, every penny in the bank and wherever else belongs to the citizens of Lowell. CIF money, whatever you want to call it, and to come in here and tell you that they want you to set a public hearing to adopt this budget without further review and that would be the public hearing, I understand that, but we all need an education on where's our money, every account we have, our water and sewer. All that stuff you blindsided the citizens with by putting on the internet, what's been done. Nothing has been done, nothing has been approved and until the budget is approved, nothing's approved. Councilmember Chitwood said it would be discussed in the public hearing and we have 30 days. He said that is enough time for him to review it. Mayor Simonds said so you want to set a public hearing. Councilmember Chitwood said no, he wanted the City Manager to finish what he was talking about. Mr. Attaway continued with the budget breakdown.

During the discussion of the line items regarding potential employee COLA and merit increases, Mayor Simonds interrupted and said "before you get too far, you don't have the car tax for automobiles included. I talked to (inaudible) and the car tax, a year and a half went by that none of you got the money because it wasn't collected. So you need to add back into that money coming in. How much did you get for the campers, cars and trucks and all the stuff you pay taxes on in addition to the homes. It's not included in your total value of Lowell. IT IS NOT INCLUDED..." Mr. Attaway interrupted and said "the motor vehicle is included in my ad valorem calculations. The \$10 tag fee". Mayor Simonds interrupted and said the tag fee has nothing to do with it, I'm talking about the taxes on a vehicle like if your car costs \$30,000 and you're paying." Mr. Attaway said we have approximately \$40,000,000 of that. Mayor Simonds said "it is not included. I'm telling you, the total value is not in there. Now listen, if you go house by house, listen I'm not an idiot, you go house by house, land by land, all the properties in Lowell and add them up, you're taking in over \$3 million in just residential property and commercial property and all the growth that we have is not included in that either. You don't add for that. Just like last year, all the money you took in. Every penny should be accounted for and the way you do that is when you have your annual audit every year and you're never in compliance with that. You're always under what it really comes in and to overstate your expenditures and understate the revenues is a wrong as anything in the world but it needs to be corrected. I'm not the one to correct it, but I'm not going to sit here and let you do what you do, but the council will do whatever they want to do. But in my opinion Scott, everything has to be accounted, all the CIF money that you say we have in the bank and different funds, I don't see it. We have never seen every bank account. How many different facets of money, I'm talking about bank holding money, who else?" Councilmember Smith asked if we could get back to the agenda? Mayor Simonds said this is the agenda. Councilmember Smith said you might get your answer if you just listen. Mayor Simonds continued asking where are all the revenues in the bank now and where are they? CIF? What bank account? Mr. Attaway asked Lisa Nolen, Finance Director, if she wanted to answer. Councilmember Chitwood asked if that was something the mayor could ask prior to these meetings? Mr. Attaway said that that information can be provided. Mayor Simonds said "that's your money, that's their [citizen's] money. I'm not going to pass it off and you can. Go ahead Scott."

Councilmember Bonham asked about the Mayor's understanding between a budget and an audit. "They are two totally separate entities." Mayor Simonds said "what do you think you audit." Councilmember Bonham continued "a budget is what you think it is, the audit is where your money is. The audit tells you where everything goes and we've got that and you can see it. When you do a budget you can say that we overestimated this or we understated that, that does not translate into missing dollars in an audit. Mayor Simonds asked "where's the money?" Councilmember Bonham said "they are two separate things, the audit takes in what comes in and the budget is what goes out." Mayor Simonds said "first of all, where is the money?" Councilmember Bonham said look at the audit. Mayor Simonds said "it's understated as far as revenue and expenditures are overstated. I don't like being wrong and I don't like being misled." Councilmember Bonham said "you can say I understated my revenue but if all the money is there..." Mayor Simonds said "you set your tax rate one time a year, look at the money it takes to own homes and buy property and how much it costs them." Councilmember Bonham said you are suggesting that there is money missing. Mayor Simonds said the "employees out here don't get paid jack (expletive) and they work hard. Councilmember Chitwood made a point of order and asked to move on. He said the mayor is not being professional. Mayor Simonds said "well I'll use the word defecation." He asked Mr. Attaway to continue. Mr. Attaway

continued with his budget presentation. He offered that he would answer any questions now or within the next 30 days.

Mayor Simonds said "the money that these people out here. They buy a home, interest has gone up with city and county taxes and all the reevaluations and everything, they are averaging \$400-\$500 a month at River View just in increased house payments and those are the people that you need to look at Scott. You need to include the tax on automobiles, you need to include every penny that we have and come back with a fair and honest budget where it represents us, not just you, this whole board. That's why the people elected a new board, they didn't elect us because they were happy with what was going on, just common sense." Councilmember Smith said "let me stop you right there. He [Mr. Attaway] set this budget to the new council's agenda. It is not his budget." Mayor Simonds said "we are just talking and it's not going to be approved tonight. I'm talking about what is going to be encompassed tonight." Councilmember Smith said "you don't have to hollar, I'm right here." Mayor Simonds apologized for hollering. Mr. Attaway said "Mayor if you would like to stop by my office, we could schedule that." There was some inaudible conversation, then the Mayor asked if the board had any other comments. There were no other comments.

6B. Set Public Hearing for Adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Ordinance- 7:14 PM

The item was motioned To Set by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Larry Simonds
To set for June 11th at 6pm.

6C. Set Public Hearing to Closeout the FY17 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Neighborhood Revitalization Program- 7:15 PM

The item was motioned To Set by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 5-0-0-0
To set a public hearing for June 11th at 6pm.

6D. Consideration of Interlocal Agreement with Town of McAdenville to Provide Water Service to Lowell Elementary- 7:15 PM

Mr. Attaway presented. He stated "the previous agreement we [Lowell] had is with Gaston County where they are going to extend the city's water line to Lowell Elementary to provide reliable and clean water to the school. Because this school is in the town of McAdenville city limits, this Interlocal Agreement is between the City of Lowell and McAdenville basically allowing McAdenville the City of Lowell to put it's utility in it's town limits." He asked John Russell to add anything or answer any questions as he is working with McAdenville's attorney.

Mr. Russell pointed out that there is a provision in the agreement that if this property is no longer used for public education purposes, (school system no longer needed the property and the property becomes residential or commercial for example) then McAdenville is reserving the right to provide water to that property at a future time. Councilmember Chitwood asked "and we go in and cap that off, according to this agreement?" Mr. Russell said yes. Councilmember Chitwood said to Mr. Attaway "to be clear, it's coming off of the water main is at River View and Beaunitt Rd according to what this says?" Mr. Attaway said "that is that side road." Mayor Simonds said "yes, I don't know how they are going to get it from McAdenville to there." Councilmember Chitwood said "it's not coming from McAdenville, it's going to be our water." Mr. Attaway asked what page that was on. Councilmember Chitwood said pg. 110 [of the agenda packet], the fourth 'wheras' down. Mayor Simonds said "they've already met with the Clerk

of McAdenville and have everything ready to be signed. I don't know what this is but we're giving up a lot of property." Councilmember Chitwood said "we are not giving up any property." Mayor Simonds said "we are giving it up right beside of it. It belongs to us. It's our sewer line. Councilmember Chitwood said we are not talking about sewer lines. Mayor Simonds said "that's the back door part of it." Councilmember Smith said "that is not even on the agenda." Councilmember Chitwood said "Mr. Mayor, I wish you would pay attention to what you are reading, because this is not.." Mayor Simonds said "I know what's going to end up happening, they're going to put those little warehouses down there." Councilmember Smith called for a point of order and to get back to the agenda. Mayor Simonds said to go ahead.

Mr. Attaway said Beaunitt is the road on the side of the Mayor's house. Mayor Simonds said that is "Lineberger, Saxony." Councilmember Chitwood said "it used to be called Lineberger." Mr. Attaway said this is what it shows but he suspected it was Lineberger. Councilmember Chitwood said [Mayor Pro Tem] Bates is the one who brought it to his attention that the police maps show it as Lineberger. He said "we either need to change it to say or whatever the existing sign or what is recognized as the street. I know River View Dr. is recognized but it's either going to either say Beaunitt or Lineberger." Mr. Attaway said to Mr. Russell that he doesn't think that would need to be a motion but more of a clerical edit to ensure that is the correct road. Mr. Russell said "I think this whereas clause came from the agreement that the county drafted and it was approved, so that would be where this location came from but certainly if that needs to be corrected, administratively, that can be done." Councilmember Chitwood said "and again, we are servicing this, we are getting paid for this water. After the whole ordeal is done, it's being serviced by us and paid to the city of Lowell? Not going to McAdenville? If the property goes awry and does not stay a school, it is cut off and capped off by the City of Lowell?" Mr. Attaway said correct to each part. He said "this makes Lowell Elementary a customer of the city of Lowell's water system." Councilmember Smith asked "and zero cost the city...the county is covering all construction costs?" Mr. Attaway said "correct, they are covering it with their ARPA funds." Mayor Pro Tem Bates asked if Lowell is supplying sewer at this point to the school? Mr. Attaway asked Thad Buchanan, Interim Public Works Director if we are supplying sewer collection and reading their existing water meter from the town of McAdenville so we can judge the flow of the sewer coming from it and that's what we do every month." Mr. Buchanan was nodding yes to Mr. Attaway. Mayor Simonds said "the only way the sewer can get to the plant is where the existing lines are, where they want to move them to put these junk houses in you got out here on Church St." Mr. Attaway said to Mayor Pro Tem Bates question "so to that point, we'll have a new water meter set in there, that's metering the water, therefore the sewer usage."

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by DeWayne Chitwood with a passing result 5-0-0-0

6E. Ordinance #02-2024 To Allow for a Volunteer Auxiliary Police Department- 7:21 PM

Mr. Attaway said "the City Clerk brought this to his attention that the NC League of Municipalities (NCLM), who is our insurer has asked if we had an Auxiliary Police Department for computing our property liability and other insurance. They asked for an ordinance that we did not have, so in front of you is an ordinance to allow for Lowell to have a Voluntary Auxiliary Police Department to meet this requirement. This is nothing new and the Chief can speak to this, this is the reserve. I think we have one on reserve?" Chief Moore said "yes, one." Councilmember Chitwood asked if there is a policy for auxiliary? Chief Moore said "yes, I believe so." Councilmember Chitwood asked "is there any way council can get a copy of that and we table this until next month so I can look at it if that would be ok with everyone else?" Council agreed to table the agenda item to the next month. Councilmember Chitwood asked Mr. Attaway if they can get the policy by this Thursday. Mr. Attaway said yes. No motion was needed.

6F. Resolution to Discontinue Collection of Motor Vehicle Tag Tax beginning FY 2024-2025- 7:23 PM

Mayor Simonds asked if "this [agenda item] would not be in the regular budget we are about to adopt." Councilmember Chitwood said "we still need to have to have a resolution for it to stop." Mayor Simonds said "would it not be encompassed in the new budget?" Mayor Pro Tem Bates said "you have to have a resolution, I believe, for the Finance Officer to turn into the County." Mr. Attaway said correct. Mayor Simonds asked for a motion to discontinue the collection of the motor vehicle tax. Councilmember Chitwood said "no, what you are needing is a motion for Resolution to discontinue the collection of the motor vehicle tag tax pursuant to NC General Statutes 160A-213. It would Resolution 07-2024." Mayor Simonds said "once you adopt that, it'll go away. Go ahead. I need a motion." Councilmember Chitwood said he just gave one. It was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bates.

The item was motioned To Approve by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 5-0-0-0

6G. Amended Grant Project Ordinance- 7:24 PM

Lisa Nolen presented. Mrs. Nolen stated "we had originally completed this in December of 2023. (Mayor Simonds left at 7:25pm) After conversations with Withers Ravenel, we needed to amend our grant project ordinance to include the amount of money that local funds were going to come from the City of Lowell to pay for the Wastewater Pre-Construction planning grant. We received \$400,000 in the grant and then we are going to be expending \$188,000 in local funds to take care of the pre-construction for the pre-construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant." Mr. Attaway added that "the contract was approved by the previous council in October [2023] when the contract was signed with Withers Ravenel. We included those old contract minutes from each of these meetings, the current project ordinance and the recommended one that shows the local funds on pg. 121. ARPA grant proceeds is the DWI Pre-construction planning grant that I mentioned in the budget message (Mayor Simonds returned at 7:27pm) about the pump station at the Wastewater Treatment plant. The \$400,000 is the maximum of the grant and the work actually costs \$588,000 so the local funds of \$188,000 is amending the ordinance for compliance." Mayor Pro Tem Bates asked if the total of \$588,000 is for Withers Ravenel? Mr. Attaway said "yes, that is the total. They are administering the entire pre-construction planning grant. They are engineering plans for the conversion of the plant." Mayor Pro Tem said "so far up to this point is the \$37,000?" Mr. Attaway said "the progress building is not there yet. We had a question about this that we just listed the grant amount as \$400,000. When we adopted this we knew that is what the grant was for. We also knew what the out of pocket amount was, but we were under the assumption the grant project ordinance only needed to list the grant. It also needed to list that local money in the action and that is what this revision is for."

Mayor Simonds said "this council has the authority to rescind that correct and go back to keep our own sewer system? There's nothing written in stone that you have to go forward with all this mess and lose our sewer system, which is a big asset to the city and brings in a lot of revenue. We pay for it, taxpayers paid for it from the 1960's to 2001 when it was paid off. Now you're just gonna up and give it away. I don't understand because another council has done something, we have the right to rescind it, correct? No prior board can obligate another council, just like they did in December meeting instead of passing their audit. They were in there protecting different things like personnel and stuff like that, when they should've been conducting business. Why would you give up your sewer system?" Mr. Attaway said to answer your question, what we are talking about here is a contract that we signed with Withers Ravenel and that's it. So we're stuck to the contract." Mayor Simonds interrupted and said "I understand that, but this is going in and getting rid of the sewer plant." Mr. Attaway said "but as I mentioned earlier

we are going to plan a work session with Two Rivers, and you all, and our engineering firm to answer a lot of those questions that came up during one of the first budget sessions, some of those concerns about what the contract would look like. This is not a commitment to do that regionalization. This is a commitment to fulfill our contract that's signed." Councilman Chitwood said "with what we are already owe to Ravenel?" Mr. Attaway said "correct and to update the grant project ordinance."

Mayor Simonds said the total is \$588 [thousand] so that would be \$541 more thousand dollars. Are we obligated to the whole \$588 [thousand] or the \$37,000?" Mr. Attaway said \$588 [thousand], we signed a contract." Mayor Simonds said why would we want to be obligated to something if we don't really know if we're going to do it or not, unless the council has already got it in their head to dump your sewer plant. We could stop that if the council voted for it." Mr. Attaway said "the previous council, in October 2023 approved the contract." Mayor Simonds said "yes sir, and it can be rescinded. Nothing has been done. Why would we want to give away the biggest asset in Lowell that we have that helps offset our taxes. Look at all these other towns. When Scott [Bates] and I went down to talk to, what's the guy's name that runs the sewer plant? He told us point blank 'the dumbest people in the world, give up their sewer plant and that's what they prey on. Listen, what's the difference, if we do this, why don't we turn the city of Lowell, listen, how much money we can save... " Councilmember Smith interrupted and said "I'm listening." Mayor Simonds continued "if we give up our city, just give it to Gastonia. Our tax rate would be \$.45 cent, we'll have water and sewer rates the same as theirs, and we won't have to pay the \$.8-1/2 fire tax. That is a lot of money. You know people, you don't realize, you're sitting out there 'ooohing and ahhhhing' every time I open my mouth, but listen \$.57-1/2 cent tax rate is enormous for the people living here. We used to have a fire department. They gave it away. Listen to this..." Councilmember Bonham interrupted "we didn't have a fire department, it was a contracted service." Mayor Simonds said "it's stupid...stupidest thing you've ever done was give the fire department away and now you want to top that by giving away the sewer plant. Stupid is stupid, I don't care how you (inaudible) it." Councilmember Smith said "John can you explain to the mayor that this is simply...The Mayor interrupted "an agreement to pay \$588,000." Councilmember Smith said "I told you one time Larry. I'm sitting right beside you, you do not have to holler at me!" Mayor Simonds said "I don't have to holler, but I want you to understand we spent \$588,000 of taxpayers money" "No you don't! I want you to understand" said Councilmember Smith. Mayor Simonds continued "I want you to understand, whether you're on the moon or not. That's a lot of money for nothing"

Mr. Russell said "anytime you have a contract, there is no law required that you fulfill it and to go through with it. There may or may not be damages if you don't fulfill assigned contracts. You really can't answer that without going back and looking at the contract, getting a sense of how far along is the engineering firm, what's expended, what those exposures are. I'd be glad to do that. I don't think I can do that tonight, but just like with anything, you've got a contract that's been signed sitting there. Therefore there's a contractual obligation to do that, but you are not required to follow through with it. There may be damages." Mayor Simonds said "we're obligated to \$37,000, they've already done the study, I understand that. But as far as going further into crushing our sewer plant, building a newer sewer plant and give it to Two Rivers, listen, that belongs to us. If we keep on giving, let me ask you something, in this budget, the only thing in there, the money, is to cover the employees. It's not even 20% to build things for the city of Lowell." Mr. Russell said "but this is not the decision to disperse (inaudible) funds." Mayor Simonds "It's the beginning stages of it, this is what it's for. This is the early procedures of getting rid of our plant."

Mr. Russell said "correct." Mayor Pro Tem Bates said "we haven't gotten to that point yet, for the council to vote on that, Mayor."

Councilmember Bonham said "and by the way, we're not building anything to turn it over. I think you're confusing or you don't understand what the process is over there. It's either build a new plant or we convert the existing to a pump station, which is even further down the line. We own everything including the pump station. From the pump station-on, if we regionalize, it's Two Rivers. So the cost of a pump station versus the cost of a new plant; versus annual operating of the pump station versus versus annual operating of a new plant, if you extrapolate the dollars out, then what are you looking at as far as the impact onto the tax payer. If you're sitting here saying, like you're doing right now, we're going to build a new plant and turn it over to Two Rivers. A) that's false." Mayor Simonds said "that's not what I said. I said (inaudible) existing plant" Councilmember Bonham said "that's exactly what you said, read the minutes. We are here to do the right thing. You want to kill it because you're afraid of everything, don't want to give anything up but that's not what we're doing. We're trying to do the best for the city in the long run and doing our due diligence."

Mayor Simonds said "we own that plant, that's what I'm talking about. They're giving away the biggest asset that you have in this town is your sewer. It's owned by the citizens of Lowell. To give it away to Two Rivers, let them come in here and take over our sewer...no one knows how much it will cost us. We set our own sewer rate because it belongs to us. There's nothing wrong with our sewer plant. We talked to the operator and the operator plainly told us that we're not at 50% capacity and plus the plant operates beautiful. All we gotta do is take care of what's there, clean up the place. We got a garbage truck down there, that's been down there probably a year, that needs to get a little part fixed on it, sitting down there going to pieces. You got tires thrown all over the place. You got garbage. Go down and look at your biggest asset and understand how it's not being taking care of. I am ashamed of the way everything is being taken care of in the city. Our people outside, they recommend what needs to be done but they don't get it. I understand and you understand too. When you see your water sewer bill, understand how cheap your water and sewer is today but once you turn it over to Two Rivers, understand how much higher it will be. When you get your tax statement every year, look at how much you're paying in property taxes because these people already been on the board for a long time." Councilmember Smith said "we already pay Two Rivers for water." Mr. Simonds said "for water, not for sewer." (Councilmember Bonham said something regarding the sewer but it was inaudible because of the train horn). Mayor Simonds said "not now because we still own our sewer plant but once you give it away, it'll automatically increase." Councilmember Bonham asked "did we not just talk about that, am I hearing things?" Mayor Simonds said "it's the truth. Scott [Bates] what did the guy tell us down there? Is our sewer plant not in good shape?" Mayor Pro Tem Bates said "yes." Mayor Simonds asked him "do we need to get rid of our sewer plant?" Councilmember Bonham "(inaudible)...that's going to retire shortly [Wastewater Treatment plant operator]." Mayor Simonds said "he's not going to retire, unless yall write him off and give it to Two Rivers. That guy does a great job." Councilmember Bonham said "this is asinine."

Mayor Simonds continued with "just like the Fire Department. Yall gave it away without a public hearing or nothing! And now look at you smarties, you got a 8 and 1/2 cent fire tax plus a \$.49 cent property tax. The Fire Department is still down there and we should take care of our Fire Department and it should be, listen..." Councilmember Chitwood interrupted and asked "why are you talking about the Fire Department? Can we point of order and move on?" Mayor Simonds said "you're point of order is taken care of." Councilmember Chitwood said "I believe you received the same email that I received, that Mr. Bates, Mr. Robinson, and these two right here [Councilmembers

Smith and Bonham] about the Fire Department. The Fire Department is a done deal" Mayor Simonds said "in your mind." Councilmember Chitwood said "oh no, it's a done deal. Unless you are going to get 100% of the City of Lowell to sign the petition. Are you going to spend all of your money to do that?" Mayor Simonds asked "did they get 100% to take it off?" Councilmember Chitwood said "I'm asking you a question, are you going to get the whole city to sign that petition? And then you are going to take it in front of the County Commissioners? Did you read that email? Probably didn't" Mayor Simonds said "the County Commissioners would be glad to give it back. You're giving them \$800,000 and getting \$600,000 back." Councilmember Chitwood said to move on.

Councilmember Smith said "basically, what I get out of it is, and I might be wrong, I'm just speculating. Either we pass this or more than likely the city of Lowell is going to be sued and we still pay off the money. That's the way I'm looking I take it. I'm not 100%." Councilmember Chitwood asked Councilmember Robinson if he had an opinion on this? Councilmember Robinson said "my thing is, have we received the \$400,000 ARPA funds." Lisa Nolen said "we've received a little over \$200,000 already. The payout was submitted to the State and the State has already paid that amount." Councilmember Robinson said "if we are moving on with and getting rid of the sewer plant, then yeah you should pay this. If you're not, then maybe you look at where they're [Withers Ravenel] at with it, what work they've done, what they haven't done. Maybe we table this to the next meeting or until we bring in Two Rivers to discuss the questions that everybody has." Mayor Simonds said "I think that's a good idea. Table it, save the city and table it please." Mr. Attaway asked Mrs. Nolen if she was aware of any deadline requirements from DEQ on this? She said she was not aware of any and that they would have to look into.

Mayor Simons said "my biggest question is this. If we had a problem with our sewer plant, I'd be the first one in agreement with you but everything is up and running beautifully down there, it's just the maintenance that needs to be done." Councilmember Robinson interrupted and said "I'm not saying that. The local funds of \$188,000 is a lot of money. I know originally ARPA was going to cover it but then the additional \$188 [thousand] from tax payer funds is just..." Mr. Attaway said "before we signed the contract we knew what the amount was and this was from a different engineer. A different engineer applied for the grant for us and got us the grant. There number was a little bit higher than this one so we went with this engineering firm. We knew that it was \$188 [thousand]. In the minutes in the packet we mentioned in the approval this was coming from water and sewer fund balance or system development fees pending General Statutes, compliance, etc. Another question, that we can find out, I would suspect if you do not deliver on the \$400,000 grant by producing engineering drawings, which is what the city applied for and the city accepted those monies to do that, then the money that the State has already given us, is probably going to need to be paid back. Mayor Simonds said "I'd rather pay the money back and keep our plant and save money. That's our plant." Councilmember Bonham said "that's a whole other discussion." There was some back and forth about the amounts. Mayor Simonds asked Mr. Attaway if the total amount is \$588,000. Mr. Attaway said yes. Mayor Simonds to Councilmember Bonham said "go ahead genius." Councilmember Bonham said "ok, genius, \$400,000 ain't ours, it's grant money." Mayor Simonds said "hell it's still our money. It's taxpayer money. It's not your money. It's everyone's money all over the United States. You pick and choose where your money comes from. It still comes from every tax payer in NC." Councilmember Bonham said "there's no question about that." Mayor Simonds said "thank you, so quit trying to act like it's some kind of deal. It's not. It's a bad deal for the people of Lowell, understand that." Councilmember Bonham said "I tell you what, why don't we give every grant dollar we got coming and that we received to date, back and you run it and you turn it to Larry land and you do it however the hell you want to do it. And you run everybody in City Hall off and replace it with all your little cronies

and run this city into the damn dirt in about 30 minutes." Councilmember Chitwood said something about the cussing. Councilmember Bonham apologized. Mayor Simonds said you can't afford to live here. Mayor Simonds then complained about Mr. Attaway not living here and paying lower taxes. He was about to talk about the Fire Department before Councilmembers Smith and Chitwood and Mayor Pro Tem Bates asked if we could move on. Mayor Simonds said "I'm tired of keep talking about it, just as wrong as two left shoes." Councilmember Chitwood said "you continue to keep talking about it."

Councilmember Robinson made a motion to table the topic until the July meeting unless there is a deadline. He then corrected it to the June meeting. Mayor Simonds said "July is good, September would be even better. Councilmember Chitwood asked to allow him [Robinson] to continue his motion. Mayor Pro Tem Bates asked when was the meeting with Two Rivers? Mr. Attaway said he'd find out this week. He said he can talk to the Division Manager of Two Rivers to participate in a work session. He said he doesn't know of a deadline but that this [amendment] was brought to his attention by Withers Ravenel. He suspect there is enough time until the June 11th meeting. Councilmember Robinson continued his motion to table it until the June meeting, seconded by Councilmember Chitwood. The vote passed with Mayor Pro Tem Bates and Councilmembers Chitwood and Robinson voting yea and Councilmember Smith and Bonham voting nay.

The item was motioned To Table by Shane Robinson and seconded by DeWayne Chitwood with a passing result 3-2-0-0 Opposed by Travis Smith, Phil Bonham

To table it to the June meeting unless there is a deadline.

6H. Discussion of Forensic Audit- 7:43 PM

Mr. Eddie Caric, CPA wanted to discuss some things with Council. He said "there are a lot of misconceptions about...the term forensic doesn't need to be used because forensic audit normally comes into play only when there is a suspicion of something else or illegal has happened to the point of..." Councilmember Bonham interrupted and asked who he was with. Mr. Caric said he is a CPA with Eddie Caric, CPA. He said they currently do the city of Ranlo, High Shoals, and Bessimer City. Councilmember Smith asked him to explain a forensic audit again. Mr. Caric said "when there is some kind of suspicion of something illegal that has happened..." Councilmember Smith interrupted "can I just stop you right there. [Looking at Mayor Simonds] Is that not exactly why you want a forensic audit. How many times can we go back on the minutes where you've said you want a forensic audit?" Mayor Simonds said "I do, I did, but I didn't know what a forensic audit was evidently. I'll admit I was wrong, I'm not going to sit here and lie to you." Councilmember Chitwood called for a point of order to let Mr. Caric continue. Mayor Simonds said "thank you Mr. Chitwood, that's one time you're right." Councilmember Chitwood said something inaudible.

Mr. Caric continued saying "I don't know anything about Butler & Stowe. What I do know about them is the fact that they are a Certified Public Accountant that's been approved by the State of North Carolina to do governmental audits. One of the things that you have to be able to do to do governmental audits, is you have to be peer reviewed at least once every three years. That is where another auditor comes in and looks at what you're doing, how you're doing stuff and approves that yes you are doing what you're supposed to be doing as far as an audit is concerned. With that having been said, if you want to know what's happened with the City of Lowell for the last five years, go to their audit reports. If you've got questions about the expenditures...I will tell you this, we do over 30 municipalities around NC for audits. %90+ of your general revenues are confirmed by outside sources. If I was going to do the City of Lowell's audit for this coming year, when I come in, I'm going to know how much the State of NC has already

paid you in sales tax, it would be posted on a website. What I'm saying is, they would have that all confirmed from outside sources as far as revenues and property taxes, these kinds of things. They would tie in what your cash accounts are at the end of the year and if any issues come up, they are going to bring it to your attention. So if you want to know what money has been spent. If you look at the Police Department for example and want to know why we spent all that money right here? Go to them [Butler & Stowe], they should be able to give you a detail of what made up those expenditures and can tell you where they got their information from. If you have questions about something, and I'm going to use an example because the Mayor had asked me 'I just want to make sure all our State and Federal funds through all these projects we've been doing have been spent the way that they are supposed to be spent.' That's what's called an agreed upon procedures audit. Y'all would come to me and say 'look, we want you to go back the last five years. We want you to verify that amount was paid, these are the people it was paid to.' You see what I'm saying the difference is? You're giving me specifics, directions on what you have concerns with." Councilmember Chitwood added "we are giving you direction to look for something?" Mr. Caric said "yes".

Councilmember Bonham said "we are assuming at that point that our contracted CPA is not doing what they are contracted to do?" Mr. Caric said "well no, let me go one step further. Your CPA is providing a financial statement audit." Councilmember Bonham asked "is there is an obligation in their scope to, if they find something out of wack, any red flags, they should come to us under the contract per what they are supposed to do as part of their State requirement and say 'this'? So if they do not and everything adds up, the planets are all lined up and everything is good and just because we have somebody in here now that wants to stir the pot and create something, he comes to you and says come here and let's piss off this guy [pointing at Mr. Attaway] who is already doing a good job, let's bring you in. If it was the other way around, where would you be right now? You'd be sitting over there pissed off" Mr. Caric said "let me say this from that stand point and let me preface this with, I'm not interested in doing an audit for you." Councilmember Bonham said he doesn't blame him. Mr. Caric continued "Mayor, I'm sorry, but there is internal conflict here or whatever that I'm not sure y'all could justify giving me a direction to look at something. If there are questions on where the money has been spent, what departments it got spent in...just take your audits. Go back and look at your audits. Like I said, if there questions, if y'all do have concerns with where Federal and State money is spent...I do financial audits just like Butler & Stowe is doing. There is no obligation for me to dig deep looking for something. Now if I confirm with DEQ [example] that they gave you this amount of money and that's not the amount of money that is showing up on your book, then I have an obligation to figure out what happened." Councilmember Bonham said "it's not your obligation to dig deeper, but it is your obligation to say 'hey, I'm gonna stop right here, because this is where my scope ends BUT, I think on this line item or whatever you want to call it, I think it deserves more attention?'" Mr. Caric said "in that case I am obligated to dig deeper. If I do come across something that doesn't agree or look right, then yes I am obligated to look further, even though I'm doing a financial statement, I've got an obligation at that point in time to dig deeper and figure out why this is not making sense."

Mayor Simonds asked "the city of Ranlo for the whole year and whatever work you did, audit, take care of their books, CPA work, I hope I'm not putting you on the spot, but what do they pay you?" Mr. Caric said "you're not putting me on the spot, because you can go on the State Treasurer's website to see every fee for every town in NC as far as the audit is concerned. Our base fee is \$15,000." Mayor Simonds asked if that was for a year. Mr. Caric said yes. Mayor Simonds said "and then like a special audit, we just paid Butler & Stowe \$40 some thousand dollars

to audit ARPA. What did it cost Ranlo?" Mr. Caric said \$4,000. Mayor Simonds said "see that's the thing that gets me, you know, this is money that we can save. I'm not doing anything wrong. I've never met you in person, we've only had phone conversations. I'll admit I didn't know what a forensic audit was and didn't mean to misquote anyone but I think it's a good idea for this council and let him, if he would, do our audits, I mean do our work every year. Would you be interested in doing it?" Councilmember Chitwood said "did you not just hear what he said?" Mayor Simonds said "he said he wouldn't do an audit for us." Councilmember Chitwood asked Mr. Caric to repeat what he said. Mr. Caric said he was not interested. Mayor Simonds said I thought he said he's not interested in forensic. Mr. Caric said "I did say I'm not interested in any kind of forensic or agreed upon procedures audits but no, I don't think am interested in the financial statement audit either." Councilmember Chitwood asked "so you are not interested in any part of looking at any audit, taking over for Butler & Stowe for the city of Lowell?" Mr. Caric said "no sir." Councilmember Chitwood said "thank you, and I apologize for you having to wait so long tonight." Councilmember Bonham said "sorry you've waisted your time. So right now you [to the Mayor] are the point you don't know what a forensic audit is, you called this man in unfortunately wasting his time and what you really want to do is renegotiate terms of our annual audit."

Mayor Simonds said "I want to renegotiate the whole Butler & Stowe deal. I do want to do that because that's way over." Councilmember Chitwood asked if that was something that can be done. Mr. Attaway said he can provide you with it. He said he believes we are in the middle of a three year contract right now. If council would like him to look at another auditing firm and consider that contract with the attorney. He added "when we selected Butler & Stowe, I was here, not as Manager, but when we selected Butler & Stowe [before selecting them], we consistently had late audits being submitted from our prior CPA. I'm sure this gentleman [Mr. Caric] can attest that there is not enough auditors doing local government audits in NC right now." Mr. Caric said "not at all." Mr. Attaway said "the League of Municipalities has noticed that and is trying get some of the accounting assistance to ready smaller localities to get their ducks in a row as they find an auditor so they can get them the information they need. If we want to do that [renegotiate], then you would instruct the Manager to go out and do a request for proposals for CPA contracts but we're in the middle of one right now."

Mayor Simonds asked Mr. Caric "just like whenever we, every year, set the budget, when the Manager gives us the budget and council approves it, and then when the audit comes in and it's throwing away more money that's been taken in, that what was projected, is that a red flag or not or when the audits are not turned in on time?" Mr. Caric said "when an audit has not been turned in on time, in fact the State of NC, if you're consistently late with your audit, they are going to start withholding some taxes that they will be distributing out, so that is a point of emphasis that they are looking at. Actually your budget is a legal document from the expenditure side. So I would say 90% of the towns that I deal with, the revenue is going to exceed what was budgeted revenues are BUT you can not spend one dollar more than what your budgeted expenditures are or you're going to be in violation." Mayor Simonds said "and the money is supposed to go back to the citizens...I did make a mistake on the forensic side but I did not make a mistake as far as when he gives us a budget, it should be the budget. It should be, maybe in the realm of 5-6%, not 25%, 30%, 35%. That's what hurts because that kills the tax payers because you get charged for what he [Mr. Attaway] says is not true. You can't overstate the expenditures and understate the revenues and say it's ok. That's wrong. I can't do it. when you turn your taxes in, it better be what it's supposed to be. You're [Mr. Caric] a CPA, that's why you have one. I'm glad that you came in."

Mr. Caric asked council if they had any questions. Mayor Simonds asked "do you not have enough staff to do another city?" Mr. Caric said he had plenty of staff. Mayor Simonds asked "if we advertise for a new CPA, could you do it?" There was some commotion in the audience. Councilmember Chitwood asked them to quiet down. Mr. Caric said "Mr. Mayor, I'm sorry but no. Without some internal resolutions, no I would not be [interested]." Mayor Simonds said "it would be up to the council. If the council would get together and ask you, in an understanding way, rather than spend this exorbitant amount of money we're spending, we need to save all we can. This is a poor town with poor people and I do appreciate you coming. It's my fault for saying forensic audit but thank you."

Councilmember Bonham stated he needed to leave and excused himself to the Mayor and Council at 7:58pm.

6I. Consideration of Budget Amendment #13- 7:58 PM

Presented by Lisa Nolen. She said "this was for a Water AIA grant back in FY22 and we just received the final payment for that. This budget amendment is recognizing that revenue and that's the reason for the amendment because we did not originally budget for it." Councilmember Chitwood said "we're bringing in \$67,521?" Mrs. Nolen said yes. Mayor Simonds asked what the grant money was for? Mrs. Nolen said it was the Water AIA grant from FY22 and was not exactly sure what all is included as she was not employed here then. She said she started in late 2021. Mayor Simonds asked "so the money has just been lying dormant?" Mrs. Nolen said "no, the State did not release the funds until recently." Mayor Simonds said "so we need an amendment to take the money, which makes sense." He asked for a motion.

Mr. Attaway asked if she had it in front of her and to look for the 1.755 million number where there looks like there is an extra digit [shows 1,755,7093.24]. She said there is an apologized. There was some silent review of the amounts of the amendment. Mayor said we need a motion to accept the amendment. Councilmember Robinson said "we are looking at the amounts to make sure." Mayor Simonds said "we need to add it correct[ly] to start with."

Councilmember Robinson said from what he could figure it was the three and just a typo. Mrs. Nolen said it was a typo. Mayor Simonds asked what should the total be? Councilmember Smith made a motion to accept the funds with the typo being fixed, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bates.

Under discussion, Mayor Simonds asked "how much is that line item going to go to?" Councilmember Smith said "it's on your paper." Mayor said "well that's not what it says, it says \$1million, 779 right? What did you have to start with Lisa, \$1 million, 779. Mrs. Nolen said it was \$1,755,709. Accepting that grant money it goes to \$2,155,709. Mayor Simonds said that's \$67 thousand. That amount adds to over \$1million, bout \$2million something. \$1million 779 plus \$67 [thousand] is \$1,853,000 so how can it be \$2 million something? I made my living out of reading people's faces." It was mentioned that the amendment says \$67 thousand in one place and \$400,000 in another. Mrs Nolen stated that is an error. Mayor Simonds said "so let's get it right before we leave here, no use in passing something that's not right. It's simple math." Councilmember Chitwood said "we'll table it until June, when we get it right. That way it's written on the paper and Mr. Simonds maybe won't be speaking on it too much. I say we table 6I, Budget Amendment #13 until June 11" Mayor Simonds said "in the meantime Scott, can you get us the correct figures sometime tomorrow?" Councilmember Chitwood said "in the meantime, we don't need it until June." Mayor Simonds said "I need it. You can tolerate all the mistakes you want." The motion to table was seconded by Councilmember Robinson. The vote was unanimous.

The item was motioned To Table by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by DeWayne Chitwood with a passing result 4-0-1-1 Abstained by Larry Simonds Absent was Phil Bonham

6J. Consideration of Budget Amendment #14- 8:03 PM

Presented by Lisa Nolen. She said this is from Gaston County to receive funds in the amount of \$31,000 from their Township Grant. She said we used those funds for repairs to the Community Center. Mr. Attaway added that "this is for the CDBG-NR that we did the neighborhood revitalization grant. We had monies from CDBG to do the exterior, the repairs, the painting, etc. at the community center. In that grant, we had to have local match. When the Township grants came out in the late teens [years] from Gaston County, what they did, if you all recall when you were on the council [to Councilmembers Robinson and Chitwood], the County distributed money from the Caromont lease, I think it was, to all the municipalities based on population. We did the cross walk improvements out here at the Main St. section with the pedestrian beacons and purchased some other things relative to beautification and then it was slated that we were going to utilize that needed CDBG match. We received our final invoice from MAN Construction at the Community Center and this is the maximum amount of what we need to match with those local funds. \$31,000, there was about \$43 thousand and some change sitting at the county. We requested the \$31,000 to assist in paying MAN Construction, leaving a balance of a little over \$12,000 that we can then request from the county to zero out our Township Grant. I'd say that would be a wise use of coupling that with the \$75,000 if we want to continue using those funds at the Community Center for interior repairs and that will come at a later time. This is just to amend it for the \$31,000."

The item was motioned To Approve by Shane Robinson and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 4-0-0-1 Absent was Phil Bonham

7. Reports / Discussions

7A. City Manager Report- 8:05 PM

1. Glad everyone is safe from the recent tornado here in Lowell. Thanked Thad, Interim Public Works Director, and staff and the councilmembers that helped feed staff and the Police Department after working over.
2. Police Officer's Memorial is tomorrow [15th] at 10:00 am at Woodlawn Baptist Church and a procession following that will travel to the cemetery on New Hope Rd in Gastonia.
3. Mentioned the Notice of Intent to fund earlier.

7B. City Attorney Report- 8:07 PM

Nothing at this time.

7C. Mayor and City Council General Discussion- 8:07 PM

1. Councilmember Robinson also thanked Public Works for their work during the tornado.
2. Mayor Pro Tem Bates had no comment
3. Councilmember Chitwood thanked Public Works during tornado
4. Councilmember Smith thanked Public Works, Police and everyone that helped during tornado.

Mr. Attaway added that Town of Ranlo helped Lowell Public Works, as well as Gaston County Emergency Management brought a pull behind generator. Also Woodlawn Baptist fed everyone well and he wanted to thank all of them.

5. Mayor Simonds [to Thad Buchanan] "the town of Ranlo helped you guys out. It would be crazy if you weren't our Public Works Director but that is the Boards recommendation to Mr. Attaway...The Community Center, is it open now?" Mr. Attaway said "it is not." Mayor Simonds asked why not? Mr. Attaway said "we still have a bathroom to repair on the main floor before we can open it." Mayor Simonds asked how many years has it been closed? Mr. Attaway said "the Community Center has been closed since Covid." Mayor Simonds said "all this stuff has taken a toll. "People think that I'm mean, but you got the wrong idea, I love everyone, but in this case, this is (inaudible) tonight. If I wasn't so healthy, like I am, I'd probably be over here throwing up in the floor after listening to all the misappropriations of money and I'll tell you, just like the auditor told you.

"You can't keep what you're doing, overstating the expenditures and understating the revenues, just like weaving out the actual car tax money. Do you not realize how much money that would help reduce property taxes? And listen to this part, and I know people are shaking their heads, shake your head, I don't care. The truth's the truth. \$.8-1/2 cent fire tax, a \$.8-1/2 cent fire tax, the money doesn't go to our Fire Department, maybe 72-75% goes to them. They [former council] let them leave here without a public hearing. They say now we gotta have 100% of the citizens to allow them to come back. We're not crazy and I guarantee you, when I go before the County Commissioners next month and talk with them about the situation of how, listen, that is so wrong, to give up \$.8-1/2 cent tax rate from us and only get back maybe 4%, 6% tops. That's bad management and I don't care if it's your cousin, your brother, your sister, me. If I did you that way, I would be wrong. Listen, we have to honor what this City Manager says. He is the leader. He's supposed to be the one that keeps everyone informed. I'm talking about citizens and the board. To get all this crap today Scott, is slap in my face. The other people [council] may say it's ok but Larry tells you the truth. I would strongly recommend at this time that we advertise for a new City Manager (loud chatter/noises from the audience) and he can also include his resume and I'm not firing no one." Candy Funderburk was asked to stop hollering by Councilmember Chitwood. She apologized.

Mayor Simonds continued "I can recommend anything I want to and you're out of order but that's alright. That's my recommendation because I don't like misappropriation of money. I don't like for two things to be different year after year after year after year. If you think that's right, that's your opinion. Vote for who you want to, I'm not running for nothing. But I can't respect wrong and that is wrong when you tell the figures are wrong and you [hits desk] see this crap on the day of the meeting less than an hour from the meeting, I have no respect for you, because you showed me no respect. But that's my recommendation. The council can vote it up or down or never vote on it but that's my recommendation and the council has that authority, I don't. We need a new City Manager in this town, that's my opinion." Someone hollered from the audience "we need a new mayor." Mayor Simonds said "that's good, you can get one of them too. You like paying higher taxes and too much money? Go ahead. Do you have a motion to advertise for a new City Manager?" Councilmember Chitwood said "I make a motion that we do not even consider that." Mayor Simonds said "well then is there a motion to adjourn?" Councilmember Smith made a motion to go into closed session. Mayor Simonds said "yall go into Executive Session and all in favor, go ahead." Councilmember Chitwood said "don't you think you might need to listen to it." Mayor Simonds said "you know what's wrong, you're a grown man. I know what's wrong, he's wrong."

City Clerk asked who made the motion and 2nd to go into closed session. Mayor Simonds said "all in favor, go ahead." Councilmember Robinson stated that the Statute had to be said. Mayor Simonds asked John Russell who said the statute was 143-318.11 Section 3. Councilmember Chitwood made a motion that we go into closed session

for General Statute 143-318.11 Section 3 pursuant to consult with the City Attorney on a specific matter in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege with respect to the matter discussed. It was seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Bates.

The mayor then left at 8:15pm. There was a brief 2 minute break. Everyone returned at 8:17pm

8. Closed Session

8A. 143-318.11 (3) Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(3) to Consult with the City Attorney on a Specific Matter in Order to Preserve the Attorney-Client Privilege with Respect to the Matter Discussed- 8:12 PM

There was no action taken during the Closed Session.

The item was motioned Convene into Closed Session by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 4-0-0-2 Absent was Phil Bonham, Larry Simonds

To go into closed session for General Statute 143-318.11 Section 3 pursuant to consult with the City Attorney on a specific matter in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege with respect to the matter discussed.

The item was motioned ReConvene into Regular Session by DeWayne Chitwood and seconded by Scott Bates with a passing result 4-0-0-2 Absent was Phil Bonham, Larry Simonds

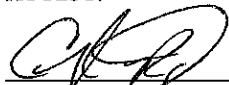
9. Adjournment

9A. Meeting Adjournment- 8:45 PM

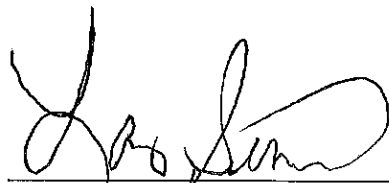
Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm

The item was motioned To Adjourn by Travis Smith and seconded by Shane Robinson with a passing result 4-0-0-2 Absent was Phil Bonham, Larry Simonds

ATTEST:



Cheryl Ramsey, City Clerk



Larry Simonds, Mayor



RESOLUTION TO DISCONTINUE THE COLLECTION OF A MOTOR VEHICLE TAG TAX PURSUANT TO NORTH CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES 160A-213

RESOLUTION 07-2024

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statutes 160A-213 and 20-97 authorizes municipalities to assess an annual tag tax of up to \$30.00 upon each registered motor vehicle resident within their corporate limits; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell Council currently assesses a \$10 tag tax fee; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell Council desires to cease the collection of this tag tax fee; and,

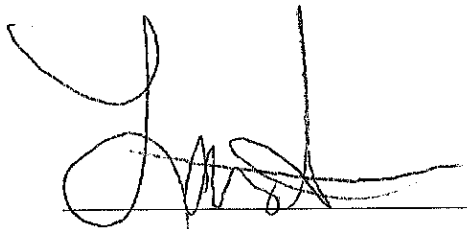
WHEREAS, the City of Lowell has entered into an agreement with Gaston County whereby Gaston County collects all taxes assessed by the City of Lowell; and,

WHEREAS, it is necessary for the City Council to adopt a resolution to remove said tax and direct the Gaston County Tax Administrator to stop the collection of said tax;

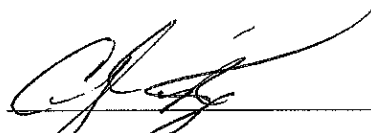
NOW, THEREFORE, IT BE RESOLVED, that the City of Lowell Council does hereby authorize the Mayor to sign this resolution for the purpose of formally removing an annual tag tax of \$10.00 upon all motor vehicles residing within the Municipal Boundaries of the City of Lowell pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes 160A—213 and 20-97, effective the 2024-2025 budget year beginning July 1, 2024;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Finance Director is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Gaston County Tax Administrator with directions to cease the collection of the tax on behalf of the City of Lowell.

Adopted this 14th day of May, 2024,



Mayor Larry Simonds



ATTEST: Cheryl Ramsey, City Clerk



PROCLAMATION

National Public Works Week

Proclamation 02-2024

WHEREAS, May 19-25, 2024 has been designated as Public Works Week in which we pause to reflect on the contributions of the Public Works staff; and

WHEREAS, public works professionals focus on infrastructure, facilities and services that are of vital importance to sustainable and resilient communities and to the public health, high quality of life and well-being of the people of the City of Lowell, NC; and,

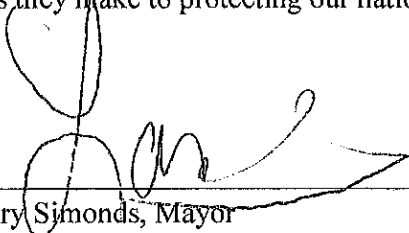
WHEREAS, these infrastructure, facilities and services could not be provided without the dedicated efforts of public works professionals, who are engineers, managers, and employees at all levels of government and the private sector, who are responsible for rebuilding, improving, and protecting our nation's transportation, water supply, water treatment and solid waste systems, public buildings, and other structures and facilities essential for our citizens; and,

WHEREAS, it is in the public interest for the citizens, civic leaders and children in Lowell, NC to gain knowledge of and to maintain an ongoing interest and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in their respective communities; and,

WHEREAS, the year 2024 marks the 64th annual National Public Works Week sponsored by the American Public Works Association/Canadian Public Works Association be it now,


NOW, THEREFORE, the City of Lowell City Council, do hereby designate the week May 19–25, 2024 as National Public Works Week; I urge all citizens to join with representatives of the American Public Works Association and government agencies in activities, events, and ceremonies designed to pay tribute to our public works professionals, engineers, managers, and employees and to recognize the substantial contributions they make to protecting our national health, safety, and quality of life.

This, the 14th day of May, 2024.



Larry Simonds, Mayor

ATTEST:



Cheryl Ramsey, City Clerk



PROCLAMATION

***National Police Week May 12-18, 2024 and
Peace Officers Memorial Day May 15, 2024***

Proclamation 03-2024

WHEREAS, throughout our nation, law enforcement officers serve diligently and with unwavering dedication to uphold the rule of law, safeguard our communities, and protect the rights and liberties of all citizens; and

WHEREAS, these brave men and women of law enforcement selflessly put their lives on the line each day to ensure the safety and security of our neighborhoods, often facing grave dangers and challenges in the line of duty; and

WHEREAS, National Police Week observed annually, provides an opportunity for all Americans to express gratitude to law enforcement officers for their tireless commitment and sacrifices, and to honor those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their communities; and

WHEREAS, Peace Officers and Memorial Day, observed May 15th, serves at a solemn occasion to pay tribute to the memory of law enforcement officers who have lost their lives in the line of duty, and to honor their enduring legacy of courage, valor, and service; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell, North Carolina recognizes the invaluable contributions of law enforcement officers to our community and acknowledge their integral role in fostering a safe, just, and inclusive society for all residents;

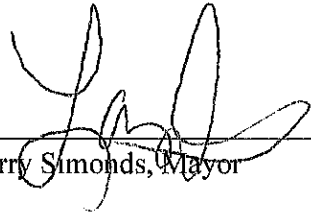
NOW, THEREFORE, I, Larry Simonds, Mayor of Lowell, do hereby proclaim the week of May 12th through May 18, 2024 as National Police Week in our City. I call upon all residents to join in honoring our law enforcement officers, expressing gratitude for their dedication, and recognizing their sacrifices.

FUTHERMORE, I designate May 15th, 2024, as Peace Officers Memorial Day in Lowell and urge all residents to observe this day with reverence and reflection, honoring the memory of those officers who have given their lives in service to our community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have set my hand and caused the official seal of the City of Lowell to be affixed this 14th day of May 2024.

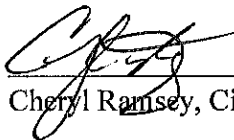


PROCLAMATION



Larry Simonds, Mayor

ATTEST:



Cheryl Ramsey, City Clerk

**City Of Lowell
Budget Amendment #14
Budget Ordinance FY 23-24**

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Lowell, North Carolina, that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024:

Section 1: To amend the Water/Sewer Fund, estimated revenues are to be changed as follows:

General Fund:

Revenue:

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
10-3300-0000 Township Grant		\$31,000.00

This will result in an increase of \$31,000.00 in the General Fund estimated revenues, bringing the revenues budgeted for FY 23-24 from \$5,009,073.93 to \$5,040,073.93.

Section 2: To amend the General Fund, the appropriations are to be changed as follows:

General Fund:

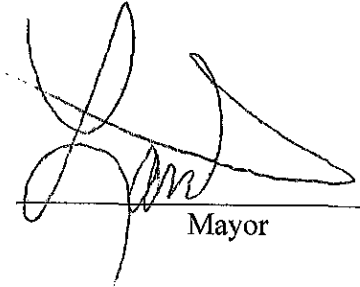
Expenses:

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
10-6120-1501 CC-Maint. & Repair-Bldg/Grounds		\$31,000.00

This amendment will result in an increase of \$31,000.00 in the Parks & Recreation appropriations for Community Center Maintenance & Repair-Building/Grounds in FY 23-24 from \$5,000.00 to \$36,000.00.


Section 3: Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk of the City Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 14th day of May, 2024.



Mayor

Attest:



City Clerk

Account Number:	510640
Customer Name:	City Of Lowell
Customer Address:	City Of Lowell 101 W 1St ST Scott Attaway Lowell NC 28098-1404
Contact Name:	Cheryl Ramsey
Contact Phone:	
Contact Email:	cramsey@lowellinc.com
PO Number:	

Date:	04/11/2024
Order Number:	10068316
Prepayment Amount:	\$ 0.00

Column Count:	1.0000
Line Count:	31.0000
Height in Inches:	0.0000

Print

Product	#Insertions	Start - End	Category
GAS The Gaston Gazette	2	04/30/2024 - 05/07/2024	Public Notices
GAS gastongazette.com	2	04/30/2024 - 05/07/2024	Public Notices

Total Cash Order Confirmation Amount Due	\$142.60
Tax Amount	\$0.00
Service Fee 3.99%	\$5.69
Cash/Check/ACH Discount	-\$5.69
Payment Amount by Cash/Check/ACH	\$142.60
Payment Amount by Credit Card	\$148.29

As an incentive for customers, we provide a discount off the total order cost equal to the 3.99% service fee if you pay with Cash/Check/ACH. Pay by Cash/Check/ACH and save!

Order Confirmation Amount

\$142.60

Ad Preview

Notice of Public Hearing
The City of Lowell's City Council will hold a Public Hearing at their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6:00 pm, at City Hall, 101 West First Street, Lowell, North Carolina, 28098.

The purpose of this Public Hearing will be for a proposed Rezoning CHANGE 5 acres TO INDUSTRIAL (IND) ZONING CLASSIFICATION. The property being discussed is located at 603 Groves Street, Lowell, NC - Parcel 302742.

Case# ZMA24-01
May 14, 2024, City Council Meeting, 6:00pm

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/@cityoflowellinc9321>

For further information please call Tyler Cobb, Planning Director at 704-740-9869 4/30, 5/7/24 10068316

Account Number:	510640
Customer Name:	City Of Lowell
Customer Address:	City Of Lowell 101 W 1ST ST Scott Atfaway Lowell NC 28098-1404
Contact Name:	Cheryl Ramsey
Contact Phone:	
Contact Email:	cramsey@lowellinc.com
PO Number:	

Date:	04/11/2024
Order Number:	10068423
Prepayment Amount:	\$ 0.00

Column Count:	1.0000
Line Count:	31.0000
Height in Inches:	0.0000

Print

Product	#Insertions	Start - End	Category
GAS The Gaston Gazette	2	04/30/2024 - 05/07/2024	Public Notices
GAS gastongazette.com	2	04/30/2024 - 05/07/2024	Public Notices

Total Cash Order Confirmation Amount Due	\$142.60
Tax Amount	\$0.00
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Payment Amount by Cash/Check/ACH	\$142.60
Payment Amount by Credit Card	\$148.29

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Order Confirmation Amount

\$142.60

Ad Preview

Notice of Public Hearing

The City of Lowell's City Council will hold a Public Hearing at their regularly scheduled meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024, at 6:00 pm, at City Hall, 101 West First Street, Lowell, North Carolina, 28098.

The purpose of this Public Hearing will be for the Spencer Ridge Development Agreement. The property being discussed is located at 1418 LOWELL SPENCER MOUNTAIN RD GASTONIA, NC 28056- Parcel 311868.

Case# Spencer Ridge Development Agreement
May 14, 2024, City Council Meeting, 6:00pm

Please join the meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone by clicking the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/@cityoflowellinc9321>

For further information please call Tyler Cobb, Planning Director at 704-740-9869
4/30, 5/7/24 10068423

Account Number:	510640
Customer Name:	City Of Lowell
Customer Address:	City Of Lowell 101 W 1st ST Scott Attaway Lowell NC 28098-1404
Contact Name:	Cheryl Ramsey
Contact Phone:	
Contact Email:	cramsey@lowellinc.com
PO Number:	

Date:	04/17/2024
Order Number:	10086924
Prepayment Amount:	\$ 0.00

Column Count:	1.0000
Line Count:	83.0000
Height in Inches:	0.0000

Print

Product	# Insertions	Start - End	Category
GAS The Gaston Gazette	1	05/20/2024 - 05/20/2024	Public Notices
GAS gastongazette.com	1	05/20/2024 - 05/20/2024	Public Notices

Total Cash Order Confirmation Amount Due	\$190.90
Tax Amount	\$0.00
Service Fee 3.99%	\$7.62
Cash/Check/ACH Discount	-\$7.62
Payment Amount by Cash/Check/ACH	\$190.90
Payment Amount by Credit Card	\$198.52

As an incentive for customers, we provide a discount off the total order cost equal to the 3.99% service fee if you pay with Cash/Check/ACH. Pay by Cash/Check/ACH and save!

Order Confirmation Amount

\$190.90

**NOTICE OF CLOSEOUT
PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF LOWELL FY17
COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT BLOCK
GRANT PROGRAM**

Notice is hereby given that the City of Lowell will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 6:00 PM in City Hall located at 101 W. First Street, Lowell, NC 28098, to review and assess the performance of the City's FY17 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) neighborhood revitalization program. The City received \$750,000.00 in grant funds from the NC Department of Commerce. With these funds, the City provided housing rehabilitation to eight (8) low-and-moderate-income (LMI) households and rehabilitation repairs to one (1) neighborhood facility. All citizens are urged to attend the public hearing and make their views known prior to the submission of closeout information to the NC Dept. of Commerce. A public information file exists at City Hall and may be viewed upon request. Residents will be given the opportunity to provide oral or written comments on the City's use of CDBG funds. For additional information or to submit written comments, please contact Scott Attaway, City Manager, 101 W. First Street, Lowell, NC 28098, phone (704) 824-3518. Comments should be received by the City no later than Friday, June 7, 2024, and a written response will be made within 10 working days. The City of Lowell does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, age, or familial status in the admission, access to, treatment, or employment in CDBG program and activities. Non-English speaking persons and other persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations should contact the City Manager, Scott Attaway at (704) 824-3518, TDD Relay Service at 711, at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Para mayor información en español, contacta a Scott Attaway at (704) 824-3518 o en 101 W. First Street, Lowell, NC 28098, de adelantamiento para esta comunicada. 5/20/24 10086924