

Minutes for the Regular City Council Meeting meeting
101 W. First Street, Lowell, North Carolina, 28098.
September 12, 2023, 6:00 PM - September 12, 2023, 7:15 PM

Roll Call: (The following members were in attendance)

Cheryl Ramsey, City Clerk
Sandy Railey, Mayor
Podium, Support
Scott Attaway, City Manager
Phill Bonham, Councilmember
JoAnna Fulbright, Councilmember
Candy Funderburk, Councilmember
Thomas Gillespie, Councilmember
John Russell, Jr, City Attorney
Travis Smith, Mayor Pro-Tem

1. General

1A. Call To Order - 6:00 PM

Mayor Sandy Railey called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. City staff present were City Manager Scott Attaway, City Attorney John Russell, Police Chief Carl Moore, Police Assistant Chief Jeff Harrison, GIS Analyst Todd Stroupe, Stormwater Administrator Jamie Watkins, Finance Director Lisa Nolen, City Planner Joe Gates, 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 present.

1B. Invocation / Pledge of Allegiance - 6:00 PM

Councilmember Gillespie gave the Invocation and led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1C. Adoption of Agenda for this Meeting - 6:01 PM

Mayor Railey asked for a motion to adopt this meeting, Mr. Attaway asked to add section 6K to set a Public Hearing for consideration of Economic Development Grant for Project Seattle.

The Item was motioned To Approve by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to approve the adoption of the meeting and adding 6K to set a public hearing for the consideration of Economic Development Grant for Project Seattle at the October 10, 2023 City Council meeting at 6:00pm. It was seconded by Mayor Pro Temp Smith and the vote was unanimously in favor.

1D. Public Comments - 6:03 PM

1. Larry Simonds of 1603 Power Dr., Lowell, NC - He stated he is a candidate for Mayor for the City of Lowell. He then complained about the taxes and that council is not looking out for its citizens. He said Lowell doesn't have anything, but keeps buying property like the Boys and Girls Club, the Methodist Church yet we don't have a bank, no sidewalks, no grocery store, doctor or dentist offices but has the highest tax rate of any city in Gaston County at .57-1/2 cents with .8-1/2 cent fire tax due to Mr. Attaway making the Fire Chief mad. He said it's a shame that we can have a debate at

Holbrook Middle school so the public can ask questions of the candidates. He said the current council is not getting anything done, then complained about no one answering the phone at the Police Department, a 6 lane highway coming out of NorthPoint and increased taxes. He thanked council for their time and said he doesn't think they are doing a good job. He then left the meeting.

2. J.C. Hueck, owner of Miami Fusion Cafe at 125 N Main St, Lowell, NC - He stated they had their grand soft opening today. He wanted to announce his support of the Social District. He thinks it is a step forward to develop Lowell and he is here to support. He hopes it will bring life and happiness to the City. Councilmember Funderburk stated that the food is great at the new restaurant.

3. Alisa Frye, owner of Fryeday Coffee Roasters at 108 E 1st St, Lowell, NC - She wanted to go on record to say she is in support of the proposed Social District if we get to that point. She thinks Lowell needs something going on to attract more people to the town where they can feel free to walk around in a Social District. She also stated she would love to see the Brunch Bill back on the agenda to be passed by council, which would allow them to sell alcoholic beverages on Sunday before noon. She said with her business, having a beer and wine license, people come in on Sundays and want to sit on the patio to have a mimosa or want to buy a bottle of wine after church for dinner and they can't because of the rule, causing her to lose sales.

4. John Cato, 109 Walnut St, Lowell, NC - He is disappointed with council because of the violation of Civil Rights. He said he is ashamed of them. He said he doesn't like the way people have been treated around here and not being able to speak at the City Council meetings. He is also disappointed over the Spencer Mountain, the chemical dump and he'd recommend finding some other place to spend a million dollars. He said who is going to let their kids go up there to play at a park that is across from a park that is polluted.

2. Approval of Minutes

The Item was motioned To Approve by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Phil Bonham with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

2A. Approval of Minutes 8-15-2023 -

With no changes, Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilmember Bonham. The vote was unanimously in favor.

3. Special Presentation

3A. Proclamation 06-2023 - Patriot Day - 6:14 PM

Honoring and Remembering those who lost their lives in the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks.

The Item was motioned To Approve by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

3B. Proclamation 07-2023 – Stormwater Awareness Week - 6:15 PM

The Item was motioned To Approve by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

3C. Introduction of New Planner and New Parks and Recreation/Events Director - 6:16 PM

Scott Attaway introduced City Council to the new Planner, Tyler Cobb. Mr. Cobb gave a brief background of himself. Mr. Attaway said he is increasing the departments output already and getting

caught up with code enforcement. He issued 16 violations in one day. Mr. Attaway then introduced City Council to the new Parks and Recreation/Events Director, Tori Dellinger. Mrs. Dellinger then gave a brief background on herself as well.

4. Consent Agenda

Councilmember Funderburk thanked all the city employees but wanted to personally thank Todd Stroupe, GIS Analyst, for the mapping he has done and how he is getting ready to start mapping the cemetery that she will be helping him do. She also asked about the report for Parks and Recreation and her concern about the big event on Saturday, September 23rd with Caleb Davis. She said he has a huge following and wanted to know why are we having it from 11am to 2pm and not in the evening hours from like 5-8pm especially with the new restaurant in town. Mr. Attaway answered (because Mrs. Dellinger was not employed at the time of the booking). He stated that it [the event] ties into the events of the rest of the day with the Shred-It truck coming, that is done every year. He said we didn't know if the restaurant was going to be open at the time of the booking and staff will be working with the businesses downtown in the future when we schedule events, which are typically scheduled six months in advance. Councilmember Funderburk suggested scheduling things in later hours especially for someone like Caleb Davis because he has such a strong following. Mr. Attaway said the reason why we have him for an earlier show is because that was the only time he was available that day, which also helped in our costs to pay him.

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

4A. Planning Report -

4B. Customer Service - Billing Report -

4C. Stormwater Report -

4D. Finance Report -

4E. Public Works Report -

4F. Police Report -

4G. GIS Report -

4H. Parks and Recreation Report -

5. Unfinished Business

No Items

6. New Business

6A. Set Public Hearing - Creation of Lowell Social District - 6:20 PM
Resolution and Consideration to Approve the City of Lowell's "Lowell Social District"

Mr. Attaway presented. He directed Council to their packets and described the map showing the plans for the proposed Social District and the resolutions to adopt the Operations Maintenance Plan. He said if this is approved in the public meeting in October, all documentation will be sent to the

State. He then continued the review of the map and stated Mrs. Dellinger went to all the businesses in the proposed area to explain what a Social District is and if they are willing participants or if they think having it is a good idea. He does know of one business that would not allow the beverages in [their establishment] but they did not have a problem with having a Social District. He then asked council to ask any questions.

Councilmember Bonham asked if this is the district that will allow the activity or the traffic but not to mandate or force businesses to participate, correct? Mr. Attaway said the city will provide stickers for businesses to put on their doors stating they do or do not participate. What would happen is someone would go to a participating business, say Miami Fusion and then could go to other participating businesses. If a business does not have a liquor license, like the beauty salons, for example, but they have stated they want to be a part of the social district, the person could go to the restaurant or Fryeday's for a drink then bring it with them when they get their hair done. The ordinance does not mandate the business to participate. This is all spelled out in the packet under the Operations Maintenance Plan. If they do sign up as an allowable business to walk in with a beverage, they have to agree to all the rules and conditions. The Police can then have access to the property at any point of time that they suspect something is not going right. We will have a lot of trainings, provided free by the ALE (Alcohol Law Enforcement) and ABC Board, to ensure the business owners are aware of their obligations. Councilmember Bonham said to be clear, the business owner can allow it to go out but not necessarily to come in, correct? Mr. Attaway said correct.

Councilmember Funderburk said her only concern is the traffic and jaywalking of impaired participants. She asked will the Police Department be able to handle it. She said she knows Belmont said they can't handle it right now. She asked if someone will be able to buy the cup from something like Miami Fusion and then go to their car and have more liquor there. Will people be able to do that? Mr. Attaway said the Police Chief and Assistant Chief have been reaching out to other jurisdictions like Cramerton, Gastonia, and Hickory to discuss that, which is also listed in the Operations Maintenance Plan of how this district is to be operated. Councilmember Funderburk then asked about the hours of operation and the ordinance. She said the hours are supposed to be Monday through Sunday from 10am to 11pm but we already have an ordinance in place that we don't sell anything until noon on Sunday. Will this new ordinance take over the previous one? Mr. Attaway said no, you would have to do both. If the Brunch Bill is not passed to allow alcohol before noon, then the ordinance for the Social District would have to be changed for the Sunday hours, if it is approved.

Councilmember Bonham asked if approved, moving forward, will there be language in place for a person/business to apply for this to incorporate them or how does that work? Mr. Attaway said they would just petition the city to have it extended to them.

With no other questions, Councilmember Funderburk made a motion to set Public Hearing for October 10th at 6pm for the creation of the Lowell Social District, seconded by Councilmember Bonham. The vote was unanimously in favor.

The Item was motioned To Set by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Phil Bonham with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Ralley

To set the Public Hearing for the Social District on October 10, 2023 at 6pm

6B. Interdepartmental Transfers for FY 2023 Budget - 6:30 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated the Finance Director, Lisa Nolen, prepared the interdepartmental transfers located in the agenda packet. He stated this is for the General Fund, Water/Sewer Fund, and the Stormwater Fund. He stated some expense accounts went over budget but the overall departments did not go over budget so it is within the normal occurrence of line item transfers. This is being brought to Council for information purposes only and in compliance with the yearly budget ordinance.

6C. Budget Amendment #1 - 6:31 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated this is to receive insurance proceeds to pay for repairs to a damaged Police vehicle in the amount of \$6,039.80.

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

6D. Budget Amendment #2 - 6:32 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated this is an ARPA fund transfer balance request of \$724,389.58 to the General Fund. He stated this will complete the move of all ARPA funds to the General Fund and its' subsequent budget amendment #4 to be transferred to the Community Investment Fund (CIF).

Councilmember Funderburk asked since we are transferring that to the General Fund and she knows we have a time limit to spend ARPA funds, will that help us prolong it and not have to spend the funds within that time period? Mrs. Nolen answered, stating that once we supplant those funds into what we are going to use them for out of the CIF fund, we are going to spend it within the time frame, so that is not an issue.

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

6E. Amended Grant Project Ordinance - ARPA - 6:34 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated because that was done [previous two amendments], we have to amend our Grant Project Ordinance, showing all those funds were transferred to the General Fund including the funds prior. Every time ARPA funds are moved, we have to amend the Grant Project Ordinance.

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by JoAnna Fulbright with a passing result 5-0-1-0
Abstained by Sandy Railey

6F. Budget Amendment #3 - 6:35 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated this is a move of funds from the excess in the General Fund to the CIF. We had a 50% goal that was established during the budget retreats stating that anything above the 50% goal set would be transferred to the CIF. He said he has been asked that if something were to happen in another department and it had to come back out, for example in emergencies, then it could come out of the CIF as it is not a Capital Reserve fund. He said 50% is a good goal but when you have a smaller budget, you want that goal to be a little higher. This has the liquidity of the funds to come back [to the General Fund] if necessary. He then explained the CIF to the audience in that it is a fund developed by council where the city could finance or pay for debt service for all capital investments or anything above \$75k.

Mayor Pro Temp said that we set our goal at 50%, done great with that and are making good leeway before going into his motion.

The Item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by JoAnna Fulbright with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

6G. Budget Amendment #4 - 6:38 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. This is to move the ARPA dollars from the General Fund to CIF. An updated amendment was provided to council (see attached). He stated the one in the packet does not account for the purchase of the Lowell Fire Department's Kawasaki side-by-side UTV [for the Police Department] in the budget amendments relative to the difference. The \$695,305.53 that is slated to move to the CIF balance, leaves behind funds to purchase that UTV in the General fund as well as things for Utility Billing, see the memo in the packet from Sue [Lowe] that highlights the numbers. He said the city currently uses postcards for utility bills, where you can't get a lot of extra information on it. For example, Thomas Shrewsbury often is required to publish Stormwater and annual reports for water quality but there is no room on the bill. We have received multiple complaints about the size of the bill, so we are looking at a full page sized bill and the sorter machine that it will take to perform this task of folding and stuffing envelopes. He then showed an example from a neighboring city that uses the machine. This machine will also allow us to print four more pages that can be added to the envelopes, saving the city from having to print the quarter newsletter anymore, which costs the city up to \$8,000 a year. As we keep growing and there are more recipients of these letters, that cost will also increase. The city will see a net savings of \$2973.20 by taking out the quarterly newsletter and doing monthly newsletters instead. So we will get a full size bill, with content on the back to discuss utility billing, deadlines, contact information, free bulk pick-up schedules and then the other pages to add in, for example, a newsletter and Stormwater information we are required to send out to the public. Other departments can also use this machine as well, in our effort to save the city money by automating processes, give the citizens a good product, and more up-to-date information instead of quarterly or every five months.

Councilmember Funderburk said she liked the idea of new bills and newsletters monthly instead of quarterly. She knows the citizens are always questioning what is going on. So if there is an event coming up, it can be in with the bills. Mr. Attaway stated it was brought up by the Mayor Pro Temp Smith to do a concert line-up beginning in the spring where you can do a one page document noting our activities. He reemphasized that all departments will be able to use it to get their information out to the citizens a lot quicker and cleaner.

Referring to the purchase of the UTV mule from the Fire Department, Councilmember Funderburk asked if this is better than buying a new one? Mr. Attaway said yes and referred to Asst. Chief Harrison to elaborate. Asst. Chief Harrison stated that they have applied for grants several times for a mule and have been turned down every time. He said they will continue to apply for that grant but this opportunity presented itself. He researched this particular unit and believed it to be a good price and in good shape. He also took it to a local dealership and they also thought it was a good deal. He said it is a good tool for the officers to get down in the woods when they get calls. They have had three or four rescue calls at Poston Park and they end up standing by the Fire Department until the person is brought out. This vehicle will allow the Police Department to go out there and help therefore serving it's purpose well.

Councilmember Bonham asked if additional re-lettering and detailing necessary? Mr. Attaway said it will be re-lettered for the local Police.

The Item was motioned To Approve by Phil Bonham and seconded by Candy Funderburk with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

6H. Regional Stormwater Partnership of the Carolinas Memorandum of Understanding - 6:45 PM

Presented by Jamie Watkins, Stormwater Administrator. She stated that they have been working with the Regional Stormwater Partnership of the Carolinas (RSPC) for a while now and some of the things they provide for us and other municipalities in the area is access to outreach and education via television and radio ads. We then get metrics on how many people in Lowell were reached by those ads and what topics they viewed most. At the end of the year when she is doing the process of presenting the self-audit to the DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality), they can show how many ads were done, what subjects were discussed, and how many people heard them. They would also be given access to a things that can be distributed during events like the River Fest in May. This includes coloring books, activity books, and dog waste dispensers with a slogan on them to hand to people. She said it was explained to her that in order for the DEQ to give the city credit for our efforts, we have to have an official Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between us and the RSPC. She is asking council to approve the MOU, so it can be turned into the DEQ to receive credit going forward.

The item was motioned To Approve by Travis Smith and seconded by Candy Funderburk with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

6I. Resolution 06-2023 to Adopt and Approve CDBG-I Compliance Plans - 6:48 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated all the information is in the packet. We have to keep the compliance plans and policies updated for the CDBG-I, the sewer grant we received and continue to use. Cheryl Ramsey added that this is an annual requirement to stay in compliance.

The Item was motioned To Approve by Phil Bonham and seconded by JoAnna Fulbright with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

6J. Professional Services Amendment with WithersRavenel for the CDBG-I Grant - 6:50 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway. He stated that with the CDBG-I Grant, what was found, during some exploratory work, cameras in the line, and making repairs, is that some of the lines were not as bad as we assumed before the grant was awarded in the geographical area that we are bound to with CDBG requirements. This amendment is for WithersRavenel to look for ways to spend more money on additional repairs in the area. Thomas Shrewsbury added that the areas we are looking at now are to stretch the zone as far as we can to maybe include the basins that continue outside the grant area but goes to the lift station. We are currently looking at our worst functioning lift station in the city to be repaired and also some manholes that are spotty throughout the grant application area. Councilmember Funderburk asked what area is this? Mr. Attaway said it is the same area as the CDBG-NR grant [where the houses that are scheduled for rehabilitation] or around highway 7 and Phillips, Birch, Ash, Clay roads.

Mr. Attaway went over some of the numbers noted in the agenda packet, specifically stating that we have a balance of \$1,122,574.08 left to spend and \$197,000 is for the amendment to WithersRavenel to explore other projects that can qualify for repair. Cheryl Ramsey added that she

spoke with WithersRavenel this morning and stated that the initial grant project is scheduled to end December 31st but they are going to try to get an extension to have enough time to spend more money. Councilmember Bonham reminded council and the public that this is a use or lose it scenario, so if we can find other ways in this area then we should go for it, correct? Mr. Attaway said yes, staff recommends approving the amendment with WithersRavenel so they can identify more areas of need and yes, if you do not use the funds, you return them to the State.

The item was motioned To Accept by JoAnna Fulbright and seconded by Candy Funderburk with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Ralley

6K. Set Public Hearing For Consideration Of Economic Development Grant For Project Seattle For The October 10, 2023 City Council Meeting - 6:58 PM

[Added to agenda] Presented by Scott Attaway. This is to set the public hearing for the consideration of Economic Development Grant for Project Seattle. This is a Gateway 85 development at building #7 that is partially in Lowell. The SE corner of the building is in city limits. We are a part of this grant application from Project Seattle as well as Gaston County and the City of Gastonia. The City of Gastonia predominantly holds the majority of the building in its city limits. This would likely only qualify for a tier 1 or tier 2 because of the investment of approximately \$20 million dollars of machinery. He reminded councilmembers that we have already done the Economic Development Grant for the development itself and the buildings. This request is similar to what we did recently for Project Newell, where it was just for the contents (shelving, inventory, equipment) of what Newell had in the building. He stated that he only knows them as Project Seattle at this point and doesn't think the EDC knows what company this is either. What he does know is this is a Fortune 500 company that is anticipating adding approximately 107 new jobs with an average salary of \$25.82 per hour. They are looking to have this investment complete at the end of December 2024.

With no questions, Councilmember Fulbright made a motion to set the public hearing for consideration of Economic Development Grant for Project Seattle for the October 10, 2023 City Council Meeting, seconded by Councilmember Funderburk. Councilmember Bonham reminded council and the audience that this is a sliver [of property] in Lowell and based on the dollar value and salary value, he thinks we are looking at distribution and not manufacturing. With no other discussion, the vote was unanimously in favor.

Mayor Ralley added that Newell is hiring if anyone is interested. Go to Newell.com if interested.

7. Reports / Discussions

7A. City Manager Report - 6:58 PM

Presented by Scott Attaway:

1. Events lined up for the Fall schedule including City's Music in the Park, Fall Festival, River Sweep, Senior Adult, Mammogram bus coming and the Treat Walk coming. He said this is one of those busy seasons of the year and a lot going on in, and around downtown.
2. Update on DWI grant application submitted for our Waste Water Interconnect with Two Rivers Utilities at our Waste Water Treatment Plant. We received a letter, which he supplied to council, stating that we applied for \$7.9 million grant through DWI. The process is that DWI will let you know if you are awarded the grant or a very low interest rate financing. They came back to us with \$2,086,500 of that, with no closing fees for a grant. This brings the total of the State Evolving Fund

loan down to \$5.8 million. \$500,000 of that would be the principle forgiveness allowed. Approximately \$5.3 million would be repayable at a .76% interest rate. He reminded council that they just approved capital financing at our last meeting. He wanted to just keep council updated and also noted that we are going to work with the staff and Davenport Public Finance on this and work it into our water/sewer budgets. He will report back to council in the October meeting regarding this. He mentioned there is some direct funding requests from the State as well but water/sewer was included in that. He said we don't know when the State is going to adopt its' budget, but that's when we'll find out about any direct funding, if any, from the State of North Carolina. We also have some Federal earmarks with Congressman Jeff Jackson but he does not know when that budget will be approved either. He will stay in contact with Davenport and report back in October. He said this is good news getting this award to sustain the growth and development that we are seeing already and will continue to see.

3. Demolition update of 1602 N. Main St, the old Crompton and Knowles site. He spoke to the superintendent there and 16 buildings are down to the slab. They have done concrete slab tests on all of the slabs there and is awaiting the results to determine where that concrete can go. They are doing all the environmental work with Mid-Atlantic, our environmental consultants, watching all the abatement removal, etc. We also have the city engineer watching the actual work flow and erosion control of the site. Another slab is nearly done and another will be beginning in the morning [9/13/23]. Some change orders have been discussed that they may need to bring to council at a later date. We may use SCIF funds out of the \$2 million received from the State to tear this building down and build the new Public Works facility first, then recreation, river access, etc.

4. CDBG-NR updates. Moving along with repairs and still waiting on doors and windows for the Community Center. There was a production delay for the oddly shaped doors and windows. He said to get it opened, there was another issue in the kitchen and that was ventilation from the hood. We received the fan finally and Thomas is working to get that installed and have our electrician finalize it so it can be opened back up to the public.

5. Christmas Decoration on McAdenville Rd. Tomorrow [9/13/23], Duke Power said they are going to check Public Works flags on the poles that we asked to see if we could add more decoration to. Councilmember Funderburk asked how many poles? Mr. Attaway said he think there are a dozen to 15.

6. Capital Equipment updates. We are fine-tuning all the Public Works equipment, getting some quotes in, and scheduling with the bank to get our documents signed. Financing was approved by council last month.

7. Poston Park sidewalk update. This funded project that the county is doing is to extend the sidewalk on the left side of North Main to Poston front entrance from approximately the Preston Place subdivision. It is still slated to begin next Spring. The County is going to send out a mailer about the project to residents. He added that this is an eight year wait for this project to begin.

8. Carolina Thread Trail update. Still working through the interlocal agreement team at Gaston County and will have more of an update at the next council meeting in October.

9. New Staff update. He said it is such a relief for our staff to have our new staff. We are getting so much more completed. The 16 violations in one day is amazing when you have the personnel to do it. He appreciates council for allowing us to have that [added personnel].

10. EPA Lead Copper Rule is live and in effect and Todd Stroupe is really helping Thomas Shrewsbury get that inventory set up. Citizens will start seeing mailers coming for this mandated rule. More information to come on this.

7B. City Attorney Report - 7:13 PM

No updates.

7C. Mayor and City Council General Discussion - 7:13 PM

Mayor Pro Temp Smith stated that during Public Comments, taxes were mentioned. Lowell's tax rate is \$.49 cents, correct? Scott Attaway and Mayor Railey answered yes. Mayor Pro Temp Smith continued saying he just wanted to clear that up. He also stated that we can't get a grocery store in Lowell, a doctor's office, a Lowell bank, even though the bank we had was a Truist Bank, not a Lowell bank. He said most people know that we can't get those types of businesses in Lowell. He then referred to another comment in that we tested and re-tested the old chemical plant in hopes to see what we could do there. We are still testing this area. He also wanted to clear that topic up. He also thinks with the Social District, we should discuss pursuing the Brunch Bill to help our businesses to show we appreciate them being here.

Councilmember Funderburk added that the White Water Center, if anyone has ever been, was also built on a Brownfield like the park [at the old Chemical Plant] is being built on and it was tested. She said she took her children and grandchildren and will take her future great-grandchildren up there [new park] one day especially when the splash pad is built. She said she is very excited about the things happening in Lowell even if she doesn't agree with everything. She said in the overall picture, we're doing great. We have the money to do things and we want to keep moving forward. Sometimes she thinks our spending might be a little bit...but we are working on it. We all work together, even if we don't agree and she appreciates all the departments as they work so hard all the time. She really appreciates the Police Department. When she had an emergency at her house this [past] weekend, they were first on the scene and probably saved a life and really appreciates them.

Councilmember Bonham said we are not spending money we don't have yet and what it takes is planning and budgeting to allow ourselves to do the things that are required of us and what our citizens want us to do. That takes discipline and to make some hard decisions and that is what we are elected to do. He appreciates all of the audience for coming to hear things first hand instead of social media. Don't listen to your neighbor or get it on social media, ask someone who knows. Get the real facts! We'll be going through this until November with the garbage that goes on social media and even in our public comments. If you truly want to know, ask the questions to the right people as we are all happy to answer. If he doesn't have one, he'll get you one from the right person.

Councilmember Fulbright wanted to extend on what Mayor Pro Temp Smith said. She said someone asked, in the Public Comments, why the Fire Department decided to go to the county. The reason the

Fire Department went to the county is for budgeting purposes. When that first came up, she approached the Board of Directors and the Fire Chief himself to get their opinions. Both of them stated they needed to go to the county for funding and they will be better funded through the county. So again just like Councilmember Bonham said, get your information from the true, right source and don't listen to what is being put out there. Some people will want to come in here and just hate and with dissension and we are doing everything we can with the best interest for this city when making these decisions. Please come and get the information from the correct sources.

Mayor Railey thanked all for coming tonight and how very much the citizens are appreciated. She wanted to tag team on what Councilmember Fulbright and Mayor Pro Temp Smith said about comments made through Public Comments. She asked the audience to not think negative because they are a very positive board and want it to stay that way. Just be careful of letting people pull you down because we are up and want to stay up. She said we are doing a great job, council and staff, and we want to stay behind them as much as we can.

Councilmember Bonham added that most of us here make decisions based on facts, what is presented to us, what is given to us, what is proven, and what is here from all these different angles. He may not particularly like something or wish something were different, but that doesn't change the facts. We are making decisions not only for today or tomorrow but for 5, 10, 15 years down the road based on the facts that we have in front of us, not what I want, but factual based data.

8. Closed Session

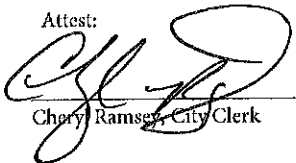
No Items

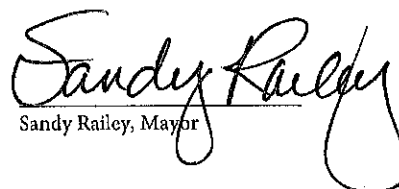
9. Adjournment

9A. Meeting Adjournment - 7:13 PM

The item was motioned To Approve by Candy Funderburk and seconded by Travis Smith with a passing result 5-0-1-0 Abstained by Sandy Railey

Attest:


Cheryl Ramsay, City Clerk


Sandy Railey, Mayor

**City Of Lowell
Budget Amendment #4
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 Community Investment Fund balance to be changed as follows:

**Community Investment Fund:
Fund Balance:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
10-3990-2000 CIF Balance Appropriated		\$695,305.53

This will result in an increase of \$695,305.53 in CIF Balance Appropriated.

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


**General Fund:
Fund Balance:**

	<u>Decrease</u>	<u>Increase</u>
10-3990-0000 Fund Bal. Appropriated	\$695,305.53	

This amendment will result in a decrease of \$695,305.53 in Fund Bal. Appropriated.

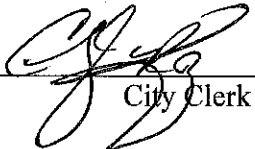
Section 3: Copies of this budget amendment shall be furnished to the Clerk of the City Council, and to the Budget Officer and the Finance Officer for their direction.

Adopted this 12 day of September, 2023.



Mayor

Attest:



City Clerk

ADD AGENDA ITEM 6K

**SET PUBLIC HEARING FOR CONSIDERATION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
GRANT FOR PROJECT SEATTLE FOR THE OCTOBER 10, 2023 CITY COUNCIL
MEETING**

RESOLUTION TITLE: TO APPROVE A CITY OF LOWELL LEVEL TWO INCENTIVE GRANT PURSUANT TO N.C.GEN.STAT. §158-7.1 AND TO AUTHORIZE CITY OF LOWELL TO ENTER INTO AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT (EDA) WITH PROJECT Seattle

WHEREAS, Project Seattle is a Fortune 500 Company considering a total investment of \$21,000,000 to establish a facility in City of Lowell, to include the purchase and installation of Machinery & Equipment, with the expectation to complete this investment on or before December 31, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, Project Seattle's investment is anticipated to add approximately 107 new jobs with an average salary of \$25.82 per hour over the next twelve months.; and,

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute §158-7.1 authorizes a City to undertake an economic development project by providing grants for the location of industry; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Lowell developed an economic grant policy to provide global advanced manufacturing companies and distribution facilities with incentives to develop high quality industries in the County; and,

WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the Company's capital investment in and at the Property and its operations thereat will generate significant ad valorem tax, sales tax and other revenues to the City and will qualify for a Level One or Level Two Grant, whichever is the applicable assessed tax value of personal property; and,

WHEREAS, the City will prepare a detailed Economic Development Agreement (EDA), between Project Seattle and the City, so as to induce the company to provide good job opportunities and capital investment which will enhance the City's ability to attract additional business and industry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Lowell City Council approves a Level One or Level Two Grant, whichever is the applicable assessed tax value of personal property, and further authorizes the Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore or the City Manager to execute any documents necessary to complete an Economic Development Agreement, for Project Seattle.

DO NOT TYPE BELOW THIS LINE

I, Cheryl Ramsey, Clerk to the Lowell City Council, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of action taken by the City of Lowell as follows:

A=AYE, N=NAY, AB=ABSENT, ABS=ABSTAIN, U=UNANIMOUS