

Minutes were approved on June 26, 2023, by the City Council.

**CITY OF LACONIA - CITY COUNCIL MEETING
7:00 P.M.**

6/12/2023 - Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Hosmer called the meeting to order at 7:23 PM

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

Public Works Director Anderson led the salute to the flag

3. RECORDING SECRETARY

Katie Gargano, City Clerk

4. ROLL CALL

Clerk Gargano called the roll of the following Councilors: Councilor Cheney, Councilor Soucy, Councilor Lipman, Councilor Haynes, Councilor Felch and Mayor Hosmer.

Absent: Councilor Hamel

5. STAFF IN ATTENDANCE

Kirk Beattie, City Manager; Glenn Smith, Finance Director

6. COUNCIL PROCLAMATION

After Item 22 C. Mayor Hosmer read a proclamation to acknowledge month of June 2023 as Pride Month in support of the LGBTQ+.

Councilor Lipman stated he supports the proclamation, with the exception of flying a flag on a City building or flag pole.

Councilor Soucy doesn't agree that this should take place for a whole month where we only have one day for Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Mayor Hosmer agrees that those and other holidays should be longer, however those dates were set outside of anyone's control as it was set way before their time.

Councilor Lipman would like to see a motion on it that excludes the flag component in the proclamation because we don't have a policy.

Councilor Haynes comment said that he wife's hometown went through the same issue they are currently facing. Their governing body decided that it would not be hung on City Hall because they did not find it appropriate.

Councilor Felch noted that its not a celebration or holiday. It's just showing support and recognition and its federally recognized.

All of the Council were in favor.

7. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

7.A. City Council regular meeting minutes of May 22, 2023

Minutes of the Laconia City Council meeting of May 22, 2023 were distributed to the members of the City Council on May 30, 2023.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes were accepted as distributed.

7.B. City Council budget meeting minutes of May 8, 2023

Minutes of the Laconia City Council budget meeting of May 8, 2023 were distributed to the members of the City Council on May 30, 2023.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes were accepted as distributed.

7.C. City Council budget meeting minutes of May 15, 2023

Minutes of the Laconia City Council budget meeting of May 15, 2023 were distributed to the members of the City Council on May 30, 2023.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes were accepted as distributed.

7.D. City Council budget meeting minutes of May 22, 2023

Minutes of the Laconia City Council budget meeting of May 22, 2023 were distributed to the members of the City Council on May 30, 2023.

With no corrections or changes submitted to the Clerk, the minutes were accepted as distributed.

8. CONSENT & ACTION ITEMS

9. CITIZEN COMMENTS FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

No one from the public wished to speak.

10. INTERVIEWS

11. NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS

12. COMMUNICATIONS

13. PUBLIC HEARINGS

13.A. Public Hearing - Resolution 2023-13 - Relative to acceptance of an award in the amount of \$30,683.28 from the Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant Program for the purchase of body armor

Notice of this Public Hearing was made available in the May 25, 2023 Laconia Daily Sun, and posted

at Laconia City Hall, Laconia Community Center, Laconia Public Library and the offices of the SAU.

Action on this item may be taken up under Unfinished Business.

Mayor Hosmer opened the Public Hearing at 7:27 PM

No one from the public wished to speak.

Mayor Hosmer closed the Public Hearing at 7:28 PM

14. **PRESENTATIONS**

15. **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Celebrating the 100th anniversary of Motorcycle week, it was very busy and seemed that things were going very well with our Police, Fire and DPW Departments.

On Thursday 6/8/23 at the Motorcycle Week Press Conference, the City of Laconia was presented the Fritzie Baer Award. Mayor Hosmer congratulated the City and thanks Charlie St. Clair and Jennifer Anderson.

On Friday 6/9/23 the Laconia High School graduation, while attending those ceremonies he always sees a great sense of pride and he expressed gratitude to all the teachers and staff. There was a lot of positive energy.

Last week he attended a meeting with the City Manager, about the future of the Colonial. There will be a 5 board member advisory board for the Colonial. If there are any Councilors who are interested in serving he'd like them to reach out to the City Manager by email or phone in his office to try and put this group together by the end of the summer with meetings roughly three times a year.

16. **COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Councilor Haynes spoke on Gale Ave and the issues with Short Term Rentals. He feels that a cease and desist should be issued immediately. He expressed that his constituents are tired of hearing that legal is looking into it. Councilor Cheney interjected and said that the manager has an amendment to the existing ordinance and he will be calling a government operations and ordinances committee meeting to review and he agrees wholeheartedly. Mayor Hosmer granted the policy gets referred to the subcommittee. He also spoke about the entrance signs to the City, they look great. He also gave thanks to Kirk Beattie and Wes Anderson for looking into the crosswalk at Court Street.

Councilor Felch brought up the 4th of July parade that will be held on July 2nd. They are looking for participants and bands, please reach out to him to help make this a huge event.

Councilor Cheney wants attention brought Leighton Ave that have culverts and ditches that need to be cleaned out and patches. Mayor Hosmer brought up that he has heard from a few owners on the north end of Old North Main complaining about the condition and deterioration of the road. Councilor Cheney said that the road is in fact that. Wes Anderson said the road has junk soil and needs to be rebuilt. It wouldn't be done until money is available. It would cost a couple hundred thousand minimum to rebuild it. Councilor Cheney asked for Wes Anderson to look into this possible cost further.

Councilor Lipman also noted that he has never heard of the Council telling the DPW to not focus on construction of roads, he'd like to not see it keep getting deferred.

Councilor Cheney also noted that he heard on the radio, an interview with our police chief. The announcer asked the chief about how many people they were down and he noted two positions. He was amazed by

the announcer's reaction to his answer and he is very proud of this.

Councilor Lipman noted that the Council should be prepared to take action on the budget sooner rather than later.

17. COMMITTEE REPORTS

17.A. FINANCE (Lipman (Chair), Hamel, Cheney)

17.A.i. **WOW Trail Funding**

17.A.ii. **Downtown TIF Financing**

17.B. PUBLIC SAFETY (Cheney (Chair), Soucy, Lipman)

17.C. GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ORDINANCES (Soucy (Chair), Felch, Cheney)

17.C.i. **Review of Chapter 167, Noise and Chapter 161 Licensing as it pertains to outdoor sound equipment and loudspeakers**

17.C.ii. **Ordinance Amending Chapter 221, Vehicles and Traffic/Parking on Sublawns**

17.C.iii. **Procedural review of grant applications**

17.C.iv. **Regulation of Short Term Residential Rental Businesses**

17.C.v. **Proposed Historic Overlay District**

17.C.vi. **Scenic Road Motorcycle Noise Petition**

17.C.vii. **Use of public property by for-profit entities**

17.C.viii. **Short Term Rentals**

17.C.ix. **Naming privilege's to public areas**

17.D. LAND & BUILDINGS (Hamel (Chair), Haynes, Felch)

17.D.i. **Downtown parking garage**

17.D.ii. **Repair & maintenance of City buildings**

17.D.iii. **Plan for the DPW Compound**

17.E. PUBLIC WORKS (Haynes (Chair), Felch, Soucy)

17.E.i. **Retaining Wall Policy**

17.E.ii. **Discussion for converting from a manual to an automated solid waste curbside collection service**

17.F. APPOINTMENTS (Councilors Soucy (Chair), Cheney and Haynes)

18. LIAISON REPORTS

Councilor Haynes mentioned that Lakes Region Public Access held their annual meeting, he feels it is a valuable asset to the communities that participate.

19. **CITIZENS REQUESTS TO COMMENT ON CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Patrick Wood of the Mayors Human Relation Committee wished to speak some words to the Council about the Pride Flag that is being requested to be flown at City Hall for the month of June.

20. **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

20.A. **Financial and Operational Trends Report**

Manager Beattie went over the Financial and Operation Trends report, he went over building permits, EMS calls, Public Assistance Data, Police, Property Tax Collection, Motor Vehicle Collection, department overtime, impact fees, code statistics, boat tax, general fund revenue and expenditures, and EMS billing history. Beattie made a quick statement saying they are making strides in shortening the time between issuing a violation to a short term rental and taking it to court with legal and training the right people.

21. **NEW BUSINESS**

21.A. **Approval of Resolution 2023-16 relative to the FY 2023 year-end carryforwards**

At the end of each fiscal year there are monies that have been appropriated for special purposes that have not been spent. Reasons for this vary, but include:

- Timing – contracts for many projects, especially those related to roads, drainage, sewer improvements, etc. cannot be finalized until after the budget is approved. This can push start dates into the following spring, which means that projects often cannot be completed until after June 30th,
- Coordination with third parties – completion of many projects can be delayed due to outside influences, such as supply chain issues, or coordination with third parties such as grantors, contractors, and engineers.

Carrying forward authorization to spend appropriated funds from one year to the next allows for completion of these projects.

In FY23 we are requesting a total of 40 carryforwards, a decrease from the 65 requested in FY22. In 11 instances, it is requested that funds be carried forward for the purpose of moving funds into reserve. These represent projects and priorities which may not be fully expended in FY24.

General Fund: 31 carry forwards totaling \$2,034,217.18 as of June 1, 2023

Sanitary Sewer Fund: 8 carry forwards totaling \$1,663,000.00 as of June 1, 2023

Internal Service Fund: 1 carry forward in the amount of \$15,331.00 as of June 1, 2023

Councilor Soucy questioned Hillard Rd and Highland St bridges on page 2. Soucy said it looked like it was copied and pasted wrong. Director Smith said yes, the second item under purpose should say Highland St not Hilliard Rd. The other question was how long does something stay in reserve if it doesn't get spent. It stays in there until it needs to be taken out for various reasons.

Councilor Lipman asked if there are any projects that eventually proceed. Manager Beattie said yes.

All amounts are listed as not to exceed totals. Actual carry forwards will not exceed the amount available in each account at the close of FY23.

Your approval of this request allows the money required to complete or continue these projects to be carried forward and spent in Fiscal Year 24.

Councilor Cheney made a motion to waive reading of this Resolution in its entirety and to read by title only. Seconded by Councilor Haynes. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

Councilor Felch made a motion to move a first reading of Resolution 2023-16 relative to the Fiscal Year 2023 year-end carryforwards. Seconded by Councilor Haynes. **Discussion:** None. That ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

Councilor Soucy made a motion to move to schedule a Public Hearing on June 26, 2023 during the regular City Council meeting to gather public input prior to any action being taken. Seconded by Councilor Cheney. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

21.B. **Request to sign the unlicensed Dog Warrant for 2023**

Per RSA 466:14 as stated below, the attached list of unlicensed dogs must be distributed to the City Council no later than June 20, 2023 for approval within 20 days to permit the issuance of Civil Forfeiture penalties allowed by RSA 466:13. It is my request that the signing of the warrant be placed on the agenda for the regular City Council meeting to be held on June 12, 2023, after which time the Laconia Police Department will begin the process of issuing Civil Forfeiture fines to those individuals listed.

Councilor Soucy moved to issue the warrant as presented for the 2023 Unlicensed Dogs. Seconded by Councilor Felch. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

21.C. **Celebrate Laconia - Proposal for permanent lights downtown**

Celebrate Laconia is proposing permanent over-the-street lights in downtown Laconia to honor Laconia's history and past by bringing the tradition of lighting and holiday decorations back to the City.

The proposal will request fundraising from local businesses, companies and individuals as well as City funding, support and maintenance. A phased approach is being suggested, beginning on Canal Street to connect Main Street to Beacon St. East. Future phases will concentrate on Mill Plaza and the Alley Way, Hanover Street and finally Main Street as the grand finale.

Funding requested from the City by Celebrate Laconia at this time is \$16,000. Celebrate Laconia will donate \$7,000 to the first phase of the project (Canal Street). They will also donate \$1,000 to the City each year for maintenance and repairs and create a fundraising program to raise funds for completing the Canal Street phase. Money raised from the Celebrate Laconia Lights Festival will contribute to this project as well. Celebrate Laconia has committed to planning for future phases and fundraising.

Mayor Hosmer said this is very reminiscent of urban neighborhoods in larger cities during festival times. It would help market the downtown area and its exciting. He thinks it terrific and draws people's attention. Councilor Soucy thanked Warren Clement and the Celebrate Laconia and any other on this committee. He is very excited as well and has been looking forward to this for a long time. Mayor Hosmer ask how the city would be paying for it. Manager Beattie explained that there is \$6,200 in carry forward for city appearance that has not been decided for, and the other \$9,800 can come from the city manager contingency line.

Councilor Soucy made a motion to approve that the City allocate the amount of \$16,000 towards the first phase of the Celebrate Laconia lighting and holiday decoration project as presented. Seconded by Councilor Haynes. **Discussion:** Councilor Lipman offered a suggestion on where to place this budget. By making it a line item in the budget going forward. Councilor Felch asked if they can look into seeing how they can fund the next phase to be included in next years budget start now. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

Warren Clement thanked the Council for the vote and mentioned they'd like to get the first phase completed prior to Pumpkin Fest.

22. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

22.A. **Resolution 2023-13 - Relative to the acceptance of an award in the amount of \$30,683.28 from the Department of Safety Homeland Security Grant Program for the purchase of body armor**

The City has applied to the New Hampshire Department of Safety for grant funding in the amount of \$30,683.28 to purchase body armor through the Homeland Security – Search and Rescue Equipment Grant Program. These grant funds will provide for the acquisition of ten sets of body armor (ballistic plates w/carriers).

Ownership of the body armor shall remain vested in the Laconia Police Department. LPD will dedicate the body armor for the exclusive use of the Belknap Regional Special Operations Group. BRSOG members will transport the equipment to callouts, activations and trainings as appropriate.

Maintenance of the equipment will be the joint responsibility of the Police Department and the BRSOG. The BRSOG and the PD will monitor the condition of the body armor and schedule periodic maintenance as appropriate. The BRSOG will pay for the cost of maintenance of the equipment or reimburse the PD upon request.

At the May 22, 2023 City Council meeting a motion was approved to schedule a Public Hearing on this matter; that Public Hearing was held earlier in this evening's agenda.

Councilor Cheney made a motion to waive a reading of Resolution 2023-13 in its entirety and to read by title only. Seconded by Councilor Haynes. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

Councilor Cheney made a motion for a second reading of Resolution 2023-13 relative to acceptance of an award in the amount of \$30,683.28 from the Homeland Security – Search and Rescue Equipment Grant Program for the purchase of body armor. Seconded by Councilor Felch. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

Councilor Soucy made a motion to approve Resolution 2023-13 relative to acceptance of an award in the amount of \$30,683.28 from the Homeland Security – Search and Rescue Equipment Grant Program for the purchase of body armor, and to authorize the City Manager to sign all documents related to this grant. Seconded by Councilor Cheney. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed with all in favor.*** 5-0

22.B. **Discussion regarding implementation of a City of Laconia flag policy**

At the City Council meeting of March 13, 2023 this agenda item was tabled, and remains on the table. In order for continued discussion to occur, the item must be taken off the table.

Councilor Flech made a motion to take this item off the table. Seconded by Councilor Haynes **Discussion:** None. The ***motion passed 3-2 with 3 in favor.*** 2 opposed: Councilor Lipman and Councilor Soucy.

Councilor Cheney asked the manager to also have this policy referred to the government operations and ordinances subcommittee. To make sure it is done properly.

Councilor Soucy will be scheduling the government operations and ordinances subcommittee as soon as possible. Mayor Hosmer granted the policy gets referred to the subcommittee.

Councilor Felch feels that we need a flag policy. It is not about any certain flag.

Councilor Lipman wanted to note that he agrees with everything that Mr. Wood stated tonight but what he disagrees, he feels this will not bring the City together but would rather divide it. He knows he is probably in the minority. He thinks we don't yet have an issue but are rather creating one

Mayor Hosmer said that if you take a look at the policy draft, it would not be on city hall. Even though people would like see hung on the building but it would not be coming from city hall. He is happy that this current council is starting this process instead of a future council having to deal with a problem.

Councilor Cheney expresses he wants to work through all of their concerns and wants to get ahead of any possible problems

Councilor Felch noted that this agenda item is just for a flag policy. Not a specific flag.

Mayor Hosmer asked if there is any opposition to sending this to the government operations and ordinances committee, Councilor Lipman was opposed.

Councilor Haynes said he did lots of research and had long discussions with others. He came to the conclusion that we do not need a flag policy but he also discovered some other things that other cities have adopted and said that they need to look at where they want to go and he supports Councilor Cheney and looking at a policy but thinks they will find a lot of weeds and that its going to be a long meeting. If we don't have a policy it leaves the city open.

Councilor Haynes wants to see a City of Laconia flag flown at City Hall, Councilor Felch agrees. Councilor Felch also thinks there should be a POW Flag in Veterans Square.

22.C. **Displaying a Pride Flag at City Hall**

Councilor Felch has requested that the Council consider allowing a Pride Flag to be displayed at City Hall for Pride Month (Pride Month is celebrated each year in the month of June).

Councilor Felch would like to see a pride flag hung at Veteran's Square Mayor Hosmer asked if he would like to see the flag flown prior to any flag policy. He said yes because it was flown last year and doesn't recall any feedback. Mayor Hosmer asked if the City was still in possession of the flag. Manager Beattie wasn't fully sure but if they do not he believes that the human relations commission would. DPW director Wes Anderson sad that he would find out. He noted that if they are to fly the pride flag that it has to smaller than the U.S. flag and this one isn't so they will need a different one.

Councilor Felch made a motion to allow the Pride Flag to be displayed at the flag pole at the rotary on Church St for the month of June, 2023 to commemorate Pride Month. There was no second to this motion. **Discussion:** None. The ***motion failed.***

23. **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

23.A. **Master Plan**

23.B. **Milfoil Treatment funding requests**

23.C. **Sewer & Water Master Plan**

23.D. **Single Stream Recycling/Concord Co-op/Solid Waste disposal cost reductions**

23.E. **Strategic Planning/Goal Setting**

23.F. **WOW Trail**

23.G. **Weirs Beach Restoration Project**

23.H. **Fair St/Court St traffic problems and accidents**

24. **Any other business that may come before the Council**

25. **NON-PUBLIC SESSION (According to RSA 91-A:3, II)**

26. **ADJOURNMENT**

Mayor Hosmer Adjourned the meeting at 8:40 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Gargano, City Clerk