

Council President

David R. Cormier

Council Vice President

Pauline M. Cormier



Councillors-at-Large

Thomas F. Ardinger

Susan Chalifoux-Zephir

Todd M. Deacon

Claire M. Freda

Ward Councillors

Ward 1 – William A. Brady

Ward 2 – Pauline M. Cormier

Ward 3 – David R. Cormier

Ward 4 – Mark C. Bodanza

Ward 5 – Peter A. Angelini

MINUTES

CITY OF LEOMINSTER

CITY COUNCIL

APRIL 25, 2022

JOHN P. MAHAN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PUBLIC HEARING 6:35 PM

- C-68 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request the acceptance of the CDBG Budget/Action Plan for the City of Leominster. Year 48.
(Ways & Means; Regular Course; 04/11/2022; Public Hearing 04/25/2022 @ 6:35PM Majority Vote)

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:35 PM.

Ellen Racine presented the CDBG Budget/Action Plan for the City of Leominster Year 48. She stated that 135 people were helped last year through the Housing Rehab program. These are zero percent interest loans, and the loan money gets paid back to the City. There is a new program at Ginny's Helping Hand this year. COVID funds have been used for this program as well. The Mayor's Summer Youth Program has been cut, as there is no person to run the program. More energy assistance is needed, so that has been increased.

Councillor Pauline Cormier asked about the application for the housing rehab?

Ms. Racine explained that this is a HUD-approved application, and applicants must meet HUD income guidelines. There are many documents needed, such as copy of the deed to the house, copy of tax returns or proof of income. There are 80 documents that go into each applicant's folder.

Councillor Pauline Cormier asked if the number of 135 individuals being assisted by the Housing Rehab program was an increase.

Ms. Racine answered yes, this was an increase. Where Montachusett Opportunity Council (MOC) was essentially closed, this program assisted individuals.

Councillor Pauline Cormier feels that this is a great program for the community.

Ms. Racine added that rehab helped a lot, but there are eleven non-profits that also were assisted through this program. There is accountability from these organizations.

Councillor Ardinger stated that it does not seem like a lot of money that goes to non-profits.

Ms. Racine answered that guidelines have to be followed.

Councillor Ardinger asked about the cut to money for personnel.

Ms. Racine replied that they are looking to hire one person for 6 weeks to help with the office work.

Councillor Ardinger asked about the 108 loan.

Ms. Racine answered that this was for sidewalks and this loan is currently being paid off.

Ms. Racine explained what areas have changed in the budget for Year 48.

Councillor Deacon asked about how people apply. He also asked if public safety (i.e. Police, Fire) can apply.

Ms. Racine answered that there was assistance for low-income families for smoke detectors. She added that all heat detectors will be upgraded in all senior housing units in the City. She explained COVID funding.

Councillor Freda asked Ms. Racine to briefly explain how money gets into CDBG and what guidelines are needed, along with the City's philosophy.

Ms. Racine answered that HUD is where these programs originate. New ideas have to be approved by HUD. They must assist low-income residents.

Councillor Freda sent many people to Ms. Racine and has had many compliments at what a great job she does.

Councillor Ardinger clarified that these funds have to be spent in a specific area.

Ms. Racine answered yes, it is French Hill/downtown area.

The Public Hearing was closed at 6:51 PM.

PUBLIC HEARING 6:50 PM

C-69 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request that the following sections of the City of Leominster Revised Ordinance, Chapter 16 – Personnel, Article II – Personnel, Wage and Salary Plan, Division 3 – Classification Plan, Section 16-34 ‘Classification of positions’ be amended, effective immediately to replace the existing Classification with the new Classification plan presented below.

Class Title	Classification
Assistant Purchasing Agent	S-5

And inserting in their place the following:

Class Title	Classification
Assistant Purchasing Agent	S-7

(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 04/11/2022; Public Hearing 04/25/2022 @ 6:50PM; 2/3 Vote)

The Public Hearing was opened at 6:51 PM.

Jennifer Reddington, Comptroller, and Gregory Chapdelaine, Purchasing Agent presented the proposed classification plan and the reasons for this request.

Councillor Bodanza asked how long it has been since there has been an Assistant Purchasing Agent.

Mr. Chapdelaine answered 23 years. He spoke about the need for assistants. He shared information on bids and contracts and explained how, with COVID money, there is much more work.

Councillor Bodanza spoke about public procurement and complying with Chapter 30B.

Mr. Chapdelaine added that many purchasing laws are geared around preventing fraud, and, also, to give everyone a “bite of the apple”. He added that there are many Massachusetts regulations for bidding out.

Councillor Bodanza added that it isn’t always about the lowest bidder and spoke on other qualifiers and the role of Request for Proposals (RFP).

Mr. Chapdelaine stated that certain firms have different approaches for services and the City has to decide what is best for their need.

Councillor Bodanza asked about the S-7 salary range.

Ms. Reddington answered that Fitchburg has the same job opening and is posting for \$72,000. Leominster will not be as high, but competitive. The desire is to hire someone who will learn and grow with the position.

Mr. Chapdelaine added that good salary will attract good candidates.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked if Mr. Chapdelaine has administrative support.

Mr. Chapdelaine answered that yes, he has someone to do secretarial duties.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked if all assistant department heads are S-7s?

Mr. Chapdelaine said that most are in the S-7 or S-8 range. He added that salaries are skewed and the salary study is not completed yet.

Councillor Freda said that, according to the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA), people are not going into government jobs. It is important that the job is done correctly and if it takes a little bit more money, then we need to do that.

The Public Hearing was closed at 7:11 PM.

PUBLIC FORUM, 6:55 P.M.

The public forum is an opportunity for any member of the audience to speak on a matter specifically listed on the Council Agenda. Speakers will be asked to come to the microphone and state their formal name and address along with identifying the specific item(s) they wish to address. Each speaker is respectfully asked to keep their comments within a two (2) minute time frame. The Council will not be responding or answering any questions; however, at the discretion of the Council President, clarification may be given.

The Public Forum opened at 7:12 PM.

With no one speaking, the Public Forum was closed at 7:13 PM.

I. REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL, 7:00 P.M.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

III. ROLL CALL OF COUNCILLORS IN ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Council President David Cormier; Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier; Councillor Bodanza; Councillor Ardinger; Councillor Angelini; Councillor Brady; Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir; Councillor Deacon; and Councillor Freda.

Others present: Katelyn Huffman, City Clerk, Dianne Reardon, Assistant City Clerk

IV. APPROVAL OF RECORDS

- April 11, 2022 – **Council Vice-President Pauline found the minutes in order and placed them on file.**

A motion was made by Councillor Bodanza, seconded by Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir, to recess the meeting at 7:03 PM.

The Council was back in session at 7:13 PM.

V. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

APPOINTMENTS:

Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests the appointment of Mary Marotta, 34 Wheeler Street, Leominster, to the Historical Commission, term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Interview 05/09/2022 at 6:25 PM; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE and an interview was set for May 9, 2022, at 6:25 PM.

Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests the appointment of Diana Sanabria, 18 Lawrence Avenue, Leominster, to the Historical Commission, term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Interview 05/09/2022 at 6:27 PM; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE and an interview was set for May 9, 2022, at 6:27 PM.

RE-APPOINTMENTS:

Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of Joseph Tocci, 334 Hill Street, Leominster, to the Board of Appeals; term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of Nicholas Preville, 127 Spruce Street, Leominster, to the Board of Appeals as an Alternate Member; term to expire April 15, 2023.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of Richard Dondero, 691 Lancaster Street, Leominster, to the Board of Assessors; term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of Martin Turbide, 99 Scenic Drive, Leominster, to the Disability Commission; term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of Gail Turbide, 99 Scenic Drive, Leominster, to the Disability Commission; term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests the reappointment of James Despo, 2 Helena Street, Leominster, to the Library Board of Trustees; term to expire April 15, 2025.

(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

MONEY ORDERS:

C-70 Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$39,000.00 be made to the Library Operating Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Library Personnel Account.

RE: Funding book purchases for the rest of the fiscal year.

(Finance; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-71 Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$217,755.00 be made to the Water Debt Service-Principle; the same amount to be transferred from Water Support Services.

RE: Allows DPW to pay off existing debt service before maturity.

(Finance; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-72 Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$353,988.00 be made to the Water Debt Service-Principle; the same amount to be transferred from Water Capital Outlay.

RE: Allows DPW to pay off existing debt service before maturity.
(*Finance; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote*)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-73 Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$112,654.00 be made to the Water Debt Service-Principle; the same amount to be transferred from Sewer Support Services.

RE: Allows DPW to pay off existing debt service before maturity.
(*Finance; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote*)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-74 Dean J. Mazzaella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$118,213.00 be made to the Water Debt Service-Principle; the same amount to be transferred from Sewer Capital Outlay.

RE: Allows DPW to pay off existing debt service before maturity.
(*Finance; Regular Course 04/25/2022; Majority Vote*)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

VI. PETITIONS FIRST TIME ON THE AGENDA

52-22 Vincent Ciccolini, on behalf of Sterling Jewelers, Inc. dba Kay Jewelers #1285: request to renew license to deal secondhand articles at 100 Commercial Rd.
(*Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/28/2022; REFERRALS IN: Treasurer; Police; Majority Vote*)

This was given REGULAR COURSE.

VII. MATTERS BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT - \$19,801,215.00 STABILIZATION FUND BALANCE

IX. FINANCE

C-67 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$75,000 be made to the Unemployment Insurance Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account.
(Finance; Regular Course; 04/11/2022; Majority Vote)

The Finance Committee recommended that the City Council GRANT the communication. By a vote of 9-0 the communication was GRANTED.

ORDERED: By a vote of 9-0 the communication was ADOPTED.

I. LEGAL AFFAIRS

20-22 Elizabeth Wood (on Behalf of the Planning Board) requests to amend the zoning ordinance pertaining to the parking of unregistered vehicles.

RE: Overflow lots
(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 06/14/2021; Public Hearing; January 10, 2022 @ 6:50PM; Cont. Public Hearing February 14, 2022 @ 6:50 PM; Cont to 03/14/2022 at 6:50 PM; Public Hearing Continued to 04/11/2022 at 6:50 PM; Public Hearing Continued to 05/23/2022 at 6:50 PM; REFERRALS IN: Planning Director; REFERRALS OUT: Building Inspector, Zoning Board of Appeals; 2/3 Vote)

This was given FURTHER TIME with a vote of 9-0.

48-22 Peter Angelini, Ward 5 Councillor: Requests to amend the City of Leominster Revised Ordinances Section 12-2 as attached. This amendment is proposed to take effect July 1, 2022.

RE: To revise the fee schedule in the City of Leominster to begin July 1, 2022 (FY2023)
(Legal Affairs: Regular Course 03/28/2022; Public Hearing 04/11/2022 at 6:45 PM; Public Hearing Continued to 05/09/2022 at 6:30 PM; 2/3 Vote)

This was given FURTHER TIME with a vote of 9-0.

49-22 Elizabeth Wood (On Behalf of the Planning Board) requests to amend the zoning ordinance pertaining to the Solar Ordinance, Article III Table of Uses and Section 22-104 of Zoning, per attached letter.
(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 03/28/2022; Public Hearing 05/09/2022 at 6:50 PM; Further Time 04/11/2022; 2/3 Vote)

This was given FURTHER TIME with a vote of 9-0.

C-69 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Request that the following sections of the City of Leominster Revid Ordinance, Chapter 16 – Personnel, Article II – Personnel, Wage and Salary Plan, Division 3 – Classification Plan, Section 16-34 ‘Classification of positions’ be amended, effective immediately to replace the existing Classification with the new Classification plan presented below.

Class Title	Classification
Assistant Purchasing Agent	S-5

And inserting in their place the following:

Class Title	Classification
Assistant Purchasing Agent	S-7

(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 04/11/2022; Public Hearing 04/25/2022 @ 6:50PM; 2/3 Vote)

The Legal Affairs Committee recommended that the City Council GRANT this petition. It was GRANTED with a vote of 9-0.

II. WAYS AND MEANS

C-68 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Request the acceptance of the CDBG Budget/Action Plan for the City of Leominster. Year 48.
(Ways & Means; Regular Course; 04/11/2022; Public Hearing 04/25/2022 @ 6:35PM Majority Vote)

Councillor Freda disclosed that she is a director at Catholic Charities.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir disclosed that she will vote but abstain from votes involving Ginny’s Helping Hands.

Councillor Freda added that this is a Mayoral program and is always subject to the federal government. She feels this is a vital program.

The Ways and Means Committee recommended that the City Council GRANT the CDBG Budget/ Action Plan Year 48. By a vote of 9-0 except for the piece regarding Ginny’s Helping Hand, in which Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir abstained due to a possible conflict of interest and the piece regarding Catholic Charities where Councillor Freda abstained due to a possible conflict of interest, the budget/action plan was GRANTED.

- 50-22 Entertainment Cinemas Blvd: Request to renew theater license located at 45 Sack Blvd.
(Ways and Means; Regular Course 04/26/2021; REFERRALS IN: Treasurer; Police; Majority Vote)

The Ways and Means Committee recommended that the City Council GRANT the theater license. A vote was taken, and it was voted 9-0 in favor to GRANT the license.

- 51-22 Christopher Rivard: Request to renew transient vendor license for the sale of flowers and plants.
(Ways & Means; Regular Course 04/11/2022; REFERRAL IN: Police; Majority Vote)

Councillor Freda is curious to see how long Mr. Rivard has been doing this transient vendor license.

City Clerk Katelyn Huffman replied that, according to Mr. Rivard, it has been 36 years.

The Ways and Means Committee recommended that the City Council GRANT the Transient Vendor license. A vote was taken, and it was voted 9-0 in favor to GRANT the license.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading of an Ordinance:

- 39-22 Katelyn Huffman, City Clerk: Requests a new section of the City of Leominster Revised Ordinances Chapter 1, Section 1.12, regarding an electioneering policy for the City of Leominster.
(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 02/28/2022; Public Hearing 03/14/2022 at 6:40 PM; FURTHER TIME 03/28/2022; 2/3 Vote)

Councillor Freda asked for an amendment for clothing and accessories to be mentioned in the electioneering policy.

City Clerk Katelyn Huffman stated that we mimic the state law and state law does not allow clothing articles, but had no problem with the amendment as proposed.

A motion was made by Councillor Freda, seconded by Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir, to amend the electioneering policy ordinance for the City of Leominster, after the word “circular” to add “or any article of clothing or adornment.” The motion to amend was granted with a roll call vote of 9-0.

With a roll call vote of 9-0, the second reading of the AMENDED electioneering policy for the City of Leominster has been ADOPTED.

24-22 Elizabeth Wood (on Behalf of the Planning Board) requests to amend the zoning ordinance pertaining to Performance Guarantees for Site Plans.

RE: To ensure that all conditions of approval, issued by the Planning Board for Site Plan, are completed.

(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 01/10/2022; Public Hearing; January 24, 2022 @ 6:50PM; FURTHER TIME 03/28/2022; 2/3 Vote)

The Legal Affairs Committee recommended that the City Council ADOPT the second reading of the ordinance. By a roll call vote of 9-0, the second reading of the ordinance was ADOPTED.

Councillor Freda read a letter that was in the tax bills regarding the elderly and disabled tax fund. She spoke about Chapter 60, Section 3D. She was concerned about residents feeling embarrassed to apply.

Councillor Bodanza added that, as he stated in a previous meeting, the board deals with approximately four applications per year.

Councillor Freda added that the MGL states there should be three residents on this board and there is only one. She would like to get this close to what the law states.

IV. COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Councillor Deacon spoke of the accident involving Officer Hardy on Friday evening and what could have been a tragedy. He feels it is important to take a moment and wish him well and his family.

Council President David Cormier stated that we certainly have Officer Hardy and his family in our thoughts, and we hope he has a speedy recovery.

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councillor Angelini, seconded by Councillor Bodanza, to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 PM. The motion was passed with a vote of 9-0.

- Katelyn Huffman, City Clerk