

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

JUNE 13, 2022

JOHN P. MAHAN CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

PUBLIC HEARING (Continued) 6:44 PM

55-22 Verizon New England, Inc. requests permission to locate poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, guys and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures to be owned and used in common by your petitioners, along and across the following public way or ways:

MERRIAM AVENUE: Place one (1) solely owned pole numbered T.104S on the east side of Merriam Avenue at a point approximately one hundred sixty-three (163) feet northerly from the center line of Shadow Lawn Drive.

Reason: Place one (1) solely owned pole on Merriam Avenue at the request of an abutter to remove a trespass; and to provide for the distribution of intelligence and telecommunications.

Wherefore they pray that after due notice and hearing as provided by law, they be granted joint or identical locations for and permission to erect and maintain poles, wires and cables, together with anchors, guys and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures as they may find necessary, said poles to be erected substantially in accordance with the plan filed herewith marked VERIZON No. 1A5F8DP, dated February 16, 2022.

Also for permission to lay and maintain underground laterals, cables and wires in the above or intersecting public ways for the purpose of making connections with such poles and buildings as each of said petitioners may desire for distributing purposes.

Your petitioners agree to reserve space for one crossarm at a suitable point on each of said poles for the fire and police telephone and telegraph signal wires belonging to the municipality and used by it exclusively for municipal purposes.

(Public Service; Regular Course 05/09/2022; Public Hearing 05/23/2022 at 6:45 PM; Continued Public Hearing 06/13/2022 at 6:44 PM; Majority Vote)

The public hearing started at 6:44 PM.

Alexander Marrero of Attleboro, MA, introduced himself as an authorized contractor for Verizon. He spoke about this 104S pole replacing the prior 104S pole, which is overloaded and is leaning. He added that Verizon feels there should be a pole placed across the street. Verizon feels placing cables underground is too costly.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir explained that the plan was still not updated. She was looking for the location of the new pole, and Verizon stated that they do not want to mark up the road. She still would like to see the exact location. The homeowner is looking for other options. The cost is around \$2,000 and will be paid by Verizon. Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked how Verizon decides if a pole is sufficient.

Mr. Marrero answered that a new cable is placed around the pole if, if it seems to be overloaded, the engineering department will get involved. In this case, engineering agrees that a support pole is the best option and will not interrupt existing service.

Councillor Brady asked if a third option was changing the class of the pole.

Mr. Marrero answered that replacing the existing pole with a Class H pole (1-3/4 ft pole) would pose the threat of the wood rotting in a very short time.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked if Verizon could install a more substantial pole, as this particular pole needs support.

Councillor Freda asked what repercussions there would be if this is denied tonight.

Mr. Marrero answered that the pole may fail due to leaning already. We are trying to prevent it from failing.

Councillor Ardinger asked if the anchor pole is also in jeopardy of rotting.

Mr. Marrero answered that the anchor itself takes the brunt of this pole.

Councillor Pauline Cormier asked where the anchor will go.

Mr. Marrero answered that it will probably go right where the new fence is on the homeowner property without trespassing onto the homeowner's property.

Councillor Angelini asked if this is such an emergent situation, why wasn't Verizon here three weeks ago.

Mr. Marrero answered that he was only asked to be here tonight and doesn't know what happened three weeks ago.

Councillor Angelini asked about the pole on Lindell-Merriam leaning in the opposite direction and wondered if this pole could be used in the process.

Mr. Marrero said that this pole is already being supported.

Councillor Angelini asked what the load is.

Mr. Marrero answered that there are cables from this pole up Merriam and across Lindell.

Councillor Bodanza established that it isn't likely that the load can be removed from 660 Merriam.

Mr. Marrero added that he doesn't think Verizon wants to remove load due to the expense and it isn't likely these wires are going underground.

Councillor Ardinger asked if the Lindell/Merriam Ave pole supports 660 Merriam.

Mr. Marrero answered that is the other way around. 660 Merriam supports the corner, and the service may be going up Lindell Ave.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir would like information from Verizon: She would like to know the location across from 660 Merriam. She would like alternatives to lighten the load in front of 660 Merriam. She would also like engineering to chime in for options to remedy this problem.

The public hearing will be left open. The public hearing ended at 7:09 PM.

PUBLIC HEARING 6:45 PM

C-84 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request that the following ordinance change be adopted: Amend Chapter 16. Personnel. Section 16-30. Compensation grades. By inserting therein, the following sections: for FY2022 through FY2024: as follows:

6/30/2022	FY22							
	MIN	2	3	MID	4	5	6	MAX
S-1	32,263	33,556	34,898	36,292	37,743	39,260	40,822	41,642
S-2	36,137	37,580	39,084	40,650	42,271	43,965	45,723	46,643
S-3	40,471	42,091	43,772	45,528	47,346	49,245	51,211	52,235
S-4	45,331	47,144	49,030	50,986	53,027	55,148	57,353	58,499
S-5	50,771	52,801	54,909	57,108	59,388	61,765	64,235	65,522
S-6	56,860	59,133	61,504	63,958	66,517	69,178	71,947	73,388
S-7	63,679	66,206	68,881	71,637	74,502	77,477	80,573	82,187
S-8	71,325	74,180	77,144	80,233	83,441	86,774	90,250	92,051
S-9	79,882	83,079	86,402	89,855	93,455	97,192	101,077	103,097
S-10	89,298	93,047	96,769	100,640	104,668	108,851	113,207	115,470
6/30/2023	FY23							
	MIN	2	3	MID	4	5	6	MAX
S-1	33,400	34,739	36,128	37,571	39,074	40,644	42,261	43,109
S-2	37,410	38,905	40,462	42,083	43,761	45,515	47,334	48,287
S-3	41,897	43,575	45,315	47,133	49,015	50,980	53,016	54,077
S-4	46,929	48,806	50,759	52,783	54,896	57,092	59,374	60,561
S-5	52,560	54,663	56,844	59,121	61,482	63,942	66,499	67,831
S-6	58,864	61,218	63,672	66,213	68,862	71,617	74,483	75,975
S-7	65,923	68,540	71,309	74,162	77,128	80,208	83,413	85,084
S-8	73,839	76,794	79,863	83,061	86,382	89,833	93,431	95,296
S-9	82,698	86,008	89,448	93,022	96,750	100,618	104,640	106,731
S-10	92,446	96,327	100,181	104,188	108,358	112,688	117,197	119,540
6/30/2024	FY24							
	MIN	2	3	MID	4	5	6	MAX

S-1	34,235	35,607	37,032	38,510	40,050	41,660	43,318	44,187
S-2	38,346	39,877	41,474	43,135	44,855	46,653	48,518	49,494
S-3	42,945	44,664	46,448	48,311	50,241	52,255	54,342	55,428
S-4	48,102	50,026	52,028	54,103	56,268	58,520	60,859	62,075
S-5	53,874	56,029	58,265	60,599	63,019	65,541	68,161	69,527
S-6	60,336	62,748	65,264	67,868	70,584	73,407	76,345	77,874
S-7	67,571	70,253	73,091	76,016	79,056	82,213	85,498	87,211
S-8	75,685	78,714	81,860	85,138	88,542	92,079	95,767	97,678
S-9	84,766	88,158	91,684	95,348	99,169	103,133	107,256	109,399
S-10	94,757	98,736	102,685	106,793	111,067	115,506	120,127	122,529

(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 5/23/2022; Public Hearing 06/13/2022 at 6:45 PM; 2/3 Vote)

The public hearing opened at 7:09 PM.

Councillor Angelini explained the chart and the reason for the Cost of Living increases.

The public hearing was closed at 7:11 PM.

PUBLIC HEARING – CONTINUED – 6:50 PM

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; Public Hearing Continued to 06/13/2022 at 6:50 PM; REFERRALS OUT: License Commission, Board of Health, Planning and Conservation; 2/3 Vote)

The public hearing was opened at 7:12 PM.

Councillor Angelini spoke on this petition with amendments:

- 1) **Item #19 should say Sunday entertainment license is \$20/per event or \$400/yearly.**
- 2) **#63 needs to have the word “birth” spelled correctly.**
- 3) **Include the language “allow the City to renumber this schedule as needed”**
- 4) **The effective date needs to be changed to “effective upon passage”**

The public hearing was closed at 7:16 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 was opened at 7:16 PM.

Jeffrey Stephens, Health Director, explained the need for C-90 and C-92 on the agenda this evening. These two accounts have run significantly short on funds. There are 5-year contracts in place and there is a need to cover funding that the City is incurring in order to close out these bills before the new fiscal year. There is one more year until this contract is completed and he will try to mitigate this occurrence.

Council President David Cormier stated that discussion on these two communications will take place at the next meeting, along with the vote.

Mr. Stephens wanted to clear up why this money was being requested.

The public forum was closed at 7:20 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; Councillor Freda; City Clerk Katelyn Huffman; and Assistant City Clerk Dianne Reardon.

IV. APPROVAL OF RECORDS

- May 23, 2022 – Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier asked to wait on voting these minutes while some typos are fixed. She will contact the clerk’s office with the corrections.

Councillor Freda spoke about Richard Earley and his work with the Veterans Department here in Leominster. The City Council had a Moment of Silence in his memory.

A motion was made by Councillor Freda, seconded by Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir, to enter into recess at 7:08 PM. This was passed with a vote of 9-0.

The Council was back in session at 7:20 PM.

V. COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR

C-90 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$179,000.00 be made to the Refuse Disposal Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account. *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

RE: Residential refuse and recycling tons picked up in excess of estimates.

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-91 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$2,500,000 be made to the Fall Brook School Capital Project Fund; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account (Undesignated Fund Balance). *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

RE: Fall Brook Elementary School Feasibility Study

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-92 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$16,847.00 be made to the Refuse Disposal Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account. (Undesignated Fund Balance). *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

RE: Excess Fuel Costs

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, CONTINUED

C-93 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$80,000.00 be made to the Highway Fuel Depot Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account. *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

RE: Excess Fuel Costs

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-94 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$25,000.00 be made to the Municipal Building Maintenance Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account. *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

RE: Cover ongoing bills to upgrade municipal buildings.

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-95 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request an appropriation of \$43,000 be transferred from the Stabilization Account to the Highway Capital Account. *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; 2/3 Vote)*

RE: Safe Route to Schools

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-96 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request the Leominster City Council endorse the Leominster 202-2028 Open Space and Recreation Plan. *(Ways & Means; Regular course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-97 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request that Kelly Marciano be exempt from the provisions of M.G.L Chapter 268A, (20B) Conflict of Interest. *(Ways & Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.

C-98 Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Request that Brianna Wark be exempt from the provisions of M.G.L Chapter 268A, (20B) Conflict of Interest. *(Ways & Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

This communication was given REGULAR COURSE.
COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE MAYOR, CONTINUED

Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Request the appointment of Bill Comeau to the License Commission, term to expire 04/15/2028. *(Ways & Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Interview 06/27/2022 at 6:50 PM; Majority Vote)*

This appointment was given REGULAR COURSE and an interview was set for June 27, 2022 at 6:50 PM.

Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Request the appointment of Isaiah Koranda to the Board of Assessors, term to expire 04/15/2025. *(Ways & Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Interview 06/27/2022 at 6:51 PM; Majority Vote)*

This appointment was given REGULAR COURSE and an interview was set for June 27, 2022 at 6:51 PM.

Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Requests the permanent appointment of Nicholas Abruzzi to the position of Director of Recreation for the City of Leominster for a term of three years. *(Ways & Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Interview 06/27/2022 at 6:52 PM; Majority Vote)*

This appointment was given REGULAR COURSE and an interview was set for June 27, 2022 at 6:52 PM.

VI. PETITIONS FIRST TIME ON THE AGENDA

57-22 The City of Leominster Retirement Board voted unanimously to increase the COLA base amount for the City of Leominster Retirement Board Retirees from \$12,000 to \$13,000. *(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

This petition was given REGULAR COURSE.

58-22 Brendan O'Donoghue, on behalf of Best Buy Stores LP #1433: request to renew license to deal secondhand articles at 33 Orchard Hill Park Drive, Leominster, MA. *(Ways and Means; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)*

This petition was given REGULAR COURSE.

- 59-22 William Brady, Ward One Councillor, request to install a streetlight on Pole #NG 1 at 7 Crescent Street.
(Public Service; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)

This petition was given REGULAR COURSE with referrals to the DPW, the Mayor's Office, and the Wire Inspector.

- 60-22 Gregory C. Chapdelaine, Purchasing Agent, requests to enter into a six-year contract with the Animal Control Officer and the Animal inspector Services.
(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)

This petition was given REGULAR COURSE

- 61-22 Gregory C. Chapdelaine, Purchasing Agent: requests to enter into a six-year contract for Water Backflow Testing Service.

RE: This will cover FY23 - FY28
(Finance; Regular Course 06/13/2022; Majority Vote)

This petition was given REGULAR COURSE

VII. MATTERS BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL

VIII. FINANCIAL REPORT – STABILIZATION FUND BALANCE - \$20,768,705.00

IX. FINANCE

- C-82 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$250,000.00 be made to the Municipal Building Maintenance Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account.

RE: Completion of copper troughs and gutter system on City Hall.
(Finance: Regular Course 05/23/2022; 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 order was ADOPTED.

C-83 Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$14,000.00 be made to the Highway Equipment Expense Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account.

RE: Purchase of a Utility Gator
(Finance: Regular Course 05/23/2022; 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 order was ADOPTED.

C-86 Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$338,550.00 to be made to the DPW Equipment Fund; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account (Undesignated Fund Balance).

RE: Purchase of two sidewalk snowplows that will replace older/failing models
(Finance; Regular Course 05/23/2022; 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 order was ADOPTED.

C-87 Dean J. Mazzearella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$417,035.00 to be made to the Data Processing Account; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account (Undesignated Fund Balance).

RE: To replace expiring computer software for Police and Fire Departments.
(Finance; Regular Course 05/23/2022; Majority Vote)

Councillor Bodanza noted that the amount should be \$418,035.00, as was amended at the last meeting.

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 order was ADOPTED.

- C-88 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$1,000,000.00 be made to the Stabilization Fund; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account (Undesignated Fund Balance).
(Finance; Regular Course 05/23/2022; 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 order was ADOPTED.

- C-89 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Requests an appropriation of \$1,000,000.00 be made to the Capital Investment Fund; the same amount to be transferred from the Excess and Deficiency Account (Undesignated Fund Balance)

RE: These funds are to be set aside for capital items, including the police station
(Finance; Regular Course 05/23/2022; 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 order was ADOPTED.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked for an updated total of the Excess and Deficiency Account.

Councillor Bodanza replied that he will get that balance.

X. LEGAL AFFAIRS

- 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; Public Hearing Continued to 06/13/2022 at 6:50 PM; FURTHER TIME 04/25/2022; 2/3 Vote)

Councillor Angelini proposed amendments to the fee schedule ordinance amendment:

- 1) Item #19 – Sunday entertainment license should be \$20/per event or \$400/yearly.**
- 2) #63 the word “birth” needs to be correctly spelled.**
- 3) The adoption date should be “effective upon passage”.**
- 4) Renumbering of the fee chart should be allowed by the City of Leominster, as needed.**

Councillor Bodanza made a motion to make these amendments, seconded by Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier. The amendments were passed with a vote of 8-1 (Councillor Freda opposed).

Councillor Freda spoke on the need of raising the fees, however she feels it is the wrong time to raise them with the economy the way it is. She feels it is a mistake at this time.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir agreed that the timing is poor, but the fees needed to be reviewed.

Councillors Bodanza and Angelini did not agree with this sentiment. They felt that all costs are going up and the City needs to keep pace with paying the employees that process permits and do these jobs. For the same reason the Councillors are opposed, is why they are in favor.

Councillor Freda said she understands the discussion but she fails to see how we are helping people with these fees. She went through the fee schedule that is proposed. She is not opposed to raising, just not at this point in time.

Councillor Brady added that the cost of doing business has tripled. Some permits have to be raised in order to keep pace.

The Legal Affairs committee recommended that the City Council GRANT the petition.

By a roll call vote of 7-2 (Councillors Freda and Chalifoux-Zephir voted “nay”) the petition was GRANTED, as amended.

C-84 Dean J. Mazzarella, Mayor: Request that the following ordinance change be adopted: Amend Chapter 16. Personnel. Section 16-30. Compensation grades. By inserting therein, the following sections: for FY2022 through FY2024: as follows:

6/30/2022	FY22							
	MIN	2	3	MID	4	5	6	MAX
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S-10	94,757	98,736	102,685	106,793	111,067	115,506	120,127	122,529

(Legal Affairs; Regular Course 5/23/2022; Public Hearing 06/13/2022 at 6:45 PM; 2/3 Vote)

The Legal Affairs Committee recommends passage of this ordinance change.

With a roll call vote of 9-0, the ordinance change was ADOPTED.

XI. PUBLIC SERVICE

55-22 Verizon New England, Inc. requests permission to locate poles, wires, cables, and fixtures, including the necessary anchors, guys and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures to be owned and used in common by your petitioners, along and across the following public way or ways:

MERRIAM AVENUE: Place one (1) solely owned pole numbered T.104S on the east side of Merriam Avenue at a point approximately one hundred sixty-three (163) feet northerly from the center line of Shadow Lawn Drive.

Reason: Place one (1) solely owned pole on Merriam Avenue at the request of an abutter to remove a trespass; and to provide for the distribution of intelligence and telecommunications.

Wherefore they pray that after due notice and hearing as provided by law, they be granted joint or identical locations for and permission to erect and maintain poles, wires and cables, together with anchors, guys and other such sustaining and protecting fixtures as they may find necessary, said

poles to be erected substantially in accordance with the plan filed herewith marked VERIZON No. 1A5F8DP, dated February 16, 2022.

Also for permission to lay and maintain underground laterals, cables and wires in the above or intersecting public ways for the purpose of making connections with such poles and buildings as each of said petitioners may desire for distributing purposes.

Your petitioners agree to reserve space for one crossarm at a suitable point on each of said poles for the fire and police telephone and telegraph signal wires belonging to the municipality and used by it exclusively for municipal purposes.

(Public Service; Regular Course 05/09/2022; Public Hearing 05/23/2022 at 6:45 PM; Continued Public Hearing 06/13/2022 at 6:44 PM; Majority Vote)

This petition was given FURTHER TIME and a continued public hearing was set for June 27, 2022 at 6:40 PM, with a vote of 8-0-1 (Councillor David Cormier abstained).

XII. WAYS AND MEANS

C-85 Dean J. Mazarella, Mayor: Requests a RESOLUTION vote of support to enter into a Tax Increment Financing agreement (TIF) with Girouard Tool Corporation located at 561 Research Drive, Leominster, MA.
(Ways and Means; Regular Course 05/23/2022; Majority Vote)

Amanda Curtis, Economic Development, Bill Connor, Assessor, Nick Julius, Girouard Tool, and Melissa McCloud, Girouard Tool addressed the Council.

A motion was made by Councillor Bodanza, seconded by Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir to recess at 7:55 PM. The motion was passed with a vote of 9-0.

Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier explained the process of a Tax Increment Financing Agreement.

Bill Connor explained how the program is incrementally increasing the taxes on the business. This is a 5-year process. The burden increases 20% over a five-year period. The first year is 100% deferred taxes.

Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier asked about other TIF agreements with the City.

Mr. Connor explained how these agreements work out great for the City. These companies are committing to creating jobs or an agreement may end. We have had a few TIFs not work.

Nick Julius explained the company as an injection molding company with lots of growth and they have no more room at the facility they now occupy. They need to expand into a new building.

Council Vice President Pauline Cormier asked how many employees are employed at the moment.

Melissa McCloud answered ten employees right now.

Council Vice President Pauline Cormier asked if the current building is being expanded.

Mr. Julius answered that they will be moving to a new building on Research Drive. Nick added that the company has been in business since 1964.

Councillor Angelini stated that he has reservations about TIFs if there is a default. He asked if the City is able to recover the past monies that were lost.

Mr. Connor answered that, no, they only recoup moving forward. This agreement is not taken into lightly. Five years is the minimum length by state law.

Councillor Deacon asked if any other corporations have asked for extensions.

Mr. Connor answered that he has never heard of that happening.

Councillor Deacon asked if most TIFs were 5-year TIFs.

Mr. Connor answered that, yes, most that he does are 5 years.

Councillor Angelini asked if there are any customers of Girouard Tool in Leominster.

Mr. Julius answered No.

Councillor Brandy feels as if this is a win/win agreement.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked how many of the ten employees live in Leominster.

Ms. McCloud answered one.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked about the percentage of taxes that will be deferred for the first year.

Mr. Connor mentioned the numbers changing due to assessment values, but the property taxes that are deferred are for the building only and not the property.

Councillor Freda clarified that the first year has no taxes and each year increments. She wishes them luck and see lots of success with TIFs.

Councillor Bodanza asked if there is a personal property tax on manufacturing equipment.

Mr. Connor answered that there are no taxes if you are distinguished in the state as a manufacturing corporation.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked for the schedule to add employees.

Ms. McCloud said there will be 2 in the first year and one for each additional year.

The Council was back in session at 8:14 PM.

City Clerk, Katelyn Huffman, read the TIF resolution.

With a roll call vote of 9-0, the TIF Agreement was ADOPTED.

XIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Executive Session with City Solicitor – June 27, 2022, at 6:00PM, City Council Chambers regarding update on litigations.

Council President David Cormier noted that all members received the update on litigation.

Councillor Freda asked if this was all inclusive, as it doesn't appear to be.

City Clerk Katelyn Huffman replied that this is what was received and she asked for an update and received nothing.

Councillor Bodanza stated that, with very little on the list, he would be hard-pressed to pay City Counsel to attend an Executive Session of the City Council.

Councillor Freda added that there may not be a charge for this.

City Clerk Huffman will find out what is in the contract.

Councillor Bodanza asked first if this is a complete list.

Councillor Freda added that the new councillors should have the experience to hear the City Counsel speak.

Council Vice-President Pauline Cormier would like to see an updated list before setting up the Executive Session.

Councillor Angelini is in agreement that there is nothing too time sensitive on the list and we can ask for another Executive Session at any time.

Councillor Freda said that the past experience tells her that some things we are told in these meetings need to be questioned, such as why things take so long.

Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir asked for follow-up with KP Law about the list and if the trip is an added expense or in their contract.

Councillor Freda made a motion, seconded by Councillor Brady, to schedule an Executive Session with City Counsel on June 27, 2022 at 6:00 PM. The motion was NOT passed with a vote of 2-7.

Council President David Cormier said that he will revisit in July.

XIV. OLD BUSINESS

Second Reading of an Ordinance:

- 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, 04/25/2022, 05/09/2022; Public Hearing 06/13/2022 @ 6:50 PM; 2/3 Vote)

Councillor Angelini read the ordinance.

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

XV. COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Councillor Freda spoke on the Mount Wachusett Community College graduation and that Neddie Latimer received the Service Over Self Award. She added that the Leominster Campus of MWCC will be expanding and ready in 2023.

XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Councillor Bodanza made a motion, seconded by Councillor Chalifoux-Zephir, to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. The motion was passed with a vote of 9-0.

- Katelyn Huffman, City Clerk