

**LOWELL CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 21, 2018**

CALL TO ORDER OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING: The Special Meeting of the Lowell City Council was called to order at 6:00PM by Mayor Long at the Lowell Council Chambers. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the proposed 2019 Budget for the City of Lowell.

INVOCATION: The Invocation was given by **Mayor Long**.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by **Mayor Long**.

ROLL CALL: Mayor Long asked for roll call. City Clerk made a verbal roll call. Council Members present were: Thomas Evers, Eric Schein, David Adams, Dean Bitner, Kendell Stucki, Todd Fenix, Linda Vannoy. Lonnie Jones was absent. Deputy Attorney Kieklak was present. There was quorum. A roster of all others in attendance is on file with these minutes.

Councilman Bitner explained that since the council did not pass the 2019 Budget at the December 10, 2019 meeting, he felt bad about the decision. It left us hanging with a lot of questions, adding a lot of work to Finance Director, Jerry Hudlow. He was concerned that the city would not be able to pay bills beginning January 1, 2019. He called for the special meeting with the city council. He encouraged the councilmen to forego their salaries for the evening since they failed to pass the budget December 10th and he didn't think it was fair to hold the citizens hostage for their salaries for this meeting.

Motion to forego councilmen salaries for December 21, 2018 meeting.

Motion: Dean Bitner

Second: David Adams

Vote Aye: Fenix, Vannoy, Evers, Adams, Bitner, Stucki, Schein

Vote Nay: None

Motion to forego councilmen salaries for December 21, 2018 meeting approved.

City Clerk did not agree to forego her salary and City Attorney said she would be paid for this meeting.

Councilman Bitner explained that the decision to forego councilmen salaries for this meeting was discussed long before the Thursday/Friday news article was published. If the incoming councilmembers and incoming mayor wants to amend the budget in January, it was alright with him.

Councilwoman Vannoy asked if this would include the salaries of the employees of the city or was Councilman Bitner proposing the employees of the city get the raises that are in effect in the 2019 Budget.

Councilman Bitner clarified that he was proposing that the budget be passed as everyone agreed the night of the Budget Meeting, including Alderwoman DeGifford, Alderwoman Taylor and Mayor Elect Chris Moore.

Councilman Bitner made the motion to approve the 2019 Budget as written. Councilman Stucki second the motion.

Councilman Fenix expressed he didn't want to see any interruptions in any of the projects we have grant monies on so we don't stop something and then don't get the grant monies. Any grant monies we grant them, they can choose to spend or not spend them.

Councilwoman Vannoy asked if a week was going to matter. Were we applying for any grants?

Councilman Fenix explained that as we go through projects, sewer projects, he didn't want to see any of those stopped.

Councilwoman Vannoy asked if he thought that was really going to happen.

Councilman Fenix didn't want to take a chance.

Councilman Schein said we have already done this in the past and we are not reinventing the wheel. This is not just something his city does, but other cities do. Before we go further, he wanted to hear from the Mayor Elect that this was going to be his budget.

Motion was made to invite Mayor Elect Chris Moore to give his view of the 2019 Budget.

Motion: Eric Schein

Second: Linda Vannoy

Voice Vote Aye: Unanimous

Voice Vote Nay: None.

Motion to invite Mayor Elect Chris Moore to give his view of the 2019 Budget.

Mayor Elect Chris Moore expressed appreciation to speak on the budget. At this point, you can pass your budget. We can make the changes. He had spoken with the Municipal League, City Attorney. We will make changes as needed. In speaking with the attorney, there is precedence with the City Attorney and Municipal League that if we don't pass, I believe the West Helena Case that went up, took over a year; but bills were still paid and contracts were honored. For the sake of everyone enjoying Christmas and moving forward, he was perfectly fine with passing this budget.

Councilman Evers commented that at the last meeting when Eric brought this up, he asked what part of the budget he didn't like or reviewed during the work sessions that he wasn't at. Did he provide any information?

Mayor Long: I'm not aware.

Councilman Schein: No.

Councilman Evers said it was fine that he just wanted clarification. Councilman Bitner was absolutely right that when at one of the work sessions, the incoming councilmen and mayor were asked as a point of reference. Chasity Taylor agreed as far as voting, but she didn't want to talk about policemen's salaries for obvious reasons. He wanted to make sure that was noted.

Councilman Bitner said everything was on the table for January and he wanted to get into January and ease up on Jerry Hudlow and eliminate any crisis that would come up.

Councilman Evers said that as a councilman when someone brings up questions on the budget you might want to have a little pause on it. I was willing to vote yes at the last meeting and I'm ready to go.

Councilman Bitner commented that we failed.

Motion was made to pass the 2019 Budget for the City of Lowell as written.

Motion: Dean Bitner

Second: Kendell Stucki

Vote Aye: Stucki, Fenix, Bitner, Evers, Adams

Vote Nay: Schein, Vannoy

Motion to pass the 2019 Budget for the City of Lowell as written was approved.
Resolution was assigned No. 18-55.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Long made the motion to adjourn. Kendell Stucki second the motion. There being no objections, the meeting adjourned at 6:13.

APPROVED:



Mayor Chris Long for Eldon Long

ATTEST:



City Clerk, Elizabeth Estes



City of Lowell

Minutes of the Special Council Meeting

December 21, 2018