

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE LAWRENCE CITY COUNCIL

DATE: Wednesday, July 22, 2009

THE REGULAR MEETING of the City Council held on **Tuesday, July 21, 2009** was called to order and continued by **SPECIAL SESSION** on **Wednesday July 22, 2009** at 7: 11 p.m. in the City Council Chamber with all Members present. Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez arrived at 7:24 p.m. and Councilor Silva arrived at 7:29 p.m. Council President Blanchette presided over the meeting. Approximately Nineteen [19] persons were present.

I. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES: - None

II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: - None

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS – None

IV: COMMUNICATION FROM MAYOR, CITY OFFICIALS & CITY ATTORNEY:
- None

V. APPROPRIATIONS-ORDERS-RESOLUTION: - None

VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS: - None

VII. WITHDRAWALS: - None

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: - None

IX. TABLED MATTERS:

Doc.244/09: Supplemental Appropriation Order - FY 2010 – Hearing held – Approved

Upon being recognized Councilor Kolofoles presented a motion to resume the Meeting of the Lawrence City Council commenced on July 21, 2009. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gonzalez and unanimously [7-0] approved by the Council Members present. [Councilor Silva and Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez absent at the time of the vote].

[Wednesday, July 22, 2009]

Councilor Kolofoles presented a motion to remove the above item from the “table”. The motion was seconded by Councilor Moran and unanimously approved by the Council Members present [7-0] [Councilor Silva and Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez absent at the time of the vote].

Council President Blanchette provided Council Members with a summary of prior proceedings and the current status of the measure. Council President Blanchette invited Budget and Finance Director Mark Andrews to address the Council Members about any additional information regarding the item presented. Director Andrews provided a synopsis of his financial prospectus regarding the financial condition of the City of Lawrence as it relates to the matter presented.

Council President Blanchette posed questions to Director Andrews about the amounts that may be necessary to improve the Fire Department’s personnel problems. Director Andrews stated that it is a priority of the Administration to re-hire firefighters rather than continue with a diminished force. A discussion ensued between Council President Blanchette and Director Andrews concerning financial issues as they presently exist and as they may develop. Further discussion ensued regarding the authority of the Mayor to require all fire stations to remain open.

Upon the invitation of Council President Blanchette, Fire Chief Takvorian discussed the recent analysis and review of the Fire Department’s Budget to determine the financial course that may affect the Fire Department’s ability to keep all fire stations open and sufficiently staffed.

[Wednesday, July 22, 2009]

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Twomey posed questions to Chief Takvorian about response time being adversely affected by the closing of area bridges around the Park Street Fire Station. He also posed questions to Director Andrews about the possibility of obtaining funds from other sources not yet considered. At the request of Councilor Twomey, Director Andrews reviewed the appropriations requested in the petition presented.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Abdoo discussed the method of applying surplus funds within any department through a release of specific allocation of monies with Director Andrews. Councilor Abdoo asked Chief Takvorian about the manner of hiring firefighters from a reserve list and a “re-hire” list.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez asked if there were other firefighters available for re-hire from those who may have been laid-off. Chief Takvorian stated there were none.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Silva commented on the scheduled closing of the Hampshire Street Bridge expected to close on August 2, 2009 and the adverse impact it will have on response time if the Park Street Fire Station is closed. Councilor Silva stated her support for the measure presented.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Moran posed questions to Chief Takvorian regarding equipment and staffing of vehicles and reviewed overall staffing allocation. Further questions were posed to Deputy Chief Bergeron regarding the effective use of current staff.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez poses questions to Chief Takvorian about staffing, equipment and duty assignment. She suggested that the Fire

[Wednesday, July 22, 2009]

Department should have a fund raising strategy in order to supplement personnel and equipment costs. Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez also posed questions about the hiring process to Chief Takvorian. Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez also asked Director Andrews about financial plans to keep all fire stations open. Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez reiterated her support of any and all plans that would result in keeping all fire stations open and operational.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Kolofoles inquired about the continued effort of the Mayor's Office to negotiate with the Firefighter's Union to resolve differences resulting in financial difficulty to Director Andrews. Councilor Kolofoles posed questions to Deputy Chief Bergeron about the necessity of keeping all fire stations open. Councilor Kolofoles inquired of Chief Takvorian about staffing and hiring procedures and the intention to hire additional firefighter when possible.

Councilor Kolofoles moved to approve the measure, which was seconded by Councilor Abdoo.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Gonzalez stated he is not convinced the Park Street Fire Station will remain open and stated that he does not support the measure presented.

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Moran asked Director Andrews to prepare quarterly reports for the Council Members regarding this matter.

Upon no further discussion or comment offered by the Council Members present, Council President Blanchette closed the discussion portion of the hearing and called upon the Council Members to consider the matter presented. Upon motion of Councilor Kolofoles, as

[Wednesday, July 22, 2009]

seconded by Councilor Abdo, the Council Members present voted unanimously [9-0] to approve the Supplemental Appropriation Order for FY 2010.

Doc.244/09: Approved

Doc.256/09: Fire Stations Closings—declare emergency—Resolution to Federal & State Delegations—Council Vice Pres Kolofoles

Upon motion of Councilor Alvarez-Rodriguez to remove the item from the table as seconded by Councilor Silva, the City Council Members present voted unanimously to remove document 256/09 from the table [9-0].

Upon being granted the floor, Councilor Kolofoles introduced the item for consideration of the Council Members. Councilor Kolofoles presented a motion to approve the measure. The motion was seconded by Councilor Silva and the Council Members present voted unanimously [9-0] to approve the measure.

Doc.256/09: Approved

The following items remained “tabled” without further action:

- 275/07: Marion Avenue – park to be named – Ord. Comm.
- 6B/08: City Contract Ordinance – Section 3.04.230- Ord. Comm.
- 22/08: Personnel Department – Re-organization
- 236/08: National Grid—req. permission to place underground electric conduits on Green St.-hear.
- 39/09: Water Commissioner – lay off – compliance with MGL Chapter 111 Section 160- City Attorney invited to attend
- 141/09: Resolution – Delila Rivera – Council Pres. Blanchette
- 281/08: Revised Zoning Ordinance – Political Signs – hearing
- 219/09: FOIA Request Ignored by Administration – copy of all bills and documents related to payment to Mintz Levin Law Firm—Budget and Finance Director Mark Andrews and Comptroller Dir. Cammaso to attend to answer questions
- 227/09: Cell Towers – Presence requested of Land Use Planner Dan McCarthy and City Attorney Richard D’Agostino to explain process in securing cells towers and the appeal process if denied
- 245/09: Audit Bid Process – Council Pres. Blanchette

[Wednesday, July 22, 2009]

X. NEW BUSINESS: - None

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Upon Motion of Councilor Fielding duly seconded by Councilor Moran, the Council Members present voted unanimously to Adjourn [9-0]

**ADJOURNED
(9:20p.m.)**

Attest:

William J. Maloney
City Clerk