

CITY OF LEWISTON

CITY COUNCIL

OCTOBER 17, 2006

REGULAR MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL ROOM AT 7:00 P.M.

THE HONORABLE LIONEL C. GUAY, JR., MAYOR, PRESIDING.

PRESENT: Councilors Mendros, Bernier, O'Brien, Jean, Samson, Paradis, Rousseau, City Administrator James Bennett, and City Clerk Kathleen Montejo

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Moment of Silence.

VOTE (252-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, seconded by Councilor Paradis:

To dispense with the reading of the minutes of the October 3, 2006, meeting and to accept and place them on file as prepared by the City Clerk. Passed - Vote 7-0

AMENDMENT TO THE GENERAL ASSISTANCE POLICY

VOTE (253-2006)

Motion by Councilor Paradis, second by Councilor O'Brien:

That the maximum amounts allowed for general assistance and the maximum amounts allowed for food, housing, personal/household supplies, and utilities in the General Assistance Policy, for persons eligible to receive assistance in accordance with the standards of eligibility, be amended in accordance with HUD guidelines and the current Thrifty Food Plan. Passed - Vote 6-1 (Councilor Bernier opposed)

**APPROVAL OF ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR THE
NOVEMBER 7, 2006 ELECTION**

VOTE (254-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, second by Councilor Paradis:

Be It Ordered by the City Council that the Election Warrant be issued for the Special Municipal Election to be held on Tuesday, November 7, 2006 for the purposes of voting on a Charter Amendment.

To approve the following recommendation from the City Clerk/Registrar of Voters on actions necessary to conduct the Special Municipal Election and the State Candidate and Referendum Election to be held on Tuesday, Nov. 7, 2006:

A. That the hours for acceptance of registrations in person only, prior to the Nov. 7th election, as required by MRSA Title 21A, sec. 122, 6A(2), be set at 8:00am to 4:30pm, Oct. 18 through Nov. 6, 2006; and additional hours of 9:00am to 12 noon on Saturday, Nov. 4, 2006.

B. That the names of those persons who register during the closed session for registration shall be recorded in accordance with MRSA Title 21A, sec. 122, subsec. 7B, except the day prior to the election when they shall be recorded in accordance with subsec. 7A.

C. Pursuant to Title 21A, sec 759(7), absentee ballots will be processed at the central polling place at 7:00am, 12:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:00pm and any and all remaining shall be processed at 8:00pm, if necessary.

Passed - Vote 7-0

ADOPTION OF MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

VOTE (255-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, second by Councilor O'Brien:

To suspend Section 1,(a) of the Rules Governing the City Council and to hold one regular meeting during the month of November to be held on Tuesday, November 14th.

Passed - Vote 7-0

AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT TRANSFER OF FORFEITURE FUNDS

VOTE (256-2006)

Motion by Councilor Samson, second by Councilor Jean:

That pursuant to Title 15, Maine Revised Statutes Annotated, Section 5824(3) and Section 5822(4)(A), the City Council hereby acknowledges and approves of the transfer of \$668.00, or any portion thereof, in the case of the State of Maine vs. Brian Keith LeGasse, CR-05-1050 Court Records. Being funds forfeited pursuant to court process. It is further acknowledged that these funds shall be credited to the 'City of Lewiston Drug Enforcement Program', funds to be deposited in Account No. 590-3514050 at People's Heritage Bank.

Passed - Vote 7-0

**APPOINTMENT TO THE LEWISTON HOUSING
AUTHORITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

VOTE (257-2006)

Motion by Councilor Samson, second by Councilor O'Brien:

To confirm the Mayor's nomination of Bertrand Dutil of 454 Meadowview and to appoint Mr. Dutil as a member of the Board of Trustees of the Lewiston Housing Authority for a five year term, said term to expire October 7, 2010. Passed - Vote 7-0

**UPDATE REGARDING THE REGIONAL CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH
SYSTEM PROJECT**

City Administrator James Bennett made a presentation to the Council regarding the Regional Consolidated Dispatch System Project. He noted there are four dispatch centers in the county and the operating cost is \$2,553,372 to run all four centers annually. It was noted that the centers have little capital funds to upgrade equipment. There is a newly created committee that will be exploring the consolidation of the dispatching services and this committee will review logistics such as which entity would run the consolidated center, funding issues and so forth.

David Hughes of 34 Howe Street noted the consolidation of services could result in up to twelve jobs being eliminated. He asked about job training opportunities for the people who would lose their positions.

**APPOINTMENT OF ONE CITY REPRESENTATIVE TO THE REGIONAL
CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH COMMITTEE**

Councilors Paradis and Bernier nominated the City Administrator to serve as the City's representative.

VOTE (258-2006)

Motion by Councilor Jean, second by Councilor Rousseau:

To appoint City Administrator James Bennett to serve as the City's representative to the Regional Consolidated Dispatch Committee. Passed - Vote 7-0

REPORTS AND UPDATES

The City Administrator reported that despite weeks of trying to coordinate the schedules of the Gubernatorial candidates for a debate in Lewiston on revaluations and property tax, the only night that all four candidates could do a debate would be October 31. Councilor Mendros said this would be fine, yet the rest of the Council suggested letting the candidates and others spend time with their families since it would be Halloween.

At this time, the Council took a five minute recess.

OTHER BUSINESS

Cynthia Rodrigue of Auburn stated that she has been having a problem with the Lewiston Police Department. The Chief suggested she come into his office the next day to discuss her concerns.

Joyce Bilodeau of 25 Marston Street spoke in favor of the stormwater utility fee and read a statement in support of the fee and citing examples of it's necessity such as the federal mandates the city is obligated to follow.

David Hughes of 34 Howe Street stated the fee is \$30 this year and he is concerned about increases in future years. He noted that nine percent of the city's budget is in bond payments. He noted that lies and scare tactics have been used by City Hall regarding the petition to stop the stormwater utility district and he did not think the petition would "blow a hole" in the city budget. He said that City Hall is playing politics.

Michael Breton of 29 Mower Avenue said the stormwater fee is a good idea to help lower taxes and the petition is political.

Paul Fournier of Old Greene Road read part of Joyce Bilodeau's statement noting that the fee is important in addressing the CSO issues the city has. He spoke in favor of the ordinance and maintaining it.

Rick Callier, president of the firefighters union, spoke of his concern regarding city politics threatening jobs and he said that he commends a majority of the Council for working hard on the budget issues. He questioned Councilor Mendros' involvement with the organizers of the petition.

Paula Breton of 29 Mower Avenue spoke of major water problems on her street that the fire department responds to.

Jeff Baril noted that many city employees are in attendance to show support for their jobs and he also believes the petition represents dirty politics. He noted that city employees support the Councilors and feels that Councilors should support city employees.

Larry Poulin of 25 Shawmut Street stated the petition shows that citizens disagree with the Council and he noted he has talked with many residents who disagree with the new fee. He said the petition does not cut jobs, the City Administrator and Council do that. He stated that jobs should not have to be cut as a result of the petition.

At this time, the Mayor closed the public portion of other business since no other members of the public wished to speak.

Councilor Mendros stated that he respects jobs and the work done by city employees. He said that to spin his opinions as if they are anti-fire department is disappointing and not appropriate. He said that the city needs to follow the Charter regarding the petition process.

Councilor O'Brien stated that anything that she does as a public figure, she always thinks of the consequences - both intended and unintended.

Councilor Rousseau suggested that residents should review the amount of taxes they paid in 1998 as opposed to their 2006 taxes. He said that property owners are paying less in taxes now than they did ten years ago. He said that as an example, a house in 1998 paid \$2184 in taxes and in 2006 the same house paid \$2005.

Mayor Guay said that the petition was started by people who did not understand the process and the city will do everything possible to protect employees jobs.

At this point, the Mayor closed the regular meeting and began the workshop.

VOTE (259-2006)

Motion by Councilor O'Brien, second by Councilor Jean:

To adjourn at 9:30 P.M. Passed - Vote 7-0

A true record, Attest:

Kathleen M. Montejo, CMC
City Clerk
Lewiston, Maine