

LARA meeting
2/8/2023

Present: Perry Beachum, Cliff Yankovich, Mark Weaver, Amanda Rogers, Tom Gossiau, Dave Austin, Janine Mork

Guest: Andrew Siler, Auditor
Absent – Mark Anderson

Call to order – 6:30 pm

Approval of agenda – A motion to approve the agenda as presented was made by Yankovich, seconded by Rogers. Motion carried.

Approval of minutes –Yankovich motion to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2023 meeting. Rogers seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer report – Rogers indicated the need to amend the budget for Professional Fees, \$44,750 currently. Amend to \$80,000. The money will come from grant proceeds from Lowell Community Fund. That money is unrestricted so we can use for planning phases. Amanda will be refining grant money sources. Dave Austin will help her with that. Cliff motioned to increase budget to \$80,000, Janine seconds. The motion carried.

Checks to be paid – City of Lowell 6273.71; Williams & Works 720.00; Chamber of Commerce 500 and 110. This was previously approved but two separate checks are needed. Will re-issue. Yankovich moves to pay the bills as presented. Weaver seconds. Motion passed.

Dave Austin- Regarding invoices to City. Some previous invoices remain unpaid. Dave needs to reconcile that with Amanda and Sue Olin to make sure they are paid.

Public Comment – None

New Business

Audit Review – Andrew Siler is a partner at Thompson, Seiler, and Colb
His audit of the LARA records produced an Unqualified opinion – clean believe financial statements have been fair. Best you can get.

Very solid financial stmt. June meeting – make sure budget fund balance is adequate for expenses. Amend accounts before spending to make sure money is there to spend. Make sure budget is ready for new fiscal year before spending in new year. Corrective action plan for state. Keep budget in software. Make sure budget is approved before expenditures. July 1 2022 budget was not approved prior to spending. Restricted grant

monies – track to ensure it is used for intended purpose. Keep spreadsheet or recordkeeping for proof.

Perry – every board member have copy of approved budget. Not wait until June for new budget approval. Set aside time in March and April to work on budget for new year.

Anything else we need to be on top of. Grand expenditures. Always publish minutes on website. Gives Board accountability. Minutes are good, keep it up. Bill approval, budget breakdown monthly to board. Duplicate signatures on checks. Monitor bank activity. Large amount in bank. \$50k would be unnoticeable. Bank reconciliation as part of board packet. Question numbers. Spread money across different banks to keep under FICA limit. Fraud discussion – during next audit he will give members a call to discuss their thoughts.

Motion to accept audit as presented. Cliff, Mark W. motion passed.

Have municipalities get copy of audit. Cliff suggested putting audit report on our website.

Laura Garrison – replacement. Tom Gossiox is interested. Amanda motions to approve Tom. Cliff seconds. At-large representative. (Lowell Twp.)

Old Business –

Website – no updates from Jordan. We were expecting information from them pretty quick after meeting. What do they need from us to final site. Janine will follow up with them on status.

Rail Trail Connection update – Dave Austin.

West to East. GR Gravel – met with Monday to talk about access to site during construction. Will give us permission to go down east side of property that borders city water plant. Need Temporary curb cut on Bowes to enter property. Put up fence to make sure our contractors don't infringe on gravel mining. Need new surveys where our trail is going because GRG excavated part of it.

There is creek between GRG and City. Collects water from Bowes Rd and heads to River. Stream is 6' wide . Need to do a box culvert under bridge. Soil boring completed.

Stoney Lakeside Park – crossing Lee creek. Pedestrian bridge. Expensive. Completing design on it. EGLE meeting. Will do field visit as hydraulic analysis. Not anticipating issues. Dave wants them to see what is actually there in real life. Avoid issues that don't exist.

Reagan Property No issues. Using geo-grid there also. Finalize easement. City has to issue resolution to accept DNR Grant. Need easement approved first.

MDOT – quarterly reports. Told of additional cost from geo grid and bridge. Phase 2 hold up due to RR easements. Told them their money has gone down due to increased costs. They will have to pay for phase 2 alone if not increasing funds for Phase 1 now. Goal to submit plans to MDOT by middle of March. Project bid by mid-late summer and start work this year. Bridge takes long time to engineer/mfg. Want work to start this year.

Tom - how long do we have to follow MDOT rules? If part of trail needs repair replacement in future, not using MDOT money. Do we have to meet their standards? If not, they may not fund future parts.

We have to widen sidewalk by Walgreens to 10'.

Perry – city had discussion about trees, etc. Many trees need to be removed, dead or otherwise. Looking at ordinances regarding Arbor Board jurisdiction.

LLP mulched everything on Alden Nash along trail. Looks good there. Bowes Road looks like tornado went through. Rented forestry mulcher and cleaned it up. Would like to use it more often instead of waiting for it to get overgrown first.

Adjourn – Mark Weaver motioned to adjourn. Yankovich seconds. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:46pm

Next meeting scheduled for March 8, 2023