



Lowell City Council

Neighborhoods SC Minutes

Michael Q. Geary
City Clerk

Date: September 15, 2026
Time: 6:00 PM
Location: City Council Chamber, City Hall, Lowell, Ma. / Zoom

PRESENT:

Present on Roll Call were C. Scott, C. Chau and C. Descoteaux. Also present was City Solicitor Williams, Yovani Baez-Rose (DPD) and Camilo Espitia (DPD).

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER:

C. Scott called meeting to order noting attendance and the agenda item of community benefits agreements (CBA).

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

C. Scott opened meeting to public:

Joanne Dawson commented on the dangers of rodenticides and noted the actions of the City and the State. Ms. Dawson noted need for the CBA in this area and provided examples of them.

Jon Grossman noted that CBA are used to improve life in communities when big business comes to neighborhood. Mr. Grossman noted the City needs a rigorous agreement that must be enforceable. Mr. Grossman noted the need for the community to be at the negotiation table.

Jacob Fortes (Via Zoom) spoke regarding community input in structuring CBA as it is input from those directly affected. Mr. Fortes noted the agreement must be fully enforceable.

Eileen Castle noted that a CBA must be able to cover a host of issues affecting the community which would include health concerns and the effect on schools. Ms. Castle commented on current moratorium on data centers.



Mary Wanbui commented on prior tax agreements and host agreements which were constructed without neighborhood representation. Ms. Wanbui noted agreements must have strong language and the City must use its leverage to develop a favorable plan.

C. Scott noted the difference of tax and host agreements compared to CBA. Ms. Baez-Rose noted the differences and that CBA would be a response document to request made by developers. Ms. Baez-Rose noted agreements should be expansive enough to include all business even ones who make no request of the City. Ms. Baez-Rose indicated that trigger points should exist that begin process to negotiate a CBA. C. Scott questioned ways to initiate developing CBA from the community and possibly by way of zoning. Atty. Williams noted the legal basis of CBA which would include a contract element of exchange of benefits between the parties. Atty. Williams indicated that zoning options can be explored. C. Chau noted there must be an agreement and not forced upon an entity. C. Chau noted community protection goes beyond economics. Ms. Baez-Rose noted the possibility to create a committee to provide input for these agreements but indicated that the City must retain some control over the process and that it should apply beyond data centers. Ms. Baez-Rose noted the creation of a criteria table which benefit City and describes area that they could refer to for the purpose of entering negotiations. C. Chau noted the City should have initial control of the process. Atty. Williams described format of the CBA within the current Executive Order of the Governor. C. Descoteaux noted the must need to involve the community and that the current administration can develop the process for CBA. C. Scott noted the impact on community must be addressed and that the community should be used to develop a CBA program. C. Chau noted the number of stake holders that would be involved. Atty. Williams noted that there would be disagreements within group, but purpose was to put everyone at the table. Mr. Espitia noted the City can control the setup of any criteria to be used in CBA. C. Scott outlined next steps which would include expansion of the draft with community input.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion to Adjourn by C. Descoteaux, seconded by C. Chau. So voted.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 PM.

Michael Q. Geary, City Clerk
