City of Lowell Oregon
City Council
Work Session Minutes
January 6, 2026

The Lowell City Council held a work session meeting on January 6, 2026. The meeting location was at the Lowell Rural Fire Protection District Fire Station 1 at 389 N. Pioneer Street, Lowell, OR 97452. Mayor Weathers called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

City Councilors present:
Mayor Maureen Weathers, Jimmy Murray, Don Bennett, Tim Stratis, Gail Harris,

City Councilors absent: NONE

Work Session Topic(s)

SDC Updates, discussion – Matt Wadlington, Civil Est Engineering

Matt Wadlington from Civil West presented updates on three remaining System Development Charge (SDC) calculations: wastewater, stormwater, and transportation. These calculations determine maximum defendable SDC rates the city can charge for new development.

For wastewater, the maximum defendable SDC was calculated at $8,974 per Equivalent Dwelling Unit (EDU), significantly higher than the current $1,689. This increase is primarily due to necessary wastewater treatment plant upgrades, lift station improvements, and gravity sewer improvements needed to maintain permit compliance rather than increase capacity.

For stormwater, the maximum defendable SDC was calculated at $575 per EDU, which is relatively low compared to other utilities due to most stormwater infrastructure being built on-site by developers.

For transportation, the maximum defendable SDC was calculated at approximately $6,192 per EDU a substantial increase from the current $696. This fee would fund approximately 2.5 miles of new roads. City Administrator Baker noted the minimum lot size standards have changed. Matt stated he would revise memo and send to City Administrator.

Council discussed that these are maximum allowable rates, and they have flexibility to set actual SDCs lower. City Administrator Baker noted he will bring these back for potential action at the January 20th meeting, and rates could be adjusted later by resolution if needed.

Digital reader board quotes, discussion

The Council reviewed quotes for a digital reader board to be installed at City Hall/Library. Quotes ranged from approximately $14,000 to $28,000 for a 4'x6' digital display. Councilor Murray provided expertise on the differences between systems, noting that the higher-priced option includes an on-board video processing unit rather than cloud-based management.

Staff will gather additional information, including references from existing users, and bring a recommendation back to Council at the next meeting. The project is budgeted at $18,000.

Access Control Quotes, discussion

City Administrator Baker presented quotes for an upgraded access control system for City Hall, the admin building, and library. The current standalone proxy card/keypad system requires manual programming at each location and cannot be managed remotely. The new system would allow centralized management, mobile credentials, and better security monitoring.

Quotes from four vendors were discussed, with prices being comparable except for one significantly higher option. Two systems require annual subscription fees. The project is budgeted at $10,000, and the city has received a $5,000 grant that must be used by April.

Leak detection equipment quotes, discussion

The Council reviewed quotes for leak detection equipment to upgrade the city's aging water leak detection capabilities. City Administrator Baker recommended purchasing a system from Correct Equipment at approximately $5,800, which includes additional ground microphones and a carrying case compared to other options that cost over $6,700.
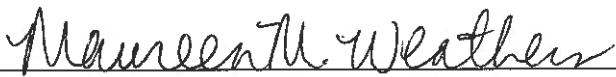
The equipment would improve the city's ability to detect water leaks by filtering out background noise and providing digital output that current equipment from 1989 and 1994 cannot offer.

City Administrator Baker will bring final recommendations for all equipment purchases to the January 20th meeting for potential action.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm

APPROVED:

Maureen M. Weathers, Mayor

ATTEST:

Max Baker, City Recorder