

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
5:30 p.m., Thursday, August 1, 2013

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, August 1, 2013 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Loftus and Ward, Chair Buckhannon, Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Buckhannon called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 11, 2013 as submitted; Councilmember Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

4. **Departmental Reports for June/July 2013 – Director Pitts**

Maintenance and Trash Collection Tracking Reports

Director Pitts reported that the work emphasis for June and July were beach sweeps to remove debris removal, i.e. broken chairs and tents primarily. The Recreation Department, without being asked, responded to the number of beach sweeps by assisting with mowing the rights-of-way, and the Director expressed his gratitude for their help.

Chair Buckhannon asked whether the debris being removed from the beach was refuse or garbage; Director Pitts explained that Public Works personnel remove the items that have been tagged by the Police Department, as well as those broken and discarded items left beside the yellow barrels. Items left on the beach that are not tagged are allowed to remain on the beach.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether the volume of reusable items has reduced over the last couple of years, and the Director said that it has come down considerably, especially this season. Councilmember Loftus asked if the items left were coming from rental properties or day visitors; Director Pitts said that there was no way for him to make such a determination, but he speculated the items were left by renters or second home owners.

DOT and Charleston County have started some ditch maintenance on the island. At Wills Way and 30th Avenue, they have worked to resolve an issue from the block of 30th and Hartnett; in the past couple of days the County has been re-structuring the 25th Avenue outfall.

Garbage collections continue to trend down while yard debris continues to trend upward.

As predicted, vehicle maintenance will end the year under budget.

5. **Old Business**

A. Update on Deployment of Yellow Barrels on Land-side of Palm

Director Pitts reported that he had left the yellow barrels longer than he had initially planned, but the results were the same as reported last month – some household garbage in the barrel at 34th Avenue and remaining two (2) barrels remained relatively empty for the length of the trial. These barrels have been re-deployed to the beach – two (2) at Grand Pavilion and two (2) at Front Beach.

B. Discussion of Progress on Assigned Work Task for 1801 Palm

Administrator Tucker recalled that the use of inmate labor had been brought up at the previous meeting; her research uncovered restrictions that gave the Administrator a degree of concern. The inmates would have to be covered by the City's insurance, and the insurance provider advised that this type of work assignment would be extremely high risk. In the case of an injury, the City would carry the effects of that injury for three (3) years in its experience rating; they added that the propensity for an injury in this type of work would be high. The City would also be required to supervise the inmates as they work; the actual inmate agreement requires that the City train them and that IOP personnel will be on-site to supervise their activities. From an available personnel standpoint, that does not seem feasible since the Public Works personnel are "maxed out" with the work assignments they have already.

The Administrator noted that vendors have not submitted quotes to clear the property because of the restriction on how it can be cleared – there are protected vegetation species growing on the property. In the alternative, staff learned about a consultant, Jeff Jackson, who will walk the lot and identify those species so that scope of work can be written for the vendors to be able to quote a price for clearing. Administrator Tucker distributed a quote from Mr. Jackson for this work; the Administrator stated that Mr. Jackson was the consultant who supervised the trimming and pruning of the accreted property on Sullivan's Island, which has equivalently delicate vegetation. Mr. Jackson's estimated cost for developing the plan is six hundred dollars (\$600) and another twelve hundred dollars (\$1,200) for marking the vegetation on the property that cannot be cut. Fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) is budgeted for this project, and Mr. Jackson's work would be the first step in getting more vendors comfortable with submitting bids for the work to be done.

Administrator Tucker remarked that the Committee is not operating under any time constraints for this work, but suggested that it would be good to have the project completed in this budget year. Since Mr. Jackson's quote was not in the meeting packets for this meeting, the Committee could delay any action until the next meeting.

Assistant Dziuban clarified a portion of the quote where Mr. Jackson speaks to the front of the property; as Director Kerr and Mr. Jackson walked the property, they agreed that the thicket at the rear of the property would be left untouched to serve as a buffer between the property and the neighbors to the rear.

Councilmember Loftus questioned that the City had personnel to accomplish the work in the off-season. Administrator Tucker responded that Director Kerr was not knowledgeable enough of the vegetation to feel confident in identifying the plants at 1801 Palm Boulevard.

Councilmember Ward asked whether this work had been put out for bid and was told that it had not been. The Administrator noted that the dollar amount of the bid shows that is below the threshold that requires the bidding process.

When the work for clearing the lot was put out for bid, the City only got one (1) response; Director Pitts was told that other vendors were apprehensive of taking on the job with the restrictions that are on the property. If Mr. Jackson were to be hired to identify the protected species, more vendors are likely to come forward. The one (1) bid was in excess of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000).

Chair Buckhannon asked whether the Clemson University Extension would do this type of work; Administrator Tucker stated that they, too, would charge a fee, but she could contact them.

Councilmember Ward asked whether the City would entertain bids from other landscape designers to identify the protected species on the property, and the Administrator said additional bids would be welcomed.

In the meantime, this item will remain on the Committee's agenda.

C. Update on Phase 2 Drainage Project and Surveying of 56th, 57th and Sparrow Drive

Dave Stevens of Civil Site Environmental was in attendance to explain his findings at these locations. Mr. Stevens reported that the routing for Phase 2 has been completed; he indicated that he has met with Charleston County and SCDOT who had some minor changes as did Lowe Wild Dunes. With the changes made, he is ready to submit for MS4 and the encroachment permit within a week and anticipates two (2) months to get all of the approvals. During this time, he will send the plan out to get initial cost estimates, so decisions can be made about phasing of the project.

For the problem at Sparrow and Duck, Mr. Stevens explained that the eight inch (8 in.) pipe currently in place is inadequate, is too high and does not meet DOT requirements; he proposes putting in a fifteen inch (15 in.) pipe and grading the ditch down to stay open for awhile. He believes that the work could be done under the heading of general maintenance and repair, not requiring an encroachment permit.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether the cost of this work would be covered under the City's stormwater program through Charleston County; Administrator Tucker said she would check.

Although in the right-of-way, Administrator Tucker asked Mr. Stevens if the ditch was going to be in the resident's yard, and Mr. Steven answered in the affirmative noting that everyone thinks that from the edge of the pavement to their residence is their yard. The Administrator wanted the Committee to be aware of that fact because she recalls that particular property as being beautifully manicured; while the project will improve the drainage, the resident may not be as enthusiastic since it will mess up their yard.

Mr. Ward stated that he has known this resident for years, and, if it is the will of the Committee, he will speak to the homeowner.

Director Pitts indicated that, if the City authorizes Charleston County to do the work, it will get done.

The next area of concern is along Palm Boulevard between 55th and 57th Avenues where again the pipes were installed too high; Mr. Steven proposes running a new fifteen inch (15 in.) drain line from 55th Avenue to the existing drainage at the beach access between 56th and 57th Avenues. This work will require a DOT encroachment permit that will fall within the existing storm drainage requirements; it could be added into the next phase or earlier depending on the City's finances.

When Councilmember Loftus asked if this project could also qualify for NPDES funds, the Administrator said that this work will be more costly than most projects that use stormwater funds.

Administrator Tucker recalled that the Audi's who live at #7 56th Avenue and who attended the meeting in May to ask for relief for the flooding they experience in their yard and driveway; Mr. Stevens indicated that the work being proposed will not alleviate the problems with their property. A rough estimate for the work is ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) due to the infrastructure in place. According to Mr. Stevens the best idea is to get an easement for Mr. Audi to tie his pumps into the Wild Dunes box across the street.

The Administrator said that a letter would be sent to Mr. Audi requesting a meeting with him when he is next in town to review the options available to him.

Councilmember Ward asked when the work on Sparrow Drive could be done; Director Pitts stated that the work could be done when Charleston County has the resources available.

D. Discussion of Sidewalk Extension on JC Long Boulevard

Administrator Tucker reported that she had shown the three (3) sketches from the previous meeting to SCDOT to get an idea of which would be most likely to be permitted; SCDOT indicated that, if they receive an application for an encroachment permit for the sidewalk extension, it would probably draw attention to the fact that the parking that is happening now, i.e. the perpendicular parking in front of Island Tyme, would have to be eliminated.

The Committee decided to take no action.

6. New Business

A. Discussion of Front Beach Restrooms

Assistant Dziuban commented that this subject is on the *Agenda* at the request of Councilmember Ward with the desire for them to appear nicer and be a more enjoyable place to go. The challenge for staff with the Front Beach restrooms to do more than cosmetic work is

the fact that they are not up to code, i.e. not elevated; FEMA's fifty percent (50%) rule comes in to play when attempts are made to do any kind of renovation or improvement. The replacement of these restrooms is on the list of future City projects in excess of two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000). The building is cinder block and the plumbing lines are inside the cinder block, so, when repairs are needed, a hole is punched in the wall and covered with plywood when the work is completed.

Chair Buckhannon asked what the restrictions on the fifty percent (50%) rule were; Administrator Tucker stated that her understanding was anything that required a permit. The Administrator explained that amount of work done must be fifty percent (50%) under the appraised value of the structure for a specific period of time.

Director Pitts said the original design was for a pressure system with plastic lines that are difficult to access; those lines have failed.

Councilmember Loftus suggested keeping the building shell and phase replacement of the sinks, toilets and shower over a period of three (3) years. Administrator Tucker explained that the dollars spent on the building accumulate for a period of five (5) years, and then the clock starts ticking for another five (5) years.

Chair Buckhannon asked that the item be kept on the agenda and that Director Kerr provide the Committee with the appraised value so the Committee will know what amount of money is available for rehabilitating the restrooms.

Councilmember Ward said that the replacement was something that Council should be considering for the near future; he stated that the building is an eyesore that has a terrible smell. The Councilmember expressed the opinion that a facelift might draw visitors out of the neighborhoods to the Front Beach public parking.

B. Consideration of Modifications of Section 6-2-5 of IOP Code to Allow for Chickens as Pets

Since the subject was broached at City Council, Chair Buckhannon offered to discuss the issue at the Public Works Committee and do a bit more research.

Councilmember Ward indicated that he had researched the issue and, based on that, he does not support people keeping chickens on the island; the idea is good for a three to five (3-5) acre farm, but he thinks there would be sanitation issues with the small lots on the island.

Councilmember Loftus said that the people who are advocating for keeping chickens would probably do a good job; however, he worries about water quality issues and, also, believes homes on the island are too close for one to keep chickens.

Chair Buckhannon said that the only way to allow chickens would be by lot size, which would limit them to a few homes on the island.

The Committee agreed to take no action.

C. Discussion of Flooding on 22nd Avenue

Director Pitts reported that a homeowner had brought this to his attention, and he distributed photographs from 2004 which are indicative of the flooding he has experienced this year. The resident's concern is that years ago an open ditch ran from the back corner of his property toward 20th Avenue; at some time, Charleston County piped that ditch and his flooding issues began. The homeowner wants to remove the pipe. Chuck Jarman with Charleston County has walked the property with Director Pitts; Charleston County is going to clean the sediment out of the pipe which is compromised about thirty to forty (30-40 ft.) into it. In addition, Director Pitts learned that there is no collection box at the head of the pipe, just a swell that runs into the pipe and must make a ninety degree (90°) turn to enter the pipe.

D. Discussion of Brush Removal

Administrator Tucker stated that this is an issue that has been year-long complaint from the Wild Dunes Community Association related to the City's debris removal operation. Director Pitts has met with the complainants on a couple of occasions, and the Administrator has dialogued with Dave Kynoski on the subject.

The debris collection process, a claw, is the same in Wild Dunes as it is in other parts of the island; this is the fastest method the City has for moving the largest volume of debris with the number of personnel the City has. Within the gates of Wild Dunes which tends to be well manicured, the operation draws attention to itself; the claw may scar the road, and, at times, when the debris is removed, what is left behind needs attention from the property owner. These issues have resulted in complaints to the Community Association; Mr. Kynoski would like for the City to retrofit the claw to prevent it from making the scrape marks on the roads and has also requested more intense personnel to clean up after the debris is picked up. Director Pitts has emphasized that he cannot move the amount of debris generated on the island with the level of personnel and equipment the City has and give the removal that level of attention. Administrator Tucker commented that she does not think the complaints will go away, and, with those Wild Dunes residents who are complaining will continue to have a heightened awareness as time goes by.

The Administrator indicated that she and Director Pitts would welcome any suggestions or methods of mitigating the problem; Director Pitts believes that he would need additional personnel and equipment to provide the level of service Mr. Kynoski is seeking. In addition, the Administrator added that she and Director Pitts would be receptive if the Committee wanted staff to do more than they are already doing to correct the situation.

According to the Administrator, there have been two (2) consistent complainants, and Director Pitts has tried to respond to those individuals specifically. Administrator Tucker has the impression that Mr. Kynoski would like to see a more hands-on approach, similar to what one would get from a private contractor.

Chair Buckhannon questioned that some kind of Teflon skid-plate might exist for the claw that would prevent scarring of the road; Director Pitts said he would look into it.

Councilmember Loftus noted that there is little right-of-way in Wild Dunes; therefore, debris is left at the edge of the road for pickup. He noted that he had heard some of these complaints, but that his concern was more of damage to the island's infrastructure, like drainage. He was of the opinion that this is a problem other communities face and deal with; he thought research was called for to learn about other options.

Councilmember Ward asked if the City has received any complaints from outside the gates of Wild Dunes; Administrator Tucker said she did not recall any.

Chair Buckhannon and Administrator Tucker agreed that, with the increased volume of debris and decreased volume of garbage, the City may need to re-evaluate twice a week garbage to devote more time to debris removal.

E. Contracts in Excess of \$10,000 – None

7. Miscellaneous Business

Beach Monitoring Results for May and June 2013

Administrator Tucker reported that all monitorings had been good.

Next Meeting Date: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 10, 2013 in the Conference Room.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m.; Chair Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk