

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**  
5:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 4, 2015

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was called to order at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 4, 2015 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Ferencz, Loftus, Chair Ward, City Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Ward 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 Ferencz moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of June 3, 2015 as submitted; Chair Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments**

**Dave Kynoski, Wild Dunes Community Association**

**MOTION:** Chair Ward moved to re-order the *Agenda* to address Item A under New Business; Councilmember Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. **New Business**

**A. Discussion of Yard Debris and Twice per Week Garbage Collection Schedules**

Mr. Kynoski, Chief Operating Officer of the Wild Dunes Community Association, opened his remarks with a "thank you" to the men of the Public Works Department for the extra efforts they have put into Wild Dunes in recent weeks; he then distributed a hand-out (a copy of which is attached to the historical record of the meeting). As background, he reported that complaints about the yard debris removal by the City are as follows:

- Complaints increased in 2015, starting in the spring and continuing through the summer;
- Complaints have been documented and sent to the City;
- Complaints focused on timeliness of pickup and quality of service, regarding debris scattered at pickup site, damage to roads and shoulders, and damage to landscaping; and
- Problems will continue unless certain deficiencies and issues are addressed.

Mr. Kynoski noted that the City's ordinance requires that yard debris be placed at the curb in front of the property generating the debris; some property owners are placing their debris on WDCA common areas. When the debris is removed from in front of the house or the concrete curbing of common areas, the equipment used is damaging property, including the curbing on the common areas.

Despite the City's ordinance stating that yard debris, like grass clippings or leaves, should be placed in paper bags or plastic containers to be picked up, at times those loose materials are dumped on the curb for pickup or mixed with other brush, leaving material behind after the pickup. Additionally, landscapers and tree trimmers have generated huge piles of yard waste for pickup; the IOP trucks are full after only a few stops, leaving other debris in the community to be removed another day or over the weekend to the next week. Mr. Kynoski suggested that the City may need different equipment or a limit on the volume of debris to be removed from a single residence.

According to Mr. Kynoski, the use of the V-bucket Caterpillar leaves material on the streets and road shoulders, which remains as a visible eyesore for several days. The task falls to WDCA 's landscape maintenance contractor to clean up after the debris pickup, which diverts him from other tasks for which he is contracted to perform. The left-behind debris creates a potential fire hazard and reduces the line-of-sight for vehicles and pedestrians. And, since Wild Dunes is a resort destiny and community, the unsightly debris has the cost of the negative visual impacts on the community which impact property values and the experience for residents and guests.

Among the suggestions to reduce the complaints were:

- Review the ordinance pertaining to yard debris to determine if revisions should be made to manage the placement, volume and condition of debris placed at the curb for pickup;
- Review the collection and disposal operations with the goal of improving timeliness, cleanliness and overall quality of the service;
- Work closely with WDCA to reinforce communications regarding the City's regulations governing yard debris pickup; and
- Provide appropriate inspections and enforcement to achieve desired results.

Director Pitts noted that the City currently has twice a week garbage pickup for thirteen (13) weeks of the year; two (2) City holidays fall within that period which means that there is no debris removal for those two (2) weeks. He stated that the City needs a fifth truck eight or nine (8 or 9) weeks a year; to do that now, a man is pulled for his normally assigned duty. To staff and run a fifth truck year-round, the City would need to add staff and purchase equipment. The Director commented that the Public Works Department cannot pick up debris on the seven (7) mile length of the island in one day; when the debris is heavy in Wild Dunes, the Department may remove debris three (3) days in one (1) week. The Director said that the area between 30<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue receives the least frequent service on the island.

Referring to the equipment used for debris removal, the Caterpillar IT14G, is the same equipment used by the City of Charleston, North Charleston and Mount Pleasant. Director Pitts reported having spent a portion of his day observing debris in two (2) subdivisions in Mount Pleasant; he distributed to the Committee photographs he had taken showing the amount of material left after debris removal and the scarring to the asphalt from the bucket. (Photographs are attached to the historical record of the meeting). The observation was also made that the scarring wears away after being driven on for a few days or after a rainfall.

Administrator Tucker commented that no one present could disagree with what Mr. Kynoski has reported, but, in her opinion, it was several problems and that the debris removal was only the

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source of the complaint. The Administrator reiterated that the Public Works Department has more work than it can handle with twice a week garbage - only with the assistance of the Recreation staff was the mowing done this summer; the City does not have enough people in the Public Works Department to get all of the work done. She noted that the existing staff is working fast in order to cover the entire island. In the Administrator's opinion, the choices were to reduce the period of time that the City could offer twice a week garbage collections or to add another crew and the required equipment.

Councilmember Ferencz asked why the City could not hire additional temporary workers as the extra help needed in peak times. The Administrator explained that the need was for a CDL driver; all of the current personnel are CDL drivers. There is also the issue of having equipment for this person to drive.

Administrator Tucker stated that many communities require landscapers to carry-off the debris they generate, which decreases the volume to be picked up by the City. The drawback for Council is that the landscapers would then pass along their added expense to the residents of the island. The Isle of Palms is one (1) of a very few communities that will pick up everything that is not hazardous.

Mr. Kynoski recalled that the City restricts the volume of building materials it will remove from one (1) address; he wondered if such limitations could be put on the volume of debris the City would accept from one (1) address.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether a list of "dos and don'ts" could be drawn up for landscapers to get when they buy their business license. Councilmember Loftus agreed with the Administrator when she stated that enforcement would need to support the ordinances.

Councilmember Loftus then asked whether the City could stop twice a week garbage collections with school starting very soon. Director Pitts reported having to run five (5) trucks today for garbage collections.

Offering another possible solution, Councilmember Loftus asked if a vacuum could be purchased to follow behind the trucks to pick up what is left by the current equipment; Director Pitts acknowledged that such equipment did exist. The Councilmember then pondered the possibility of holding a meeting with the landscapers licensed on the island to educate them on the City's ordinances.

Councilmember Ferencz stated that, with no enforcement, there was no carry through. She said that, if the City were to require landscapers to remove the debris they generate, the resident would be charged accordingly; if the City were to add another crew and equipment, all residents of the island are forced to pay.

The City Administrator opined that many absentee owners are paying for debris removal at their primary residence.

Chair Ward indicated that the discussion had been informative, but more was needed.

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At Councilmember Ferencz' suggestion, the Committee will review the ordinances that pertain to garbage and trash removal.

Administrator Tucker recommended for the Committee to give serious consideration to additional personnel and equipment, as well as ordinances on garbage/debris removal from other communities.

#### **4. Departmental Reports for June and July 2015 – Director Pitts**

For both June and July, the focus of work was cleaning the beach; also in July, personnel locked in on mowing the rights-of-way. Although his numbers are not complete, Director Pitts was confident that expenses for vehicle maintenance would end the year within budget. Since the five-year (5 yr.) debris comparison was prepared for the meeting, Director Pitts learned that for July, the volume of material removed from the island was [this sentence is incomplete]

#### **5. Old Business**

##### **Update on Drainage**

- **Lauden**

Administrator Tucker was pleased to report that Charleston County had come to help with the ditch and outfall on Lauden. When asked by Councilmember Ferencz if the County had agreed that this was their responsibility, the Administrator responded that the County would like for the City to have a legal easement.

- **NPDES Reimbursement – 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue and Palm Boulevard**

After the City agreed that it would assume the risk if this reimbursement was challenged in an audit, the County did reimburse the City from NPDES funds sixty-two thousand two hundred sixty-nine dollars (\$62,269) for the repairs done.

#### **6. New Business**

##### **B. Consideration of Purchase of Skid-steer included in the FY16 budget at \$22,000 from State Accommodations Tax funds**

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to recommend the purchase of a Skid-steer at no more than \$22,000 from State ATAX funds; Councilmember Ferencz seconded.**

Director Pitts reported that the local Caterpillar dealer had located a used Skid-steer in Boston that has only fifteen hundred seven (1,507) hours of use; the equipment is now at the dealership in Summerville. The Skid-steer is a 2006 model, has all of the attachments, comes with the

entire service history, and was within specifications when checked out. The Director added that he could get a used bucket from Caterpillar's loaner fleet.

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Councilmember Loftus complimented the Recreation Department staff for the "fabulous" job they had done mowing and cleaning the beach access paths.

**VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**C. Consideration of Alternate Style Pooper-scooper Bags**

Administrator Tucker stated that she has been approached about using a different style pooper-scooper bag that is biodegradable, yet sturdier; if the City were to change, it would only happen when the current inventory has been depleted. She offered photographs of two (2) options but noted that there are also others the City could consider.

Councilmember Loftus suggested gradually phasing in new bags rather than a wholesale change since it was possible that the stations would have to be different to accommodate the new bags.

Director Pitts indicated that he did not recommend bags that would come in a roll for use anywhere on the island.

Chair Ward noted that the consensus of the Committee was to consider new bags and asked that more time be taken to research the biodegradable bags and the cost per case.

**D. Discussion of Single Stream Recycling Schedule**

Since single-stream recycling has expanded to the commercial businesses on the island, residents appear to be confused about when they should put their blue carts on the street; the Administrator explained that recycling for commercial businesses is every Thursday and that they use the same blue containers as residents use. The recycling trucks are also on the island on Tuesday and Friday for another type of pickup. Residential recycling is every other Wednesday, but, when residents see blue containers on the street, they tend to follow suit and put their containers on the street as well.

Administrator Tucker said that the City needs more public education for residents, and the County might produce a handout for residents. The recycling calendar is posted to the City's website.

Chief Buckhannon reported that he has instructed the patrol officers to only place warnings or citations on recycling cans that are out on Saturdays and Sundays; he added that, if the island is not serviced in one (1) day; the truck will return the next day to complete the job.

Councilmember Loftus stated that the Boy Scouts were constantly looking for public service projects; possibly they would distribute the educational materials to residents.

## **E. Discussion of Debris on the Connector**

Chair Ward said that he has heard people talking about debris on the Connector, and he wanted to know whether keeping the Connector clean was a problem for the City.

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Director Pitts stated that Public Works removes large debris on the Connector as soon as it is seen or reported to them. Otherwise, the City has contracted for the Connector to be swept twice a month, and SCDOT contracts with the same company for the Connector to be swept twice a month, as well.

Chair Ward was satisfied that he had this information when the subject is broached to him.

## **F. Discussion of Encroachments on the Rights-of-way**

Councilmember Ferencz said that she had asked for this topic to be on the *Agenda*; she wanted a clarification on how the City handles them since SCDOT has given the City the authority to remove them.

Administrator Tucker remarked that many right-of-way obstructions are quite substantial and would require significant construction to remove, and the City would likely be sued. In that case, the Administrator stated that the City would need SCDOT to stand behind the City's actions – SCDOT does not take a hardline on right-of-way obstructions. The Administrator added that the City might have some encroachments of its own.

Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the encroachments created issues for either the Police or Fire Departments.

Chief Buckhannon indicated that the only time encroachments are a problem for the Police Department is when someone hits one (1) of the hard objects. As far as the removal of these obstructions, especially the ones that create safety hazards, the Chief said that the City is being asked to enforce the SCDOT's rights-of-way because SCDOT does not have an enforcement arm.

According to the Administrator, any new encroachments must have a permit from SCDOT, and the City has asked that they not issue new permits; therefore, new construction is told no encroachments, but the owner points down the street and asks why a neighboring residence is different. She noted that there residences on the island that have had encroachments in the rights-of-way for many years.

Responding to Councilmember Ferencz' question about the solution, Chief Buckhannon replied that it as a matter of removing all or removing none.

## **G. Update on Handicap Parking at 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue**

Administrator Tucker had no information to impart to the Committee, and, at this point, she was unsure what she needed to do to get any action; she said that she would continue her efforts with Charleston County.

Councilmember Loftus asked that the subject remain on the *Agenda* until something was done.

## **7. Miscellaneous Business**

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### **May and June 2015 Beach Monitoring Results**

Copies of the reports were included in meeting packets and stated that “all samples were satisfactory.”

Councilmember Loftus asked why the readings were so high at 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, and the Administrator responded that the readings were the result of the concentration of people at Front Beach and at the County Park.

**Next Meeting Date: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.**

## **8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.; Chair Ward seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk