

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**  
5:30 P.M., Tuesday, March 1, 2016

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 1, 2016 in Council Chambers, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Ferencz and Kinghorn, Chair Ward, Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and City 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 Kinghorn moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 1, 2016 as submitted; Councilmember Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments**

**Undergrounding of power lines and Non-standard Service Fund – Westy Westmoreland and Evan Wheeler, SCE&G**

Mr. Westmoreland stated that he is now the manager of Utility Service Support that oversees the customer service engineering group, the right-of-way group, pole attachments and the non-standard service fund; he previously held the position of manager of the East Cooper Division now held by Evan Wheeler, who was also present.

Chair Ward used this opportunity to thank Mr. Westmoreland for his assistance and the excellent job done on the new Front Beach lighting; the Front Beach area is now safer and more attractive.

Mr. Westmoreland stated that he had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the non-standard service fund; he distributed a schedule that Mr. Wheeler's staff had created of the most current balance for the City in the non-standard service clause. The money in the non-standard service fund equates to one-half of one percent (0.005 %) of SCE&G's revenue generated from the City. The current balance, with the SCE&G match, is approximately five hundred sixty-nine thousand dollars (\$569,000); on July 1, 2016, the remaining balance of 2010-2011 of sixty-one thousand dollars (\$61,000) will fall off as the 2015-2016 amount will be added – the fund maintains a five-year (5 yr.) rolling balance. In the process of rolling the funds forward, the City loses the ability to use the remaining sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) from 2010-2011. Examples of projects that non-standard service funds pay for are the undergrounding of lines; at Front Beach, the underground infrastructure was upgraded to service each one of the lights and the meter pedestals were installed to serve the City's holiday decorations. Generally non-standard service funds are used for infrastructure or aesthetic reasons, not for income-producing business to SCE&G. The guideline for using the fund to the maximum is to try to stay ahead of the five (5) year curve, i.e. before it drops off.

Assuming the City had the funds, it would be allowed to use the entire fund, not just the amount generated in any one (1) year.

In responding to Councilmember Ferencz, Mr. Wheeler indicated that it was difficult to predict what the cost of undergrounding lines would be in an area until they know what infrastructure is in place. Mr. Westmoreland added that the cost increases in highly developed areas with lots of driveways or existing roads where everything must be bored.

Administrator Tucker explained that the City typically budgets seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) every year for small projects, but it is not enough money to do the kind of things that should be done with the non-standard service funds. For instance, she pointed out that, at the gateway to the marina, there are all manner of things that should be underground, but one (1) of those lines is the main service line for Goat Island.

Mr. Wheeler stated that many facilities are at the marina and a lot of facilities equates to not being aesthetically pleasing; therefore, the cost there would be higher.

The Administrator noted that, a couple of years ago, the City reserved an easement on the Water and Sewer Commission's wastewater sight on 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue in the event that those lines are ultimately put underground. If the City wanted to make a statement in some other part of town, it would need to budget more than seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) a year, and the money must be allowed to accumulate.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked whether the funds could be used for technical assistance or architectural engineering work to assess what needs to be done at the marina.

Mr. Westmoreland replied that, if it were only SCE&G electrical facilities, the answer would be yes. The way it would happen is that SCE&G would draw up an agreement for the project with SCE&G's estimated project cost, both parties would sign the agreement, and, once SCE&G completes the work, they would send the City a bill for half of the total cost. Mr. Wheeler added that their engineers would not be in a position to make stipulations and designs on the City's behalf for the commercial buildings at the marina; their work would stop at the SCE&G transformer, and the services to the meter cans and the conversion cans would be the responsibility of the individual. Their in-house engineers also would not be able to support any upgrades that might be wanted at the marina. Mr. Westmoreland stated that their work must be directly related to SCE&G's infrastructure.

Councilmember Ferencz asked whether a comprehensive plan had ever been done for the cost of undergrounding all of the power lines on the island. Mr. Westmoreland responded that, many years ago, SCE&G took a very high level view of what it would cost from 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Breach Inlet along Palm Boulevard, which would be the most expensive section because three (3) circuits service it.

Responding to Councilmember Ferencz' suggestion of phasing the undergrounding of lines, Mr. Wheeler indicated that, if it were done piece-meal, there would be a duplication of efforts; therefore, from a construction standpoint, it would be more efficient to do a larger section at a point in time.

Councilmember Kinghorn suggested that SCE&G put together an updated analysis of what it would take to put everything underground and provide the City with their technical recommendations for the best and most cost effective way to phase the work.

According to Mr. Wheeler, the area between 14<sup>th</sup> and Breach Inlet is well developed, and the devices that would be required for the switch gears measure nine feet by nine feet (9 ft. x 9 ft.). If any one property owner refused to have such a device on private property, the project would be shut down or they would have to jog into the right-of-way with an encroachment permit. With the proximity of the line to the Intracoastal Waterway, SCE&G would probably require stainless steel. Mr. Wheeler indicated that he could most likely estimate the cost on a per mile basis, at a very high level with disclaimers.

Mr. Westmoreland stated that, when they do the calculations, they would assume that they have the equipment locations. He commented that the City would need to decide what is the most important section and where the City would get the most benefit; he confirmed Mr. Wheeler's statements that 14<sup>th</sup> to Breach Inlet would be the most expensive part of an undergrounding project.

Administrator Tucker asked whether the City controlled the rate and the roll through the franchise agreement, i.e. increase the rate from half of one percent to one percent (0.005 to 0.01%) and not have funds roll off.

Mr. Westmoreland answered that all of SCE&G's non-standard service agreements contain the same language of half a percent (0.005%) and a five-year (5 yr.) rolling fund; the fund was set up to be used or roll off so that it does not accumulate to such a large amount.

Councilmember Kinghorn opined the City should have a goal or stated objective to utilize the non-standard service fund money each year before it rolls off; therefore, the City would need a prioritized list of smaller projects that could be completed each year to avoid funds rolling off the fund.

The Administrator stated that it was difficult to find projects that small.

Councilmember Kinghorn thought that adding lighting to the large parking lot or electrical at the marina could be on such a list.

The Administrator cautioned the Committee that the cost of the electricity on the lights, like at Front Beach, is billed at a higher rate, thereby increasing the City's operational costs and that the City seldom has enough money to meet the desired goal.

On adding lighting to the parking lot, the Administrator said that she did not know whether more lighting was needed or if it would be welcomed by the neighbors.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked that Director Kerr be tasked with compiling a list of possible projects, and Administrator Tucker said that she would add it to the list of projects he is already working on, but she noted that he was quite busy now with things that are under a deadline. She

remarked that she did not think staff could identify and do a project between now and July 1 and she did not know if any of the seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) budgeted has been spent.

Chair Ward agreed with Administrator Tucker that staff time was at a premium with everyone focused on the FY17 budget, and he encouraged Councilmember Kinghorn to come up with his own ideas for projects and to check with other Council members for their suggestions.

Elaborating on Councilmember Ferencz' comments, the Administrator agreed that the City could change its practice so that funds begin to accumulate for electrical projects.

**MOTION: Councilmember Ferencz moved to establish a non-standard service project fund, to continue budgeting \$75,000 per year and to let the funds accumulate for future projects; Councilmember Kinghorn seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **4. Departmental Report for February 2016 – Director Pitts**

The Director stated that, normally, February is the month that Public Works starts maintenance on the beach access paths in anticipation of the beginning of the season; however, he spent several days in February pumping water. Since the island remains saturated, the maintenance has not begun because the equipment could do more damage on some beach paths than waiting until they dry out. He reported that they had completed clearing the ditch on the non-ocean side of 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue for the resident who had complained.

Chair Ward noted that the Director had gotten the dumpsters removed from *The Dinghy* and the area has been cleaned up.

For the month of February, yard debris was low, but three (3), maybe four (4), loads remain to be taken to the landfill. Garbage was up by a small amount.

On vehicle maintenance, he noted that the repairs to the Caterpillar ran quite high, but he believes that the problem has been identified and remedied. In addition, the hydraulic cylinder on the oldest truck in the fleet was replaced, but he intends to keep the truck for several more years as the primary debris truck.

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

##### **A. Update on golf cart path between 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Island Center**

Administrator Tucker reported that the design and permit request have been submitted to SCDOT, and they have responded with some comments/concerns. The first comment was to know if the path could be moved out of the right-of-way; they also voiced concern about the grading, the slope and the drainage. In addition, they submitted a few things they would like to see changed, and they requested a 10-D statement from the engineer. In addition to continuing to work with SCE&G to get it permitted by them, the Administrator reported that she and Director Kerr had met with Russ Stemke, the owner of the adjacent private property, provided him with the information on what is planned; he has some reservations about the path. Mr. Stemke stated that he would like

to have his home rezoned to limited commercial, since the dental office is already there and zoned limited commercial. To get the zoning change would allow him to have an office in his home and to see clients there; it would also allow him to rebuild if his home/office were to be demolished in a storm.

He was asked to speak with his neighbors about the request to get an impression of how they would feel about the zoning change.

The City, in the meantime, is trying to respond to SDOT's questions because, without the encroachment permit, there can be no project.

#### **B. Re-surfacing of Palm Boulevard between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Avenues**

The Administrator stated that she could not report any progress on this item. This is part of what the City submitted as damaged by Joaquin to SCDOT, and the City has not seen any movement on any of it being repaired, other than the County's being responsive on Ocean Boulevard between 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Breach Inlet to patch it. The County has, in turn, reported that area as a hazard mitigation project since the City owns the stretch of road.

#### **C. Discussion of public restrooms and beach access**

Based on discussions at the February meeting, Administrator Tucker has contacted the CVB for some advocacy on the City's behalf with the County, and they agreed to do it. She added that she has not seen any evidence that they have done it, but that may be that they simply forgot to copy the Administrator on the correspondence.

Chair Ward stated that, for the City to be taken seriously by outside funding agencies, the City must make a reasonable investment in the public restrooms.

Councilmember Kinghorn suggested that the City communicate with Charleston County that it has two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000) to invest against a million dollar (\$1,000,000) project and ask that they fund the balance.

The Administrator reminded the Committee that the FY16 budget includes one hundred one thousand dollars (\$101,000) for the design of the restrooms and ninety-five thousand dollars (\$95,000) for a dune walkover – some of which will be used for the handicap parking space at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Avenue beach access.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked if the existing public restroom had a footprint that was large enough to build a structure that would have a commercial aspect to it that, over the long-term, would help to fund it.

Chair Ward noted that the lot is only fifteen feet (15 ft.) wide; the Administrator did point out that the restrooms are built on two (2) lots.

In an effort to clarify what Councilmember Kinghorn was envisioning, Administrator Tucker said that the restrooms would be on the first elevation and the second elevation would be the business, keeping the elevation under forty feet (40 ft.).

Chair Ward expressed the opinion that, to build a structure as described, would not get any funding from Charleston County; Councilmember Kinghorn countered that possibly the County or the CVB would want a presence on the island and space could be leased to them there.

Commenting that the Committee had brainstormed on some good ideas, Chair Ward encouraged Councilmember Kinghorn to call members of County Council to advocate for the City's need for financial assistance for the public restrooms.

When asked about the next step, the Administrator stated that for her it was to get proof of participation by the state to PRT to make the current leadership aware of the prior leadership's actions.

Councilmember Ferencz asked at what point the City would concede that it was not going to get any financial assistance, but acknowledge the public restrooms must be replaced.

Administrator Tucker recalled that, initially, the City did not want to spend any money toward the restrooms, but now the City has already spent money and is morphing into recognizing that the City is going to have to earmark some money for the City's piece and use it as leverage for other participation. The feasibility of designing this building in such a way that it might have some kind of alternate use would require that the City re-engage Liollo and task them with determining the feasibility and how much it would increase the cost.

Councilmember Kinghorn stated that he would write up his ideas and present it to Administrator Tucker.

#### **D. Discussion of improvements to Public Works site**

The Administrator reported that the draft has been completed and has been sent to the County for their review to determine how much could be covered by NPDES funds; the project is close to going to bid.

#### **E. Update on sign for Mayor Carmen R. Bunch Park**

Progress has been made to the point that staff will be reaching out to the family with suggested dates for the unveiling of the sign; the sign is expected to be installed next week, depending on the weather. The sign will be on the City's property and not in the right-of-way.

#### **F. Status of Phase II Drainage**

The letters have been sent to the property owners where the City needs temporary construction easements.

### **6. New Business**

**A. Review of FY17 Capital Budget**  
**B. Discussion of 10-Year Capital Plan**

In order to produce the Capital Budgets, staff begins by checking what was completed in the current year; unfinished projects are typically rolled into the coming budget year and added to the projects assigned for purchase or replacement in the coming budget year. Once that list is compiled, the items to be replaced are evaluated to determine if they can be deferred for a year or must be replaced, and items that are in out-years are reviewed to determine if any need to be moved up to the coming budget year. For those items that are included in the FY17 Capital Budget are also assigned a replacement year in the future.

The Administrator stated that the flatbed Mack truck is being deferred for a second year, but the 2008 pickup truck deferred for the past two (2) years will be replaced in FY17. The hopper on the 2008 truck will be re-used on the new truck for another five-year (5 yr.) cycle. The two (2) single-walled, underground storage tanks have rolled forward for replacement in FY17 at a cost of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000); at the same time they are replaced, the fuel pump canopy will be replaced for twenty-thousand dollars (\$20,000). Sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) has been budgeted for radio replacements; the City has been setting aside money for several years for new radios. Having found a new source for the Mobi-mat used to stabilize the beach access paths, the amount budgeted has been reduced from twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000).

Under Special Projects, the drainage contingency has been budgeted at thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000), and the ditch/drainage work planned for FY17 is seventy-six thousand eight hundred dollars (\$76,800). The outfall to be constructed for Phase II drainage has been re-budgeted at three hundred fifty-four thousand two hundred fifty dollars (\$354,250). Another re-budgeted amount is the NPDES compliance project at the Public Works site for three hundred four thousand thirty dollars (\$304,030). The final item here is ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) for the remaining design and engineering for the phase II drainage project.

The funds being put aside for future asset purchases are one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) for garbage packers and a Caterpillar loader and two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000) toward the completion of the Phase II drainage project.

Administrator Tucker reminded Chair Ward that the Mayor had asked that Committee chairs be prepared to present the budget(s) under its purview.

The Administrator informed the Committee that, when the City signed the contract for the new kiosks for the municipal parking lots, the shortest length of time the vendor would commit to for delivery was six (6) weeks, but the installation could be sooner. This means that the revenue projected for the parking lots could be reduced because the lot will be open, but the kiosks would not be ready.

**7. Miscellaneous Business**

### **Annual Goat Island Dumpster Days**

With the permission of all of the tenants at the marina, this is an annual event where the Goat Island residents bring in dumpsters to the marina and fill them. The dumpsters will only be there for one (1) long weekend, but Councilmembers might get some complaints.

Next Meeting Date: 5:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup> in Council Chambers.

### **8. Adjournment**

**MOTION: Councilmember Kinghorn moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m.;**  
**Councilmember Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk