

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
9:00 a.m., Tuesday, November 1, 2017

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday, November 1, 2017 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Kinghorn and Ward, Chair Ferencz, Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts, Assistant Administrator Fragoso and City Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business. Since Chair Ferencz was losing her voice, she asked Vice Chair Ward to conduct the meeting.

1. Vice Chair Ward called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public were duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Chair Ferencz moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 4th, 2017 as submitted; Councilmember Kinghorn seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

4. **Department Reports for October 2017 – Director Pitts**

Trash Collection Tracking and Vehicle Maintenance Reports

The Director informed the Committee that Public Works personnel completed the beach cleanup after Hurricane Irma, and the Department incurred overtime cleaning up a contractor's debris on 5th Avenue. Personnel mowed the beach access paths from 21st Avenue to 53rd Avenue, as well as the bicycle path on Palm Boulevard from Breach Inlet to 9th Avenue. Charleston County assisted the disaster debris contractor in cleaning the stormwater collection boxes and piped ditch systems and lines at the following locations: Myrtle Avenue, 2908 Palm, 31st to 33rd Avenues on Palm Boulevard, 3008 Hartnett and collection boxes between 42nd and 43rd Avenues, 44th and 45th Avenues and 53rd to 57th Avenue. In addition, Eadie's Clean and Vacuum cleaned, vacuumed and restructured several ditches after Irma. The Director said that SCDOT was on the island at 52nd, 53rd and 54th Avenues on the non-ocean side of Palm Boulevard; Eadie's is working on the 41st Avenue ditch from Hartnett to Waterway Boulevard.

Administrator Tucker confirmed that the amendment to Eadie's contract has been executed and was in force.

In the month of October garbage collections were up and yard debris collections were down from the same month in 2016.

The vehicle maintenance budget was significantly impacted by the diesel motor rebuild for the Loadmaster truck that is twelve to fifteen (12-15) years old, which was a first generation of the re-generation type truck.

5. Old Business

A. Discussion of assignment of contract with Schupp Enterprises

Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that a couple of members of Council have asked if the Committee has evaluated the idea of bringing the job of removing garbage from the beach and the end of beach access paths in-house, and she told them that the possibility of doing that has not been studied.

Vice Chair Ward stated that he was not interested in bringing this function in-house, but that City Council should discuss it.

Councilmember Kinghorn asked how long an evaluation to bring the task in-house would take.

The Administrator indicated that she had not given the suggestion a lot of thought, but she recalled that the City had carried-out this function in the past in a relatively archaic way.

Director Pitts stated that, if Mr. Schupp's equipment was to break down, the responsibility to empty the beach barrels would fall to the Public Works Department; he opined that the job would take two (2) men two (2) days to complete using shuttle trucks with an attachment due to the number of cans now deployed.

Councilmember Kinghorn then posed three (3) questions, and they were as follows:

- Did the Director have any interest in bringing the job in-house?
- If there was interest, was it worth doing the analysis?
- Was it worthy of the analysis?

The Director responded that the job requires a rotating shift and a self-motivated individual with mechanical skills to operate Mr. Schupp's equipment, assuming the City could acquire it, and he thought it would be difficult to find such an individual. He also opined that to take on the responsibility would cost the City money.

Based on the discussions of reorganizing the Department, Councilmember Ferencz asked if doing this would create a fourth division with a rotating staff; the Department would have divisions for trash pickup, drainage, a contracts supervisor and general maintenance for all City-owned building and properties and another for beach trash pickup.

For Councilmember Kinghorn, the issues were that the City could save money and have a better product.

Since the City was considering reorganizing the Public Works Department, Councilmember Ferencz thought that an analysis would be appropriate.

Responding to Councilmember Kinghorn's question, Mr. Schupp said that the contract was for between ninety and one hundred thousand dollars (\$90,000-100,000) a year.

Administrator Tucker stated that the City has enjoyed the relationship with a contractor who lives on the island, was vested in the island and understood the departmental workings of the entire island. The concern was that, if the contract was assigned to someone who did not live on the

island and who was not vested in it or understood the inner workings of the island, the City will not get the level of service to which it has become accustomed.

In Councilmember Ward's opinion, such a person does not exist.

Mr. Schupp assured the Committee that the person with whom he was working would be as dedicated to meeting the needs of the City as he has been; he stated that this person was dedicated to doing the job the right way. This contractor would have several employees who could operate the equipment and that he was fully aware of the fact that the job would require rotating shifts. Mr. Schupp was confident that the City would not see any difference in the service it receives if this transaction were to be completed.

When Councilmember Kinghorn asked how Folly Beach and Sullivan's island handle trash removal from the beach, Mr. Schupp stated that Sullivan's Island has trash barrels only on the street and Folly Beach was the same.

Although eight (8) years remain on Mr. Schupp's contract, he indicated that he would like to conclude the sale of his business by the first of the year.

Councilmember Kinghorn suggested that the City have a trial or probationary period with the new contractor for about a year with an evaluation at that time; he thought it could be beneficial to both parties.

Administrator Tucker asked Mr. Schupp if he would talk with Mr. Eadie to learn if he would still be willing to accept the assignment of the contract if it were amended to allow for a trial period.

Since this Committee typically does not meet in December, the Administrator suggested that the Committee consider a motion to recommend approval of the assignment of a contract, subject to stipulations; in so doing, the Committee would have the opportunity to hear other people's opinions at the November Council meeting. A motion would open dialogue with the parties involved and also allow for the possibility of accomplishing the goal by the first of the year.

MOTION: Vice Chair Ward moved to recommend to City Council the approval of the assignment of the Schupp Enterprises conditional to the acceptance of certain stipulations; Chair Ferencz seconded.,

Vice Chair Ward then asked what stipulations would be considered, and the Administrator voiced her understanding of the preceding discussion that the assignment would be contingent upon an amendment to the contract to allow for a trial period of some period of time. She added that she thought a trial period must extend beyond six (6) months to know how the new contractor functioned in the busy tourist season; therefore the trial period should be a minimum of a year with an evaluation at that time.

Mr. Schupp stated that this past season he had seen a significant uptick in the number of visitors to the beach resulting in higher volumes of garbage that required him to run the route at both low tides each day.

Councilmember Ward cautioned that Council and the residents must have reasonable expectations of new contractor.

Mr. Schupp noted that the expense to the City for beach garbage removal could increase due to the number of “runs” required.

On the subject of an evaluation to bring the job in-house, Director Pitts stated that, with the projection for growth and the number of “runs” included in the base contract, the potential for added expense to the City would come based on the number of “runs” needed to achieve the same service.

With an evaluation at the end of a year, Councilmember Kinghorn opined that, if the new contractor has the confidence Mr. Schupp believes he has, the City should have confidence that he will stand behind his work.

VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Update on NPDES Project

The Administrator stated that, based on appearance, the project is nearly complete.

The on-site foreman told Director Pitts that they needed to have the walk-through and the gate and fence to finish the project. The Director stated that the wash-down was capable of operating, but, until it was released, the Department was not using it; he said that he has been trained on its operation. The City must accept the project, but Hitt Construction wants the wash-down facility manufacturer to come to Charleston to train them as well. The company has trained a person locally on the equipment’s operation since two (2) other municipalities have purchased the same unit.

C. Update on City compactor

Director Pitts has nothing new to report, but he did commented that Public Works’ personnel are pressure-washing the compactor and pad every Thursday.

Vice Chair Ward indicated that he has not heard anything additional from The Dinghy owner Brett Jones.

Having walked the site with Mr. Jones, Councilmember Kinghorn thought that some work needed to be done on the business side of the fence to keep it up.

The Director commented that some residential dumping continues to occur. And he thought it would be an ongoing issue, at least with the aesthetics.

Being specific, Councilmember Kinghorn reported that an uncovered grease pit is in an area under Mr. Jones’ control that needs to be addressed.

Director Pitts responded that the grease pit belongs to the Banana Cabana, and he would speak to the owner and correct it.

D. Update on Phase II Drainage

The Administrator reported that the project is progressing well; all of the underground infrastructure has been identified. The questions from residents have been handled very well by Civil Site Environmental to allay their concerns, CSE personnel and City staff also met with a group of concerned residents.

E. Update on replacement of underground storage tanks, timeline and cost

Although progress is being made, this task is moving slowly; the RFP continues to be refined and should be on the streets soon.

F. Discussion of personnel needs in Public Works

Administrator Tucker explained that Director Pitts and other personnel who have assisted in “filling the cracks” to do things that Director Pitts does not have the personnel to do have met to discuss the needs of the Public Works Department. The Administrator’s assessment is that the thing that the Department is doing successfully is the collection of regular garbage and debris; other than keeping the site cleaner, she does not think that anything needs to be done with that area of responsibility. For the Administrator, the one (1) area of weakness is no administrative support to track or follow up on resident requests for service, particularly in peak season with twice a week garbage pickup. She sees Public Works as acting reactively rather than proactively relative to drainage; she opined that someone needs to supervise City contracts to ensure that they are being properly executed, to supervise drainage activities and to handle general maintenance, for example, mowing the rights-of-way and beach access paths. She believes that the City must proceed with a plan to eliminate the need for the involvement of other departments or personnel from other departments and to respond to citizens’ requests and needs in a timely manner. The Administrator suggested that the time has come for an assessment of the Department and for the Personnel Committee and Council in its visioning meeting to discuss the order in which it wants to address an expansion of the Department.

Councilmember Kinghorn recalled, from last year’s visioning meeting, that the suggestion was made that an ombudsman was needed that would be the “go to” person; he envisioned someone who was resourceful, has a diverse skill set, and was responsive.

Chair Ferencz said that she was hearing about supervisors, but she questioned who would actually do the work.

The Administrator said that the work would be done by additional temp labor or City personnel, other than CDL drivers.

The Chair’s next question was where the City would house these additional people, and the Administrator indicated that the majority of their time would be spent in the field. When the Chair asked if a building should be included in the discussion, Administrator Tucker had not considered

a building because she thought it could be a roadblock, but it could be a consideration for the future. Since the City owns the lot behind the Public Works' site, it could be used for a building and not be objectionable to the neighbors; a building could also be used for additional storage for things being stored off-site currently.

Councilmember Kinghorn suggested that parking could be there to allow for the beautification along the main thoroughfare and expansion of the park.

Vice Chair Ward recommended tightening up the ordinance to require contractors to dispose of the yard debris they generate; to do that would reduce the workload without spending more money.

6. New Business

A. Discussion of blocked drainage ditches along Palm Boulevard due to driveway extensions

Administrator Tucker thought residents were confused about who to call for what; because the City has been strong in delivering services to residents, the City is the first called upon to get something done. Calling the City can often result in a delay since the ditches on Palm Boulevard belong to SCDOT, and, when a resident has a problem there, he/she should contact SCDOT. On occasions when SCDOT has been slow to respond and the City could quickly handle, the City will do the work.

Vice Chair Ward suggested that this type of information could be added to the City's website.

The Administrator explained that, if a resident has gotten an encroachment permit from SCDOT to put in a driveway, and, if the ability to put a pipe under the driveway crossing is allowed in the permit, the encroachment permit would include language that the property owner would be responsible for maintaining the pipe and keeping it clear. Too frequently, a property is sold and the new owner does not know that he is responsible for the pipe's maintenance.

B. Charleston County Intergovernmental Agreement – Drainage and streets maintenance

The Administrator informed the Committee that the City has received an agreement relative to its paying for County services, and she and the City Administrator from Sullivan's Island will meet with Charleston County on Friday to discuss it. She stated that she received an earlier version about three (3) months ago, and, after analyzing it, sent her concerns to Jim Neal, Director of Public Works for Charleston County; he responded that she should ignore that agreement because a new one was being written. The Administrator said that she was hopeful that her concerns would be addressed in the new agreement, but it contains some of the same concerns, for instance, how the County could go into the unincorporated areas of the County to perform a service yet go into an incorporated area to provide the same service, but require the municipality to pay for it. The Administrator's understanding is that the County looked at the history of the expense for what they have done for the City over a five (5) year period and, based on that, calculated the average cost of work done for IOP. According to the agreement, the City would

tell Charleston County at the beginning of the calendar year what it expects to ask the County to do in the coming year for which they would expect payment; the Administrator noted that Charleston County's rates are less than those charged by a contractor. In the meeting on Friday, she expects to get a better explanation about it and to decide whether it is a good or a bad thing.

In the past, work the City has asked Charleston County to do has been reactive, and the Administrator opined that it would be difficult to be proactive since the City does not know what might happen. Two (2) jobs currently on their to-do list are the drainage problem at the intersection of Waterway Boulevard at 41st Avenue as it goes into Intracoastal Court and the resurfacing of that road. In the past, the City has paid for materials, but not for labor when the County worked on the island. Administrator Tucker noted that County Council has approved this agreement; and the amount to be paid by the City is approximately twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000). The Administrator indicated that she does not know what the response would be if the City did not approve the agreement.

Councilmember Kinghorn suggested that the Administrator conference call with her counterparts throughout the County to fight the agreement.

In the Administrator's opinion, the basis for the number should be prorated on the basis of the volume of property taxes they are getting from the local governments. She also said that the County is pressuring the City to sign because they are expecting a list before the first of the year.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Vice Chair Ward expressed his dismay that Mr. Burke's drainage issues on 32nd Avenue were not included on the Agenda since it has not been resolved; he noted that he has been on the Committee for the past five (5) years and that items have stayed on the Agenda under Old Business until resolved.

When the Committee agreed to engage Civil Site Environmental (CSE) to do the engineering study, the Administrator thought the issue was resolved.

Responding to Vice Chair Ward's request for an update on the project, Administrator Tucker stated that, after the City Council meeting, the contract was executed with CSE; she stated that the City will not have an answers until the CSE evaluation has been completed. Although CSE got to work immediately, she does not have a projected completion date.

The Vice Chair requested for the item to appear on the January 2018 meeting agenda.

Next Meeting Date: 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, January 9, 2018

Since this was the last meeting of the Committee for 2017 and since Chair Ferencz chose not to seek re-election, Councilmember Kinghorn took a moment to thank her for her service to the Committee and to the community and wished her well as she retires from public service.

8. Adjournment

MOTION: Councilmember Kinghorn moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:54 a.m.; Chair Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:
Marie Copeland, City Clerk