

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

9:00 a.m., Thursday, November 8, 2018

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 9:00 a.m., Thursday, November 8, 2018 in Council Chambers of City Hall, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Buckhannon and Chair Rice, Interim Administrator Fragoso, Public Works Director Pitts, and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business. Councilmember Kinghorn was absent.

1. Chair Rice 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: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 4, 2018 as submitted; Chair Rice seconded and the motion **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

3. **Citizens' Comments – None**

MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to re-order the Agenda to address Item A under New Business; Chair Rice seconded and the motion was **UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED**.

6. **New Business**

A. **Consideration of Recommendation from the Planning Commission to award a contract to Thomas & Hutton for Phase III Drainage project – Presentation by Thomas & Hutton**

Mark Yodice of Thomas & Hutton distributed an abbreviated version of the information contained in the meeting packet; a copy of the handout will be attached to the historical record of the meeting. Rick Karkowski introduced himself as the project manager and the person who heads up Thomas & Hutton's Water Resources Department that deals with flood control projects, drainage and capital improvements for various municipalities; Hillary Aton was introduced as the primary designer and engineer on the project; and Mark Yodice oversees quality control and has a lot of experience on the island. Surveying would be done by Thomas & Hutton's surveyors led by Elliotte Quinn; utility relocations would be spearheaded by Ken Nagel; the GIS and information manager will be Brian Durham; and Jennifer Hayes will be the structural engineer. A few sub-contractors on the project will be Brian Shriver of Terracon who will be responsible for geotechnical; Will Salters of Terracon and Ned Fernandez of Arcadis who will handle permitting and grant funding advising; and Andy Ruocco of Terracon will work on wetlands and critical areas permitting and funding plus pursuing FEMA grants where available.

At this point, Mr. Karkowski reviewed Thomas & Hutton's understanding of the project as identifying the area on the back of the island to be sealed from the intrusion of tidal waters into the drainage system. In accomplishing that, they must design and permit drainage system outfalls that will seal the tidal water while allowing existing and future stormwater to exit. The system should be designed anticipating reasonable expectations of sea level rise, an increase of impervious surfaces on the island as well as a high level of soil saturation before storms. The

system design should be able to have kept out floodwaters associated with Hurricane Joaquin from damaging houses.

Ms. Aton stated that the 30th Avenue outfall consists primarily of storm drainage systems and ditches that direct storm drainage to 30th Avenue and north to the Intracoastal Waterway. The second water basin is very large and consists mainly of canals that direct drainage to a main canal heading north to the Intracoastal Waterway. The third basin served by the 41st Avenue outfall sends stormwater drainage through small drain systems to the ditch running along 41st Avenue.

Chair Rice commented that, since the RFP was advertised, she and the Public Works Director have found an area in Forest Trail without any stormwater infrastructure, namely, 267 Forest Trail and Sparrow that affect maybe ten (10) houses. She wanted to find a way to include the area in this project, and Mr. Karkowski assured her that they would have a proposal for the City to consider.

Director Kerr stated that the area in question was a microcosm for huge parts of the island; therefore, the plan was hyper-focused on the ends of the drainage systems. The Director added that once these areas were improved, the City would face a great deal of work within each basin to get the water where it needed to go.

Interim Administrator Fragoso suggested that the City might be interested in getting guidance from Thomas & Hutton on proposed policy changes that could address the impact of new development now and not fifteen (15) years down the road.

Mr. Karkowski said that the project would require a myriad of permits; they would be issued by Charleston County, SCDOT, DHEC-OCRM, SCE&G and the IOP WSC, to name a few. Thomas & Hutton believes that permits relating to the wetlands and critical areas will be the challenges; it could ultimately result in Charleston County and the City “ganging up on” OCRM. The outfalls improvements being considered will have a significant impact on critical areas and require significant permitting, and it has been anticipated in the plan and in the budget. An area of concern relative to critical areas was the potential requirement for mitigation, either turning a highland into a critical area or buying credits “which are incredibly expensive.”

They have identified many outside funding opportunities from FEMA in the form of hazard mitigation grants, pre-disaster mitigation grants, flood mitigation assistance, and economic development grants.

Mr. Karkowski concluded his remarks stating that Thomas & Hutton has the experience and expertise for this project as well as the resources.

Chair Rice asked about a timeline from design until completion, and Mr. Karkowski stated that they have developed a timeline that is aggressive and assumes that all of the players are cooperative and agreeable.

Director Kerr related the Planning Commission’s thought processes as getting Thomas & Hutton under contract to do the investigative work and come back to the City with several options with cost estimates from which City Council could choose the direction it will take. The City would then enter into another contract with Thomas & Hutton to do the design and engineering, permitting, etc., to make the project “shovel ready.” And, finally, the City would enter into a contract for the actual construction.

Since the first phase does not include any permitting, it should go relatively quickly; Thomas & Hutton would meet with the permitting agencies to discuss the project and get an understanding of their position on it. They feel this part of the project would take three or four (3 – 4) months.

Interim Administrator Fragoso stated that the City stresses to residents that open ditches are better than piped ditches so she asked Mr. Karkowski why they were advocating some piped ditches in their plans since they would reduce the capacity.

Mr. Karkowski agreed that open ditches were preferred, but they would be seeking a balance with costs, capacity, and maintenance; in some cases, pipes allow for better maintenance.

Councilmember Buckhannon commented to the fact that tidal flooding was a major issue in the area of 41st Avenue.

MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to recommend to Ways and Means the award of a contract to Thomas & Hutton for the first phase of the drainage outfalls project; Chair Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MOTION: Councilmember Rice moved to re-order the Agenda to address Item B under New Business at this time; Councilmember Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

B. Discussion of Memorandum of Understanding between the City and the IOP Water and Sewer Commission regarding the extension of public sewer throughout the island

The Interim Administrator noted that a draft of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was in the meeting packet and that it has not been completed. Mark Yodice with Thomas & Hutton has worked closely with the Water and Sewer Commission and former City Administrator Tucker on this document; the missing piece is the Master Plan that is expected to be completed in two to three (2 – 3) weeks. Once the document is complete, City staff will schedule another meeting with the Water and Sewer Commission to get their feedback on the MOU in order to finalize it. As noted in the draft document, IOP WSC has engaged the services of a rate consultant, but the City has not seen any of this work. Ms. Tucker also researched possible funding sources for this project.

Mark Yodice told the Committee that extending sewer to the entire island was presented as a phased project that could be combined with stormwater projects the City was planning to do; he added that packaged projects were easier to get funded.

4. Departmental Reports for October 2018 – Director Pitts

Director Pitts reported that, in October, garbage collection was down again and debris collections were nearly the same as October FY18. In his opinion, the highlight for the month was the work done at 42nd Avenue and 31A beach access paths where new matting was installed. Although he kept the old matting from 31A, he has chosen not to re-use it at this time. He also noted that, with the reduction in beach activity, the beach does not have the quantity of debris it had over the summer. In addition, Public Works personnel mowed the right-of-way between 21st and 41st Avenues; he stated that he had mowed all of the beach access paths to the point that he was comfortable without intruding on the OCRM area. Eadies has started the open ditch maintenance, particularly at 2nd Avenue and Carolina, other open ditches in the middle of the island and the 41st

Avenue ditch; they also cut the overhang. He commented that vehicle maintenance was well within budget with expenditures to-date at thirteen thousand seven hundred dollars (\$13,700) and at fifty-five hundred dollars (\$5,500) for the month that included a couple of major PMs and more to be done in this month.

5. Old Business

A. Update on Phase II Drainage project

The Interim Administrator reported that the crew is now working its way down 49th Avenue, and the additional crew will be starting their work soon. The updated schedule has the work being completed in mid-December assuming no additional weather delays occur. The Interim Administrator stated that she was keeping the Rural Infrastructure Authority up-to-date on the progress of the project; she reported that she and the Treasurer have started the reimbursement process since the City has exceeded the reimbursement amount of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) in construction expenses.

B. Update on removal/replacement of underground storage tanks at the Public Works site

Director Pitts informed the Committee that the only thing the City was waiting on was the updated application stamp of approval from DHEC UST in Columbia to be allowed to disperse fuel.

C. Update on trashcans with lids on the beach

The only update the Director had was that the apparatus used to empty the cans on the beach was compatible with the cans being looked at. He explained to the vendor that people will not open the tops which was the reason the Committee was looking at the cans with the opening on the sides. He also confirmed that the cost per can is three hundred dollars (\$300), and the vendor would not provide a can for testing; if the City wants to test a trashcan with a lid, it must buy it.

Chair Rice asked the Director if the vendor would bring one (1) of these cans to a meeting for them to look at and discuss; he stated that he would ask. She also opined that the City should go all in and replace all of the cans, not just nine or twelve (9 – 12); Councilmember Buckhannon thought replacement could be phased due to the significant up-front cost.

Director Pitts stated that he would like to see these cans deployed in the median on Ocean Boulevard in the commercial district, but he wanted to see it before acting.

Interim Administrator Fragoso thought that replacing the iconic yellow barrels could be emotional for some people who feel that they somehow define the Isle of Palms, and she thought that aspect should be a part of any decision.

Chair Rice voiced concern about the size of the opening on the top; Director Pitts stated that the opening on the cans he was seeing were on the sides and the top flips back for servicing. The Chair repeated her concern that, if the holes were not big enough, people would not stuff their garbage in them.

Chair Rice repeated her appeal to the Director to contact the vendor about bringing one (1) of these trashcans for the Committee to see.

D. Update on ditches and drainage issues

- **At 21st – 22nd Avenues**

The Director reported that this ditch was one (1) cleaned by Eadies including the pipe, and that has been done. He stated that the pipe would not be removed and the ditch opened up until he was instructed to do so by the Committee.

The Chair noted that, since this pipe was installed without authorization, it has generated major flooding in the neighborhood.

The Interim Administrator was of the opinion that David Stevens should look at the ditch and the City should get a proposal from Charleston County to actually remove the pipe.

- **At 31st - 32nd Avenue**

Director Pitts had nothing to report.

- **Between 30th and 31st on Hartnett**

The Chair commented that this was same issue as 21st and 22nd Avenues – a closed ditch that used to be open, and the residents want re-opened.

- **32 Thirty-second Avenue**

Interim Administrator Fragoso reported City staff had met with the property owners and engineers from Charleston County where the engineers laid out their findings and recommendations, as well as a tentative schedule of their approach to the improvements to the ditch.

This week the County has deployed a vacuum truck to clean the ditch followed by restructuring the ditch. The plan is to put some base material in the ditch to rebuild and to make the ditch more stable; this work will likely be done in January.

The Interim Administrator stated that the County has been very responsive; they appear to realize this is a priority since the property owner has been coming to the City for two (2) years to get some relief from the flooding in his property.

- **267 Forest Trail**

The status of this ditch was discussed with Thomas & Hutton.

E. Consideration of assignment of City's contract with Schupp Enterprises to JLG Enterprises

Interim Administrator Fragoso reminded the Committee that the Garrells attended the October committee meeting, but he did not speak since he was not included in the Agenda; at that time, he also had not gone on any test runs of the equipment with Mr. Schupp. Since then, Mr. Garrells has gotten his training on the equipment and the process, and Mr. Schupp has stated that he was comfortable that Mr. Garrells could do the work up to the City's standards. She also reported that she and Director Pitts have subsequently met with the buyers and gone through the City's contract for trash collections on the beach in detail, and the Garrells appeared to be most enthusiastic about taking over the contract. Their hope was to have everything done by January 1, 2019; although the Garrells are on vacation, Mr. Schupp reported that he was working with their attorney on the contract. The Interim Administrator reminded the Committee that they had previously discussed approving the assignment with a one (1) year probationary period.

Councilmember Buckhannon asked what the City's position would be if the Committee felt that they had not done the job to the City's satisfaction, and the City wanted to sever ties.

According to the Interim Administrator, the City would be able to cancel the contract for cause with no type of penalty. She noted that the Garrells live on the island and understand its idiosyncrasies; additionally they were on the beach daily due to their other business, renting beach chairs and umbrellas. She stated that she and Director Pitts were satisfied with their understanding of the City's expectations.

MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to recommend to the Ways and Means Committee the approval of the assignment of the City's contract with Schupp Enterprises to JLG Enterprise with a probationary period of 1 year; Chair Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

F. Consideration of expanding plastics ban and differences between the Isle of Palms' ordinance and the ordinances for Mount Pleasant and Sullivan's Island

Chair Rice stated that she had asked that this item be on the Agenda because she would like the Interim City Attorney to review these ordinances and to bring the differences to the Committee for consideration. She opined that it would be better if the three (3) local governments had the same prohibitions.

6. New Business

Items A and B were discussed at the beginning of the meeting.

C. Discussion of improving the beach access paths

Director Pitts stated that he had discussed two (2) access paths earlier, and he thought access 38A could become another handicap access on the island. The dune at the end is small and the path is relatively straight bringing the total number of handicap accesses on the island to eleven (11). Since he has the Mobi-mat in stock, the only things necessary would be shell sand and for Peterson Grading to level it; Public Works personnel would install the Mobi-mat. The Director did not think the expense would exceed thirty-five hundred dollars (\$3,500), and he was confident the money could be found in the budget to cover it.

Chair Rice commented that having more handicap accesses was something the residents were very vocal about wanting.

The Interim Administrator stated that she and Director Pitts were discussing ways to improve other beach accesses as well with the addition of sand shell and leveling.

The Director repeated that, in the beach season with twice a week garbage collection, garbage collection was all the Department could do; he was, therefore, suggesting that the City budget funds to hire someone to keep the beach accesses mowed in the summer at least twice a month.

D. Consideration of increasing the landscape contract to include some beach access paths during the summer months

Director Pitts initiated this discussion in the item above. Interim Administrator Fragoso stated that staff has asked The Greenery how much the City's expense would increase if they were to add the maintenance of certain beach accesses to the contract. They quoted the City four hundred fifty dollars (\$450) a month for twice a month maintenance of some beach accesses between March 1st and August 31st.

Responding to Chair Rice, the Interim Administrator said that staff was considering the ten (10) beach accesses most heavily utilized to begin, and funds were in the budget to pay for the increase. Director Pitts was thinking that the paths to be included would be the ten and twelve (10 – 12) foot accesses.

Councilmember Buckhannon stated that the only golf cart accessible beach access was at 23rd Avenue, and Director Pitts stated that he had mowed the areas where the golf carts park and turnaround. The Director said that this access would be on the list for The Greenery.

E. Discussion of Eadies work on 41st Avenue

Director Pitts told the Committee that the pipe under Marginal Road off 41st Avenue was broken; the Director explained that the pipe must be vacuumed out so that it can be camera-ed. He also noted that an original gate valve in the pipe that was in disrepair and would make the repairs to the pipe more expensive.

Interim Administrator Fragoso said that she has talked with David Stevens about this situation, and he said that this break and the asphalt deterioration could mean more problems down the pipe.

7. Miscellaneous Business

After a brief discussion, the Committee agreed to continue holding its meetings on the first Thursday of the month at 9:00 a.m.

Next Meeting Date: 9:00 a.m., Thursday, January 3, 2019 in the Conference Room

8. Executive Session – not needed

9. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Buckhannon moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:37 a.m.; Chair Rice seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk