

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**  
**4:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 12, 2008**

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2008 in the Public Works Building, 1303 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Present were Chairman Bettelli, Councilmen Cronin and Loftus, as well as City Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban, Livability Officer O'Donnell and City Clerk Copeland.

1. **Call to Order** and acknowledgement that the press and the public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.
2. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes** – February 13, 2008

**MOTION: Councilman Cronin moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 13, 2008 as submitted; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizens' Comments** - None
4. **Department Reports for February 2008** – Director Pitts

Director Pitts informed the Committee that the street signs ordered from Charleston County had not yet been completed. Referencing the Garbage Tonnage Report, the Director stated that the incinerator site indication was very low because the incinerator had been closed for the last two (2) weeks in February, so the garbage had to be taken to Bees Ferry Landfill. The Director commented that, since the department was small, he used the CDL drivers to perform and to supervise other small jobs in the afternoons when they returned from the incinerator. When the incinerator was closed and when it ultimately shuts down completely, the drivers would be on the road for so long that they would not have any time to perform or supervise these small jobs. He also reported that Eadies would complete clearing the ditches by the end of the week; they vacuumed the collection boxes this week, including the one (1) at the marina.

As to the Vehicle Maintenance Report, the Director stated that he anticipated being two to three thousand dollars (\$2,000-3,000) over budget for this fiscal year.

Councilman Cronin asked if the palm trees would be trimmed from 41<sup>st</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues; Director Pitts replied that they would be trimmed before the end of the fiscal year.

Councilman Cronin remarked that he had seen fourteen (14) or so men from Charleston County Public Works at the marina, but had not been able to determine why they were there. The Director explained that Chuck Jarmin of Charleston County Public Works had been displeased with work that had been done by Charleston County Public Works at the marina and had insisted that it be re-done.

Councilman Bettelli noted that two hundred (200) yellow garbage cans were staged for the Garden Club annual project of painting the palm trees that was planned for Saturday, March 16, 2008. Administrator Tucker reminded Director Pitts to let the members of the Garden Club know that he was there for assistance and to stay in contact with them throughout the morning. The Administrator informed the Committee that information about the project could be put on the City's website and that the Garden Club had distributed flyers.

## 5. Old Business

### A. Prioritize FY 2008-2009 Capital Budget

1	Drainage initiatives based on Eadies' Study (FY09 = Yr 4 of 5)	\$91,425
2	54-57 <sup>th</sup> drainage-add to savings reserve (current reserve=\$495,000)	80,000
3	Replace cantilever gate system	5,000
4	Replace air compressor (for heavy equipment tires)	5,000
5	Drainage contingency	50,000
6	Initiation of underground wiring using SCE&G non-std service fund	75,000

Administrator Tucker stated that the staff had prioritized the Public Works Capital Budget, but that it was subject to the Committee's input. The staff believed that the drainage work being done by Eadies was of primary importance as was continuing to put aside money for the 54-57<sup>th</sup> Avenues drainage project. The Administrator noted that a large portion of the City's non-standard service clause allocation would be directed toward the Public Safety Building and other initiatives related to it, leaving little for the Public Works Department; therefore, it was given the lowest priority.

One item that was not on the budget, but had been discussed by the Committee last year, was the Global Positioning System for garbage trucks that was being used very successfully in Clemson. The system allowed the garbage drivers to indicate locations of debris to be picked up later thus saving both gasoline and manpower. The Committee asked that the Administrator look into the cost for the system before they made any determination about including it in the FY 2008-2009 Capital budget.

Councilman Bettelli stated that he had no problem with the prioritization presented today. Director Pitts reported that the number of lease payments was correct as initially represented.

**MOTION: Councilman Cronin moved to send the prioritized Public Works Capital Budget for FY 2008-2009 to the Ways and Means Committee; Councilman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Review Ordinance Amendment on Roll-out Cart Timing.**

Administrator Tucker commented that the ordinance being offered was to change the time that roll-out carts could legally be placed on the street the night before pickup from 7 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to present the ordinance to City Council for approval at their next meeting; Councilman Cronin seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**C. Livability Officer - Sgt. O'Donnell**

Councilman Bettelli welcomed Sgt. O'Donnell to the meeting and stated that the Committee was asking for his observations on livability issues that relate to Public Works.

Officer O'Donnell related that he and Director Pitts had to credit Wild Dunes for their creation of the "great orange sticker," that was working well. (Example included.) The use of the sticker has satisfied many complainants, plus it has educated people. The violators, for the most part, have been humble, responsive and not often seen again. When there have been repeat offenders, the carts have been confiscated by Public Works and brought back to the office.

Officer O'Donnell explained that he has an excellent line of communication with the rental companies and that they know the City will not hesitate to cite the violators, the rental agency and the homeowner for violations.

Councilman Loftus was told about the report from the Police Department that was produced for the month of February that detailed Livability offenses. Officer O'Donnell reported that there is an ordinance on the books that was described by Judge Molony as "harboring a nuisance property;" this ordinance will be the basis for citing the homeowners and bringing them into court in addition to the violators. Rental houses could ultimately lose their rental/business license for repeated violations.

Based on the February Livability Report, Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that the highest number of violations were not in vacation rental properties, but were in property owners' properties – 2<sup>nd</sup> homes or homes that property owners or their families are using. She noted that Chief Buckhannon has the reports that backup the violations should any of the members want to see them.

Sgt. O'Donnell reported that the City was also embarking on an initiative to rid the island of abandoned vehicles. The City does not have an ordinance on the subject, but there is one (1) being written since the state ordinance lacks force.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. FY 2008-2009 Operating Budget**

For ease of reading, the Administrator pointed out the bold-faced print represented increases over the prior year's budget. The Administrator described how the staff had included the usual merit and cost of living increases in the salaries depicted, as well as a cushion to bring some employees to the minimum as recommended in the compensation study and some employees to fifty percent (50%) of the mid-point of the study. She informed the Committee that representatives of The Archer Company would attend the Ways and Means Committee meeting on Tuesday, March 18 where they would review how the study was done, the results of the study and offer recommendations on the implementation of the study.

Another significant increase was to *Vehicle fuel and Oil* where the estimated cost was \$3.10 per gallon for unleaded fuel and \$3.60 per gallon for diesel. The line for *Vehicle Maintenance* was increased because costs have been trending upward; Director Pitts pointed out that this line item had not been increased in the period he has been Director of Public Works.

Although the City was not anticipating an increase in property insurance rates, the insurer has been in town reappraising the City's properties. If the property values increase as expected, then the premiums would increase as well.

Having studied the way Director Pitts has been operating, the staff has not seen any way to reduce the figures for *Temporary Labor*.

The City has been generating increased debris yardage and the vendor has begun to charge a fuel surcharge; therefore, an increase in *Contracted Services* is required.

In total, the FY 2008-2009 Operating Budget has increased eleven percent (11%) explained Administrator Tucker; she commented that the increase could be attributed primarily to salaries, the associated benefits and the fuel costs.

Councilman Loftus stated that he was aware the Director Pitts worked hard to keep his costs down, but Loftus added he could not support such an increase without finding other areas to cut. He also pointed out to the Committee members that the City has a

large long-term debt that would be increasing with the beach renourishment project, not to mention the bulkhead replacement.

**MOTION: Councilman Bettelli moved to present the Public Works FY 2008-2009 Operating Budget to Ways and Means; Councilman Cronin seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**B. Request for Re-surfacing Cross Lane**

Administrator Tucker stated that she had initially received an e-mail inquiry and had asked the resident to put her concerns in a letter. The Administrator observed that the road was not in good condition before, but it has now been further degraded by construction traffic for the installation of the water line.

Director Pitts suggested that no decision be made until the construction is completed and the contractor has patched the road. The Director also noted that the Isle of Palms Water and Sewer Commission were instructed to patch the road to conform with SC DOT standards when the permit was issued. In addition, he informed the Committee that the re-surfacing that was done at the marina by Charleston County cost the City eleven thousand dollars (\$11,000) in materials alone.

(Mayor Sottile joined the meeting at approximately 5:20 p.m.)

Councilman Loftus suggested that the issue be studied for the next meeting.

Administrator Tucker commented that she would respond to the resident with the information that the City was getting an estimate and suggest that the resident also send a letter to the water company requesting that they would pay for re-surfacing the road rather than patching it.

**7. Miscellaneous**

Councilman Loftus asked if there were an ordinance on the books relative to hobie cats being left on the beach overnight. Councilman Bettelli answered that there had been discussion in the Public Safety Committee, but there was no ordinance in place currently.

Councilman Loftus then related that he had been told "by somebody who is supposed to be very knowledgeable about beaches" that removing a hobie cat that may be covered over with sand will not destroy the beach, but that the beach will renourish itself. Therefore, there should be no obstacles to removing the foreign structures that have been on the beach for a long period of time.

Councilman Loftus distributed a picture of a sign that was sent to him by a member of the Turtle Team and that is used at another beach in South Carolina that states the following:

SAVE OUR TURTLES

PLEASE FILL IN YOUR BEACH HOLES  
& DON'T LEAVE CHAIRS OR TENTS  
ON BEACH OVERNIGHT

He stated that he thought it would be a good way to educate visitors if placed at beach accesses.

Councilman Bettelli noted that an ordinance on the removal of tents and filling in holes was going to be presented to City Council this month. Councilman Loftus suggested that, once the ordinance was adopted, the City should proceed with the signs. Councilman Cronin made a brief reference to the number of signs already in place around and near beach accesses.

Councilman Bettelli remarked that there are many beach signs that need to be replaced; the signs are older and have become faded, making them very difficult to read. Councilman Cronin suggested that, possibly, some of the signs could be consolidated on a single pole or two (2) poles.

Councilman Bettelli explained that the area of ditches that have just been cleaned have an outfall on the golf course. Director Pitts was of the opinion that the City would get better drainage if Eadies were to sculpt the ditch at 30<sup>th</sup> and Waterway that runs under the golf cart bridge. Director Pitts informed the Committee that the City has a drainage easement there. Councilman Bettelli charged the Public Works Director to get an estimate for the work for the next meeting.

Councilman Bettelli stated that a couple that is building across from him had contacted him about an extra cigarette butt receptacle that they have; they are interested in placing it on the beach access path at 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Councilman Cronin asked who would maintain it assuming that it was placed there. The Committee agreed to accept the receptacle contingent upon the approval of the Public Works Director.

Next Meeting Date: 4:00 p.m., Monday, April 7, 2008.

8. **MOTION: With no further business to come before the Committee, Councilman Cronin moved to adjourn at 5:27 p.m., Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**