

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

4:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 4, 2012

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 4, 2012 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the Committee were members Buckhannon, Carroll and Loftus, City Administrator Tucker, Director Pitts, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland. A quorum was present to conduct business.

1. In the absence of a Chair, Administrator Tucker 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. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Councilmember Loftus nominated Councilmember Buckhannon as Chair for 2012; Councilmember Carroll seconded and Councilmember Buckhannon was unanimously elected.

Chair Buckhannon nominated as Vice Chair Councilmember Loftus; Councilmember Carroll seconded and Councilmember Loftus was unanimously elected.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 2, 2011 as submitted; Chair Buckhannon seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Citizens' Comments – None

5. Department Reports for November/December 2011 – Director Pitts

For the month of November, the focus of the Public Works Department had been completing the cleanup of the beach access paths and the bike path between Breach Inlet and 7th Avenue, as the result of a resident's request. In December, the concentration was on working with Eadie's on the ditches on 34th, Hartnett and Forest Trail.

Administrator Tucker noted for the new members that the City has a five (5) year ditch maintenance contract with Eadie's Construction; in each of those years, they identify certain open, vegetative ditches that need to be cleaned.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether the seventeen (17) street signs referred to in the report were new or replacement; the Director replied that these were replacement signs and that a total of thirty-one (31) have been taken or vandalized.

Director Pitts explained that vehicle maintenance costs have been tracked as long as he has been with the Public Works Department.

Councilmember Loftus asked for clarification on air dryers for the trucks; the Director explained that the large trucks have air brake systems and, with the temperature change, moisture collects in the system requiring that the air dryers be rebuilt each winter.

Household garbage has been tracked on a monthly basis for six (6) years; the tonnage trends are demonstrated in the bar graph and on a comparative numerical schedule. Director Pitts said he sees a correlation between the volume of household garbage and tourism funds the City receives.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether Director Pitts saw the reduction in household garbage tonnage as a by-product of increased recycling; the Director said there was certainly a connection to both recycling and visitors dining out.

The debris comparison refers to yard debris removed from the island.

Councilmember Carroll said that, in his campaign for Council, he heard nothing but good things about the Public Works Department.

6. Old Business

Update on Drainage Projects

Director Pitts reported that the work done on 21st Avenue had been completed before New Year's, and staff has submitted the paperwork to be reimbursed for the cost from stormwater fees.

Administrator Tucker explained that Charleston County serves as a steward of multiple sources of money for drainage-related activities. For instance, the stormwater fee is included on tax bills, and Charleston County collects and administers those funds which are to be re-invested in the community for drainage projects. While the fee has been in place for several years and the County has been collecting for several years, the City has asked for an accounting of said funds – which has not yet been provided.

The two (2) other sources of grant funds that the County holds on the City's behalf, i.e. Charleston Transportation Committee (CTC) funds and the Transportation Sales Tax (TST) funds. CTC funds primarily new projects for drainage improvements, sidewalks or surfacing previously unpaved roads; a separate fund provides funding for re-surfacing roads based on a computerized pavement management system. The Administrator recounted that a significant amount of CTC funds had paid for the 53rd to

57th Avenue drainage project that has been completed in this fiscal year; this drainage endeavor took from 2000 until 2011 to accumulate enough City and CTC grant funds for the project to become a reality.

Councilmember Carroll commented that many sidewalks on the island need repair or replacement and questioned what funding sources were available. Administrator Tucker said that different sidewalks are handled different ways. By way of an example, she noted that the trail along Waterway Boulevard was recently re-done through Transportation Sales Tax money, but those sidewalks are the purview of the South Carolina Department of Transportation (DOT). The City can notify them of sidewalks that are in need of repair, and the repair is their responsibility; if the City undertakes the repair, the City assumes liability for the sidewalk in the future.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether one of these sources would fund a bike path from 21st to 41st Avenue; Administrator Tucker said that was feasible. The issue would be how the City chooses to prioritize its requests for funding; additionally, a bike path would be an expensive project.

The Administrator noted that the City has a meeting with DOT next week to discuss reconfiguring the Connector to place a barrier on it, similar to the barrier on the Ravenel Bridge, to accommodate and protect bikers and walkers. If the project is accomplished, it will probably be funded from multiple sources, including Transportation Sales Taxes.

Assistant Dziuban recalled that the City has received notification that the letter requesting the City's list of projects will go out in January, and the prioritized request list is to be returned by March. Chair Loftus expressed the opinion that the requests should focus on projects that will most benefit residents of the island.

Based on feedback he has received from residents, Councilmember Loftus believes that bike lanes need to be a priority; he commented that cycling is becoming more and more popular and, as such, cyclists will become more and more of a traffic hazard. As an aside comment, Administrator Tucker explained that the only time that bike lanes can be enforced is when regulation bike paths exist on both sides of the roadway.

Continuing the update on drainage projects on the island, Director Pitts reported that the Lauden Street drainage project, which is funded by Transportation Sales Tax funds, has been completed. The Sparrow Drive project is about ninety percent (90%) completed. Chair Buckhannon commented that he was looking forward to a serious rainfall to see just how much the drainage projects will assuage the flooding issues on the island.

Councilmember Carroll inquired about effect of the drainage project on the dead-end streets on the north end of the island; Administrator Tucker responded that the project

area was 53rd to 57th Avenues. The Administrator continued that money was in the FY12 budget for engineering design for the next phase – from 46th to 52nd Avenue – of the drainage project; this is a second basin that will flow to another outfall. For the benefit of the new Committee member, Administrator Tucker explained that the City has justified entering into a sole source contract with Civil Site Environment because of their strong knowledge of the infrastructure within Wild Dunes and a good past working relationship with both the City and Wild Dunes.

If the Committee were in agreement, Administrator Tucker indicated that she would contact Dave Stevens about providing the City with the proposal for the design work associated with the 46th to 52nd Avenue project. According to the Administrator, approximately eight-six thousand dollars (\$86,000) is earmarked in the FY12 budget for engineering and design.

Councilmember Loftus questioned how two (2) private roads and the crossing of private property would impact the project; Administrator Tucker responded that the City would not be able to infrastructure on the private roads, 47th and 48th Avenues, but the project would likely lower the water table.

Referring to discussions with the engineer, the Administrator related that the design calculations may not support going to the drainage basin on the backside of Wild Dunes, assuming that Wild Dunes will allow the flow into that basin. The other option is to discuss the possibility of a retention pond on the Citadel Beach House property.

The Committee authorized the City Administrator to contact Dave Stevens to begin work on the engineering proposal.

7. New Business

1. Discussion of Paving Near Compactor in Municipal Lot

Administrator Tucker related that Cocoanut Joe's had contacted the City explaining that its employees were concerned about how unsafe it is taking the large trash cans from the business to the compactor at night due to the uneven surface and poor lighting. To validate his employee's concerns, the manager stated that he had taken the container to the compactor and found their concerns to be legitimate ones. He, therefore, was asking that the City consider using tourism or hospitality funds to correct the problem.

Assistant Dziuban and Directors Kerr and Pitts went to the site for an assessment and agreed that the walk is a treacherous one with a garbage container holding a couple of hundred pounds of garbage. Based on their findings, the City obtained an estimate of five thousand nine hundred twenty-five dollars (\$5,925) to grade out the area and install

a six (6) inch base with two (2) inches of asphalt on top matching to the existing grade; the total surface is one hundred (100) square yards. General Maintenance and Contract money is available in the Front Beach budget from the Municipal Accommodations Fee funds. Based on the legitimacy of the complaint and the risk that someone would be hurt moving the large cans from the business to the compactor, the staff believes that this work is a good use of Municipal Accommodations funds and would anticipate having completed before the season begins.

Director Pitts explained that the problem is that the casters on which this wet garbage is collected bogs down in sand or gravel. Fennell, now Carolina Waste, services the compactor once a week; if a path were to be established, the Carolina Waste truck would destroy it in a month's time. The best solution is to construct a pad that will support the weight of the truck.

Councilmember Loftus voiced concern over the damage that would be inflicted on the pad over the course of a couple of years requiring continued maintenance of it over and above the initial six thousand dollars (\$6,000). He questioned that the restaurants might have access to a different type of container to transport the garbage to the compactor, possibly as container with more substantial wheels.

Chair Buckhannon remembered that the individual line items in the budget were quite specific and pondered what would be eliminated to cover this project. Administrator Tucker noted that the amounts included in that line are estimated amounts that will be spent only if necessary, and she pointed out that she was not aware of any potholes that needed repair on Front Beach and the area of green space looks healthy and not in need of maintenance.

Director Pitts reported that the restaurant manager had tried a container with big wheels and a Rubbermaid product with casters.

Responding to Councilmember Carroll's question about damage to the pad from the trucks, Director Pitts stated that the pad, as quoted, is large enough that he does not foresee damage to it because all four (4) wheels will fit onto the pad evenly distributing the weight. The Director added that he thought the manager would be amenable to another type of container if he could locate one.

Administrator Tucker quoted from the manager's letter that he had spent in excess of five hundred dollars (\$500) in attempts to locate a container that can be easily maneuvered. He stated that employees reported twisting their ankles and wrenching their knees in getting the containers to the garbage compactor.

The Administrator commented that the initial request had been made in November, and staff had informed him that they would look into the problem; having done so, the City got the quote to construct a path and pad.

Councilmember Loftus suggested deferring a decision to next month giving the members of the Committee time to look at the area and to inquire how other businesses are dealing with the same issue.

Administrator Tucker added that the City very seldom receives requests from island businesses for assistance; therefore, she was making an extra effort to be responsive.

B. Update on 21st Avenue Storm Drain Report – discussed earlier.

C. Discussion of Recycle Bins

Councilmember Loftus had requested that this item be on the agenda having dialogued with Administrator Tucker for several months; he stated that he has received numerous complaints from residents about recycling bins being left in the right-of-way for extended periods of time. In his conversations with the Administrator, he was informed that the City does not have ordinances that would support the City taking any action.

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to have the rollout cart ordinance amended to include recycling bins.

Director Pitts expressed the opinion that parties at fault could find something else to block the right-of-way as has happened in the past.

Chair Buckhannon stated concern with legislating the entire island for the problem created by one (1) individual or household. Councilmember Carroll agreed and indicated that he preferred to handle the problem through education.

Chair Buckhannon remarked that the City would be included in single-stream recycling in the near future which would mean that all residences would have much larger containers with lids, as opposed to the current open containers. Councilmember Loftus countered that the single-stream recycling program does not address the problem of the containers at the curb; he reported that the Police Department have gone to this residence on at least two (2) occasions requesting that the bin be removed, and the resident has refused to comply.

The motion failed for lack of a second.

Chair Buckhannon agreed to drive around the island after next month's recycling pickup to see what is happening and to discuss the issue at the February meeting.

D. Consideration of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000 – None

8. Miscellaneous Business

Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that Director Pitts had directed a resident to Charleston County relative to some work that was done in the vicinity of 23rd and Cameron. The County responded in a timely manner, and the City received a copy of a very nice letter from the resident who was happy that the problem had been corrected.

Councilmember Loftus referred to an email with photographs of an oak tree at the Recreation Center that children love to climb and that has electrical lines running through its branches; he was very concerned that a child could be seriously injured. Administrator Tucker asked for confirmation that the tree is on City property and said she would look into it.

Director Pitts notified the Committee that the stormwater basin and underground piping at 3602 Hartnett must be repaired, and he has gotten an estimate of the repair cost from Eadie's. The Director said he preferred to have Charleston County do the repairs and that he anticipates them to be on the island in the next couple of weeks. The repairs are to the collection box and a series of eight (8) inch joints that have separated completely creating a safety hazard.

Chair Buckhannon stated that he would like for the members of the Committee to meet the Public Works' personnel; Director Pitts indicated that the work day was from 6:50 a.m. until 3:20 p.m. Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that for any two (2) members of the Committee to visit at the same time would constitute a meeting, or it could be noticed as a meeting if the Committee preferred.

Next Meeting Date: 4:00 p.m., Thursday, February 9, 2012 in City Hall Conference Room.

9. Adjourn

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 p.m.; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:
Marie Copeland, City Clerk