

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
4:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 7, 2012

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 7, 2012 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Carroll and Loftus, Chair Buckhannon, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban, Director Pitts and City Clerk Copeland; also present were Building Director Kerr and landscape architect Kelly Messier. A quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Buckhannon called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and public had been duly notified in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes

MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 9, 2012 as submitted; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. Citizens' Comments

Bev Ballow, 3009 Waterway Boulevard, stated that she and other residents wanted the Committee to discuss a plan for placing recycling bins on the beach.

4. Department Reports for February 2012 – Director Pitts

A. Maintenance Reports

Priorities for February had been the right-of-way landscaping and tree trimming; in addition, sand shell was delivered and spread on the inland side of Palm Boulevard from 21st to 41st Avenues.

Vehicle maintenance was a bit high for the month as a result of the purchase of six (6) tires at the end of the month. The Director pointed out that he is still within budget year-to-date.

B. Trash Collection Tracking Reports

Garbage collection for the month was similar to the same period last year. The Director noted that he had dropped the oldest two (2) years' data from the report, and it now displays historical data for a five (5) year period.

Director Pitts reported that a correction needed to be made to the January 2012 debris collection; four (4) additional loads went to 4B for a total of five (5).

The departmental reports are attached to the historical record of the meeting.

5. Old Business

A. Discussion on Recycle Bins

Chair Buckhannon indicated that this item relates to residents who leave the recycle bins in the right-of-way; he asked Director Pitts whether he had seen a change in the number of people who do this. The Director responded that he did not perceive this to be a widespread problem and that the introduction of the ninety-five (95) gallon single-stream barrels could lead to a County-wide ordinance pertaining to leaving the barrels in the right-of-way.

The Chair reported having researched the Charleston County website to determine whether they had any ordinances related to the times that recycle bins were to be placed for pickup and removed afterward, but had been unable to locate anything. He suggested contacting Charleston County about the issues.

Councilmember Carroll referred to Ms. Ballow's request for recycling bins on the beach on the island is a part of single-stream recycling. Director Pitts explained that the problem with recycling bins on the beach is that it would be a labor-intensive project for the City to ensure that everything in the bin was truly recyclable. Assistant Dziuban added that Charleston County will not accept the materials unless everything is recyclable; there can be no stray diapers or food waste, for instance. Therefore, the City would be tasked with sorting through the beach recycling bins before the bins were emptied by Charleston County.

Councilmember Loftus inquired about a research source to learn how other beach communities deal with recycling on the beach; Assistant Dziuban commented that she had fielded a query from Myrtle Beach today on that subject.

Chair Buckhannon said that this was a subject that the Committee would continue to study.

Councilmember Loftus clarified that he saw the topic as twofold, i.e. recycling on the island and recycling on the beach. He also reminded the Committee that the subject had been placed on the agenda in January to address one (1) particular resident who uses his recycling bin to prevent people from parking in the right-of-way at his resident on Palm Boulevard. Councilmember Loftus noted that the police have spoken with the resident, but he has not been persuaded to roll the bin onto his property, and citizens do not understand why the problem cannot be resolved.

B. Prioritization of Projects Greater than \$250,000

The Committee was quick to agree that the first priority was the 42nd to 52nd Avenue drainage project and that the second would be bike paths from Breach Inlet to 57th Avenue. Discussion on the bike path involved approaching the issue in phases, making a formal request to Charleston County and including the engineering for the project in the budget.

As a result of further dialogue, the Committee reached a consensus on the third priority as segregating and supporting the replacement of the lights at the Recreation ball fields from the reconfiguration of the ball fields. The fourth selection was any phase of the under-grounding of power lines as preparation for severe storm events; Chair Buckhannon commented that the City would finance along with the SCE&G Non-standard Service Funds. The fifth priority was increase of the Disaster Recovery Fund.

C. Discussion of Ingress/Egress of Public Works Site

Although this project falls under the purview of the Real Property Committee, the topic is being brought to this Committee as a result of the reconfiguration of the ingress/egress to the Public Works site. Kelly Messier, the landscape architect hired by the City, is present to respond to any questions or concerns about her recommendations for the site; Assistant Dziuban stated that staff had asked Ms. Messier to investigate a change to the ingress/egress in hopes of eliminating the trucks entering the site from Palm Boulevard. The conceptual drawings were displayed to the Committee for review; the drawings show an angled entrance to Public Works further down 13th Avenue that circles to the present ingress. Assistant Dziuban explained that the turn radius of the City's large emergency vehicles has been taken into consideration and this configuration is workable for all.

Councilmember Loftus asked whether the Public Works site was expanding; Director Pitts explained that the site was expanding into the area previously filled by the dog kennel and police garage. The area to the rear is not expanding, and a natural buffer would exist between the Public Works site and the properties behind it.

Responding to Councilmember Loftus' questions about the type of surface for the driveway, the Director said that it could be either asphalt or concrete, whichever was more feasible.

Councilmember Carroll asked if the entrance from Palm Boulevard would be eliminated, and Assistant Dziuban answered that Ms. Messier had advised that people parking in the lot created at the corner of 13th Avenue and Palm Boulevard should have an exit without having to perform a three-point turn in the confines of the lot to exit as they entered. Councilmember Loftus countered that turning onto Palm Boulevard for visitors unfamiliar with the island would be a safety hazard. In addition, the Palm Boulevard entrance would provide an emergency entrance for access to the fuel station at the Public Works site when necessary.

Councilmember Loftus noted that the costs for the project have not been discussed; Assistant Dziuban stated that the project budget would be present to the Real Property Committee at their meeting of March 13th.

Before moving forward to *New Business*, Chair Buckhannon asked about the status of the pad being constructed at the compactor. Director Pitts responded that the gravel had been excavated and the concrete was to be poured on Friday; he has advised Front Beach businesses to use the J.C. Long entrance until Sunday. Carolina Waste will empty the compactor on Thursday before the concrete is poured.

6. New Business

A. Review of Operating Budget for FY 2012-2013

Assistant Dziuban indicated that there are only a few changes to the Public Works operating budget; they are bolded to be easily identifiable. Universally, the City's operating budgets have a three percent (3%) merit pool, which affects the FICA, retirement and workers' compensation lines as well. In addition, as foreshadowed last year, the addition of a Facilities Maintenance

position is included in the Fy13 operating budget. Assistant Dziuban explained that five (5) of the City's properties – City Hall, Public Works, the Public Safety Building, Fire Station 2 and the public restrooms – do not have anyone to perform regular or proactive maintenance. The City's current practice for maintenance on these buildings is to address problems when seen or identified to call a vendor to perform the needed service; at times, members of another department are called upon to assist with minor maintenance issues.

Other increases include:

Memberships and dues	450
An increase of \$50 to reflect actual expense.	
Uniforms	7,425
In the past the City has purchased hoodies for the full-time employees; this has not been done for three (3) years. The Director stated that they deserve the protection from the weather and for safety purposes.	
Medical and lab supplies	3,250
An increase of \$250 for the replacement of safety gloves and glasses.	
Temporary Labor	169,335
The increase is based on current usage of temporary workers, i.e. 6 temps for 4 days and 7 temps for 1 day.	
Garbage cart procurement	7,600
Increase of \$10 per barrel	

Councilmember Loftus complimented Director Pitts by stating that the Public Works Department had "performed better than any department in the City" based on the run rate for the past five (5) years; he thanked the Director for the "exceptional work" he has done.

The Councilmember said that he could not support any increase in personnel because he did not want to create a situation where taxes had to be increased. He stated that the only way he would support the Facilities Maintenance position would be if another position in the City was eliminated.

Councilmember Carroll asked Director Pitts if he thought this was a need for the City, and he also asked for input from the department heads on the need. The Director responded that the City now responds reactively, and he does see the benefit of someone who would have a monthly checklist for each building. He commented that the replacement of the windows in City Hall could have been avoided if the City had someone who checked the window sills routinely; he added that he and the Building Department are called upon to handle issues related to the public restrooms.

Councilmember Loftus continued with a question about the budget projection for overtime since actual expenses through seven (7) months of the year have totaled twenty-five hundred seventy-six dollars (\$2,576). In his opinion, the budget should more nearly reflect the actual expense incurred.

Another issue for Councilmember Loftus was how the “electricity and gas” line item could be less than half of the FY11 expense through seven (7) months of the fiscal year. Director Pitts said that he thought that the difference was related to an audit that SCE&G had done of the streetlights on the island, which the City is double-checking.

The Councilmember also was questioning why the “maintenance and contracts” expense was again nearly five thousand dollars (\$5,000) when less than two thousand dollars (\$2,000) had been spent in FY 11 and only six hundred dollars (\$600) had been spent year-to-date in FY12. Director Pitts reported that the software for the fueling system had not been renewed because it is outdated, and the City budgeted for a new fuel system in FY12. Assistant Dziuban stated that the composition of that line item be available for the next meeting.

Councilmember Loftus reminded the Director that he had mentioned that, with single-stream recycling, he anticipates residents of the island wanting smaller rollout carts; therefore, he wanted the price for smaller carts as well. Director Pitts indicated that he did not anticipate much savings on the forty (40) gallon carts over the ninety (90) gallon carts.

Councilmember Carroll voiced curiosity about the budget of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) with only eight hundred dollars (\$800) being spent year-to-date. The Director explained that another sign order in this budget cycle would probably not exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000); he added that most expensive part of sign replacement was the poles; the caps and tees are twelve dollars (\$12) each. Director Pitts indicated that he reuses the caps, tees and poles whenever possible, but he has to be able to replace when vandals attack. The dollar amount is a placeholder for the worst scenario.

Director Pitts explained that the number of truck loads has been halved by going to Bees Ferry over 4B resulting in a cost savings to “contracted services.” He expressed the desire to measure the savings from going to Bees Ferry in comparison to the service costs of going to 4B.

B. Discussion of Charges to Committee from Joint Meeting

1. Island-wide Signage

Chair Buckhannon initiated the discussion noting that the City Administrator had received a response from SCDOT about the recommendations he had made relative to parking signage overhead and on the roadway; Assistant Dziuban said that she had not seen the communication, therefore, could not respond to its content. Based on his understanding, the Chair said that DOT was not the holdup; DOT has given the City the guidelines to decide what it can do within that framework. Whatever the City decides to do relative to this signage will still have to be approved by SCDOT before any action can be taken. The Committee agreed that the City should proceed with these, seemingly, simple signage solutions to direct visitors to the commercial district for parking as soon as they arrive on the island.

Councilmember Loftus inquired about whether the City had gotten any feedback from residents on the “No Parking Here to Corner” signs that have been put up on Palm; Assistant Dziuban indicated that the City has not gotten any reaction from citizens to her knowledge.

Since it rained most of the previous weekend, Director Pitts thought the City might get input after the coming weekend when spring break begins. Councilmember Loftus thought that members of City Council would be interested in knowing how the new signs are being received.

Councilmember Loftus expressed his understanding of the charge to the Committee relative to signage as one of making recommendations to Council for a component of a parking program. The recent new signs could be considered as Step 1, and Step 2 should be signage to take parking out of the neighborhoods. He expressed a desire to eliminate parking on Charleston, Carolina and the finger streets and to force parking to the public lots. He suggested studying the impact of the new restrictions on parking on Palm and the elimination of parking in the neighborhoods for a year; in his opinion, these policies were more acceptable than rushing to a pay-to-park system. The Councilmember thought the new signage should be used in conjunction with residential parking stickers that restrict the vehicle to a specific address.

Chair Buckhannon noted that the rights-of-way are only ten (10) feet wide making it very difficult for vehicles to park safely.

Councilmember Carroll repeated his opinion that the City needs professional advice on the parking issue.

When the topic of parking on Ocean Boulevard was introduced, Councilmember Loftus voiced his opinion that parking should exist on Ocean Boulevard to the extent of a specific number of parallel parking spaces on the ocean-side should be created to meet the requirements of the Beach Management Plan. This action would take the cars off Carolina and Charleston.

According to Director Kerr, the parking mandates of the Beach Management Plan are met in the commercial district and a mile in either direction. The Plan would require six (6) spaces at each of the beach accesses at 2nd, 3rd and 4th Avenues on Ocean Boulevard, and the City would allow only stickered residents' vehicles to park on the avenues.

Chair Buckhannon inquired of Director Kerr the number of parking spaces required to be in compliance with the Beach Management Plan with parking eliminated on Carolina, Charleston and the avenues; Director Kerr said that basically the number was zero (0) because the Plan is met through 5th Avenue. Beyond that, the Plan calls for six (6) spaces per beach access path for an eighth (1/8) of a mile in either direction or twenty-five (25) for a half (1/2) mile in either direction; therefore, six (6) spaces at each of 2nd, 3rd and 4th Avenues will suffice. The Director informed the Committee that a standard, parallel parking space is required to be twenty (20) feet long.

Director Kerr also indicated that the parking battle that must be won is not with the Beach Management Plan, but with SCDOT. He recounted that, early in the Planning Commission's deliberations on parking, a representative of DOT attended a meeting and made it very clear that the City could change from perpendicular to parallel parking if the action was in the name of safety. But to make that change to eliminate or reduce parking would be allowed. A member of the Commission at that time was an attorney who researched the issue and, in his legal opinion, the City could fight that interpretation in court and prevail due to the language in the state

statute. According to Director Kerr, the highway department has been very clear that the City cannot eliminate parking spaces that now exist.

The previous dialogue caused Councilmember Carroll to repeat the need for professional assistance – someone who knows the nuances of SC DOT.

Councilmember Loftus remembered the legal opinion being that Isle of Palms, as a community, has the right to make the determinations on how to manage parking. He voiced the opinion that the City should be in a position to tell DOT what will be done rather than ask their permission.

Councilmember Carroll was in favor of going from perpendicular parking on the numbered streets to parallel parking for safety reasons and no parking on Charleston and Carolina.

Assistant Dziuban commented that the parking on the numbered streets today is primarily parallel. Director Kerr described parking on those streets as a “free-for-all,” in that, if it fits, it is parked.

Councilmember Loftus suggested that parking be addressed street by street with no parking on Charleston and Carolina; he recommended squeezing the parking availability forcing people to the municipal lots and giving relief to the island’s residents.

Director Kerr noted that Carolina is far enough from the beach accesses that it is not included in the Beach Management Plan, but SC DOT will be a problem.

Councilmember Loftus remarked that the residential parking decals would be important to implement resident only parking on Carolina and Charleston; he would like to see the program in place by April 2013. Director Kerr commented that tying the parking changes to a decal system complicate matters for the City; Assistant Dziuban noted that the parking decals will require more enforcement from the Police Department. Primarily parking enforcement is done by the Beach Services Officers in the summer months because patrol officers are too busy responding to emergency calls, and, of course, any system is not effective if not enforced.

Director Kerr suggested getting agreements from the residents of Charleston and Carolina that no parking, including the residents, is better than parking yet having the problems continue would avoid the decal system and streamline the suggestion a great deal. The issue then becomes one of completing the paperwork for DOT and signage.

Philosophically, Councilmember Loftus summed up the discussion as the Committee desirous of restricting parking in the neighborhoods with a means of managing it and addressing public parking on the streets and avenue on a street-by-street basis.

B. Path at Citadel Beach Club

Director Kerr explained that the Planning Commission’s goal was finding available space that would not be offensive to the property owners where cars could go to satisfy the Beach Management Plan in exchange for eliminating vehicles elsewhere. The situation is that 47th and 48th Avenues are private roads; twenty-five (25) spaces exist at 42nd Avenue; at 56th Avenue,

vehicles are accommodated on the Palm Boulevard right-of-way. The concept was to allow cars on Palm Boulevard adjacent to the Citadel Beach Club's fence on the right-of-way and to give them access to the beach with a walkway along the edge of the Citadel's property. To do this would likely entail the installation of a new fence on their property and a corral directing people to the beach which would allow approximately twenty (20) vehicles in that section of Palm Boulevard. If this could be accomplished, three (3) areas of parking would exist at the northern end of the island and parking could be eliminated at the finger streets.

The Director stated that the Citadel would need to grant the City an easement.

Councilmember Loftus noted that the Citadel has a private beach, and he did not envision them opening it up to visitors.

Director Pitts commented that the residents of 48th Avenue have serious flooding issues, but they will not be included in the newest phase of drainage infrastructure because the road is private. Therefore, the opportunity of inclusion in the drainage may be the enticement for them to deed the road to the City which the City could then include in a parking management plan.

Director Pitts' suggestion provides the Committee with a fallback option assuming that the Citadel Beach Club is not receptive to granting an easement.

3. Obstructions in the Right-of-Way

Assistant Dziuban reflected on the fact that this topic has been on the table for quite some time; many of the obstructions in the rights-of-way are old and expensive. The rights-of-way are state-owned, and the state says that the rights-of-way cannot be obstructed, but the state does not have an enforcement mechanism in place or they choose not to use it. The City could pass legislation to increase its ability to enforce the obstructions, but past Councils have not wanted to take said action because it would be most unpopular.

Chair Buckhannon stated his opinion that a prime area of concern is Palm Boulevard between 21st and 41st Avenue. People appreciate the depth of the right-of-way on the inland side of Palm Boulevard, but fail to recognize that the same amount of right-of-way exists on the ocean-side. He pointed out that a quasi-ditch exists on the ocean-side and suggested that piping the ditch would open up Palm to a visually deeper right-of-way.

Councilmember Carroll commented that the effects of new signage and the possibility of parking in the area of the Citadel Beach Club could make significant enough changes to make the obstructions in the rights-of-way a non-issue.

Councilmember Loftus expressed the opinion that the City had to be vigilant about allowing no more encroachments into the right-of-way. Director Kerr explained that there is no mechanism in the City Code for enforcement; ordinances were introduced several years back, but were not adopted. The Director noted that the City Attorney has given an opinion on the subject stating that a traffic officer could write a five dollar (\$5) ticket for blocking the right-of-way.

Councilmember Loftus believes that the City must have the force of law to enforce its regulations; therefore, he would like for City Council to consider an ordinance empowering enforcement. Staff posed the question about the legality of an ordinance that would only enforce against new encroachments and did not enforce against all encroachments.

Director Kerr explained that, at the present time, all encroachments into the DOT right-of-way are reported to DOT, and they deal with the most egregious violations.

In concluding the discussion, Chair Buckhannon asked that the earlier ordinance be brought back to Council for review and charged Director Pitts with resolving the issues related to the quasi-ditch; Director Pitts stated that the piping of that ditch will require SCDOT approval.

C. Consideration of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000

Consideration of Award of Contract to PermaTrak in the amount of \$43,290 for Materials for Replacement of Public Restrooms Beach Access

Assistant Dziuban reminded the Committee that eighty thousand dollars (\$80,000) has been included in the FY12 budget for repair or replacement of dune walkovers; after evaluating the walkovers on the island, Directors Kerr and Pitts agreed that the walkover behind the public restroom is most in need of replacement. The existing walkway is pine, but the recommendation from staff is to replace it with PermaTrak, which is a concrete material that is environmentally friendly and requires a minimum of maintenance. This walkover is the most trafficked on the island.

Chair Buckhannon asked whether the PermaTrak would be for the deck or for the system; Director Pitts responded that the entire system would be PermaTrak.

Councilmember Loftus asked how many walkovers are on the island; Director Pitts answered that there are four (4). The Councilmember followed up by asking if Director Pitts intended to use PermaTrak to replace all of them or was the material being considered for this walkover due to the volume of use; the Director said that the latter was true. He further questioned whether the PermaTrak had been approved by the regulatory agencies; Director Kerr said that it had been approved from a materials standpoint, but staff is working through the elevation over the dunes with OCRM. Director Pitts explained that the issue with OCRM is the primary dune issue.

When asked if the product had a longer lifespan, Director Kerr stated that the product was actually concrete; Director Pitts described it as a "Lincoln log" concrete. The projected lifespan is forty to fifty (40-50) years; the City currently gets four (4) years from pine.

Other areas with close proximity to the City that have used this material are in Hilton Head, Nashville and Myrtle Beach.

MOTION: Chair Buckhannon moved to recommend to Ways and Means the award of a contract in the amount of \$43,290 to PermaTrak for materials for the replacement of the public restrooms beach access; Councilmember Carroll seconded.

Although the labor costs for this endeavor are currently unknown, staff is confident that the walk-over can be replaced using the PermaTrak under budget.

Councilmember Loftus expressed reluctance in approving this product because it is not in widespread use.

VOTE: The motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

7. Miscellaneous Business

Councilmember Carroll asked if the catch basis at 35th Avenue and Hartnett has been replaced; Director Pitts said that Charleston County has not yet completed the work.

Next Meeting Date: 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, April 10, 2012 in City Hall Conference Room.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: Chair Buckhannon moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m.; Councilmember Carroll seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland
City Clerk