

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**  
5:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2015

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was called to order at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, October 7, 2015 in the City Hall Conference Room, 1207 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Councilmembers Ferencz and Loftus, Chair Ward, Administrator Tucker, Assistant Administrator Fragoso, Director Pitts and Clerk Copeland; a quorum was present to conduct business.

1. Chair Ward 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. **Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of September 8, 2015 as submitted; Councilmember Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. **Citizen's Comments – None**

4. **Departmental Reports for September 2015**

**A. Vehicle Maintenance and Trash Collection Tracking Reports**

Director Pitts reported that the focus of work in September had been cleaning the beach paths; he stated that the work had not been concentrated in one (1) specific area of the island but had been done so as to best benefit the residents. In this process, he has found that the City's new skid steer will do the job it was purchased to do.

Maintenance on the vehicles has been nearly caught up, but the Director plans to buy six (6) tires in October; expenses through two (2) months of the year are on-target.

Debris collection has finally gotten caught up and was slightly ahead of last year. The reduction that had started in August has continued into September; the Director still believes that the City can reduce its twice a week garbage collection in 2016 by two (2) weeks, i.e. start one (1) week later in the spring and end one (1) week earlier in the fall.

**B. Discussion of vehicle and hopper purchase**

Director Pitts stated that he has received an email from the vendor that the factory now recommends the Ford F350 truck for the six yard (6 yd.) body that is also on the F250 he now has; the factory is recommending the Ford F350 truck due to the chassis and the weight. The state contract pricing for the F350 truck is twenty-eight thousand four hundred sixty-eight dollars (\$28,468) with deductions for accessories the Director does not need and the addition of steps; the amount budgeted for this purchase was forty-four thousand dollars (\$44,000).

Since the Director is currently using the Ford F250, Councilmember Loftus asked whether there had been any problems with the chassis, and the Director replied that he had not. Councilmember Loftus pointed out that the more expensive vehicle would have a higher insurance premium and

would, likely, use more fuel. The Councilmember asked that further discussion be deferred to the next meeting when Director Pitts would have more information.

**5. Old Business**

**A. Update on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue handicap parking space flooding**

Administrator Tucker reported that she has continued to pursue getting Charleston County to repair flooding issue at the 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue handicap space; the same type of handicap space was put at 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue about the same time and it also floods with a heavy rain. The recommendation from the County has been to submit a request for correction of these problems on the City's next request to the Transportation Sales Tax (TST) Committee; they assured the Administrator that such a request would not take funding away from the other priority projects because it would come from a different "bucket" of money.

**B. Update on NPDES improvements at the Public Works site**

Mark Yodice from Thomas and Hutton was present to review the costs and design options they have produced for the NPDES improvements at the Public Works site; the options for consideration were included in the meeting packets. The options range from "a Cadillac to a Chevrolet," and, accompanying them, are the advantages and disadvantages of each selection. Mr. Yodice described Option A as a full service drive-through wash-down area with overhead wash and rinse arches; it would also have a hand wash and an automatic undercarriage and side wash. Option B, also a drive-through, does not have the washers on the side, but does have the under-carriage and hand wash; it is considerably less expensive, but is only a hand wash. Option C, still a drive-through process, has a smaller footprint, is less expensive and is a hand wash only. Option D is a hand wash only and the truck would have to be backed into the wash-down area. Common costs for all of the options total one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) and include the removal and construction of the new driveway, an electric gate, and the white goods building installed. The cost of the options for the wash-down station are as follows:

Option A	\$688,500
Option B	536,500
Option C	448,500
Option D	448,500

Expressing his preferences, Director Pitts said he was not interested in Option A, but would support either Option B or C; he wanted the hand wash and questioned the need for the under-carriage wash for the three (3) Public Work's vehicles that go on the beach and for the vehicles from the Police Department that go on the beach.

Councilmember Loftus asked Administrator Tucker for the amount included in the FY16 budget for the NPDES improvements, and she informed him that the budget was three hundred four thousand thirty dollars (\$304,030).

Mr. Yodice quoted a local contractor who said that “contracting prices are white hot right now,” i.e. they are getting a lot of money. Contractors are extremely busy; some are not bidding jobs

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and those who are bidding have increased their pricing significantly. Mr. Yodice said that he does not anticipate any downturn in pricing until maybe June or July 2016 at the earliest.

Based on recent conversations with Charleston County about these improvements, Director Kerr indicated that they acknowledged that the City’s NPDES fund has been growing as the plans have been developed and now contains about three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000). The Director reminded Committee that these funds can only be spent to reimburse the City for the stormwater portion of the project, and he will be required to explain why/how each piece is related to stormwater. The Director stated that he thought the argument could be made that the entire project is stormwater related except the gate, driveway and fence are truly stormwater-related.

Responding to Councilmember Loftus, Director Pitts said that the undercarriage of the three (3) Public Works vehicles are washed by hand, and the Police Department has the attachment to wash the undercarriage, but he was unsure if they were able to get completely under the vehicles.

Councilmember Loftus questioned that the City could get an additional year’s use from the Police Department vehicles if they could thoroughly clean the undercarriage of the vehicles.

Councilmember Ferencz noted that she has never heard of issues with the undercarriage of cars when the time comes for their replacement.

Administrator Tucker reminded the Committee that the issue with this project is more that the City has been washing vehicles, most particularly Public Works vehicles, that are not only very dirty but also contain lubricants, and the runoff is going directly into Hamlin Creek. The issue is to find a way to eliminate that.

The Administrator explained that the City was in a place where, in order to progress, staff needs input from the Committee on the planning of the design.

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to proceed with Option C, not to exceed \$448,500; Councilmember Ferencz seconded.**

Councilmember Ferencz asked where the water would go on design Option C; Mr. Yodice explained that the water would be contained in a center channel and some would be recycled.

Councilmember Loftus thought that Option C offered the best work flow for the Department.

When Chair Ward asked how much the project was over budget, he was told that the budget is short two hundred ninety-four thousand four hundred seventy dollars (\$294,470).

Since this would be an EPA issue, Councilmember Loftus asked if there might be some federal money for which the City could apply.

**AMENDMENT: Councilmember Loftus amended his motion to not exceed \$598,500; Councilmember Ferencz seconded.**

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When asked where the money would come from, Administrator Tucker reiterated that staff and Thomas and Hutton need input on what to design, but staff needs to do some analysis and get back with the County.

Councilmember Loftus withdrew his motion and amendment, and Councilmember Ferencz withdrew her second on the motion and the amendment.

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to proceed with the design presented as Option C; Councilmember Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**C. Update on obstructions in the rights-of-way**

The Administrator stated that she had nothing new to report.

**D. Update on golf cart path between 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Island Center**

Administrator Tucker noted that staff had prepared a budget for an earthen path with a berm along the right-of-way.

Councilmember Ferencz asked where a retaining wall would be constructed, and Director Kerr said that one (1) would go next to the sidewalk, as well as a fence at the top of the sidewalk, and the second retaining wall would be at the fence.

Referring to the existing sidewalk, Councilmember Ferencz asked whether the path would also be a bicycle path, and the Administrator responded that it would only be a sidewalk. The Councilmember then asked whether it was wide enough for a golf cart; the Administrator answered that a person could drive a golf cart on it, but to do so was illegal. Her final question was whether the sidewalk could become the golf cart path and the earthen path could become the walking path; to do this would eliminate the need to relocate infrastructure, thus significantly reducing the cost, and people could walk around the telephone pole or the water hydrant.

Director Kerr stated that the sidewalk was not wide enough for two (2) carts whereas the new path could carry two carts.

Director Kerr indicated that he would look at it, and the Administrator suggested getting a SCDOT representative on site to get an idea of what they would approve.

**E. Discussion of Front Beach restrooms**

Administrator Tucker reported that she has reached out to her counterpart at the County to schedule an appointment to discuss the addition of funds for the Front Beach Restrooms in the County's FY17 budget.

Chair Ward recalled a chance meeting with Elliott Summey, Chair of Charleston County Council, when the two had an informal discussion of the City's public restrooms. He reported that, according to Mr. Summey, the last conversation he remembered with the City on that subject had

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been last March, but he indicated that it could be a topic for future discussion. The Chair said that he had told Mr. Summey that the replacement of public restrooms was the County's responsibility not the City's since the vast majority of users were residents of Charleston and Berkeley counties. Mr. Summey was quoted as saying, "I am on board with that" especially since plans to move forward are a year or more away. Mr. Summey asked the Administrator Tucker contact the County and they would bring a task-force to the island and "get right on it." The Chair stated that he was encouraged.

The Administrator reiterated that she had contacted Keith Bustram right after the last Committee meeting, of which Mr. Summey may not be aware. Another member of County staff has been involved and called the Administrator about the possibility of grant money; the City is also waiting on the Council of Governments work product toward grant funding.

## **6. New Business**

### **Discussion about the cutting on 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and increasing the frequency of single stream recycling**

Chair Ward mentioned about an email he had received from Jim Smiley about 45<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the cutting done there; having forwarded the email to the Administrator, he asked her for an update.

The email in question suggested an alternate way to maintain the property by putting down sod in the swale ditch. After Administrator Tucker and Director Pitts discussed it, the Director opined that to do so would be too expensive; the Director stated that the island had much more important stormwater issues than sodding a swale ditch. The runoff is sheet runoff, i.e. there are not storm drains on the Cedar Street side of 45<sup>th</sup>; with the skid steer, Public Works has gone through that swale for the first time; that cutting is what upset Mr. Smiley. The Director's understanding is the Mr. Smiley does not want any mowing of the swale, but for it to be natural. From a Public Safety point of view, the water must be directed into the system as quickly as possible; the water runs into the swale ditch and into the stormwater system, not the lift station, as Mr. Smiley thought. When the ditch is mowed regularly, the native Bermuda grass will come up to be mowed by the Z-track mower. The Director acknowledged that, over the summer, the grasses and weeds in the swale ditch flourished; therefore, when it was cut, it looked like a bad cutting job.

On the subject of more frequent pickups of recycling materials, the Administrator stated that she had gotten the name of the contact person, but had not had time to follow up, and the County offices were closed for a time because of the storm.

Councilmember Ferencz repeated that only thirty percent (30%) of the island's residences, outside of Wild Dunes, were on sewer; she then asked whether the City has any control over septic tanks after they are permitted and installed by the owner. In addition, she asked whether new construction could be required tie into the sewer system.

Administrator Tucker replied that, if sewer is available and there is the capacity for them, the owners usually want to tie into it; she noted that sewer is not available to the center of the island, leaving them with only septic tanks.

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Councilmember Loftus recalled that septic systems has been discussed at length in the Planning Commission several years ago; their recommendation was to require sewer, but to "grandfather" the existing septic systems. Once the property was sold, the new owner had to tie in to sewer system.

The Administrator stated that sewer versus septic has been a controversial subject on the island in the past because people opine that a properly functioning septic system is a perfectly acceptable way to treat waste; therefore, people do not want to be forced to go into the sewer system. Additionally there would be an expense to putting in sewer to large swaths of the island to make it available for all.

According to Administrator Tucker, the City has been notified of seven (7) locations that have had waste water back up into the houses damaging the houses and their contents, and they are unable to flush today. The City has placed port-a-lets in two (2) locations for those residents in the vicinity of 23<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> Avenues.

If Council was of a mind to start this dialogue again, the Administrator suggested that one of the first actions would be to call the IOP Water and Sewer Commission to opine what would be necessary if the City were to require residents to tie in to sewer. The Administrator also thought that septic systems might be a topic for the Planning Commission to investigate.

## **7. Miscellaneous Business**

**Next Meeting Date:** 5:30 p.m., Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup> in the Conference Room.

## **8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilmember Loftus moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m.; Councilmember Ferencz seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland  
City Clerk