

Public Works and Buildings Committee

April 21, 2016

Council Chambers

7PM

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Ralph Torr – Chairman

Councilor Ray Varney- Vice Chairman

Councilor Sandy Keans

Councilor Donald Hamann

Councilor Thomas Willis

Councilor Ray Barnett

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilor James Gray

Dan Fitzpatrick, City Manager

John B. Storer, Director of City Services

Stella Goon, China Palace owner

Jerry Grossman, Representing Stella Goon

Chris Stilson, East Rochester Baseball & Athletic Assoc

Karl Stevens, East Rochester Baseball & Athletic Assoc

MINUTES

Chairman Torr called the Public Works and Buildings Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

1. Approve minutes from March 17, 2016 meeting -

The Chairman requested a recommendation on last month's minutes.

Councilor Hamann made a motion to accept minutes as presented for the March 17, 2016 Meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Varney. The Motion passed unanimously.

2. Public Input

None

3. Columbus Avenue Parking Lot Expansion

John Storer stated that this project had been designed and then sent to the Planning Board for comment. He stated that the department cannot proceed any further until funded.

Councilor Willis stated that there was discussion at the Planning Board and that one abutter had spoke and voiced concerns about removing the vegetation that separates his property from the proposed parking lot. The property owner was concerned for privacy and exposure to his tenants. Councilor Willis stated that extending the vinyl fence the full length of the parking lot should alleviate some of the concern for privacy. He also noted that the tenant parking area at the property may be affected as it seems that they are currently encroaching on City property and once the fence is built they will not have the room to continue that practice. Councilor Gray stated that the property owner would also

like their to be no parking time restrictions. Councilor Keans stated that there would need to be some restrictions to eliminate the overnight parking of tenants in the area. Councilor Keans suggested 3-4 hours. Councilor Gray stated that there are other areas in town that have unlimited parking and parking with exemption stickers during snow storms. Councilor Keans stated that there are downtown parking lots that allow for parking with exemption during storms but DPW has to plow around them at night and then again while people are parked there during the day. She stated that the DPW did not need another lot like that to contend with. Councilor Varney stated the parking could be addressed later and that the Council should see a copy of the plan prior to moving forward. Councilor Willis questioned why the City is co-funding a parking lot that is essentially for one business to use. He stated that there is precedence where a private business has built a parking lot on City property for their use, but the City did not participate in the cost of the parking lot. Councilor Willis stated that this could be done by giving the business owners easements for construction. Councilor Varney stated that we have passed the discussion phase of this parking lot and we have made a commitment to the property owner providing that they are willing to put up their half of the costs. Councilor Varney stated that the lot could be used for overflow parking when there are functions at the Common and it could be used during parades or downtown functions. Mr. Storer asked what the next step is to get the project funded. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that we would do as we did previously with the design contract. The Council will need to fund the project with fifty percent City funding and fifty percent private contributions. The City would then send a letter requesting the private contribution prior to proceeding with the project. Mr. Grossman confirmed that Mrs. Goon is still willing to commit to fifty percent of the project but questioned what the cost is at now. Mr. Storer stated that we would like to have one hundred and thirty thousand (\$130,000) funded but believed it would finish at about one hundred and ten thousand (\$110,000). Mr. Grossman stated that Mrs. Goon could pay her half of that amount. Councilor Varney asked that Mr. Storer have a copy of the plan submitted with an agenda bill for the project.

Councilor Varney made a motion to recommend that the full council approve a supplemental appropriation to fund one hundred and thirty thousand dollars for the Columbus Ave Parking Lot Expansion and to give the City Manager authorization to enter into an agreement for the private contribution in advance of the project. The motion was seconded by Councilor Keans. The motion passed with one vote from Councilor Willis opposed.

4. Keay Field

Mr. Storer stated that he had discussions with Chris Stilson and Karl Stevens regarding Keay Field water metering. He stated that there is an agreement in place where the City is responsible to install a meter for reporting usage, but the water fees are not billed in lieu of using the Keay Field parking lot as a snow dump. Mr. Storer that the DPW is no longer using it as a snow dump but he wouldn't want to eliminate the possibility of using

it at a later date. He further stated that there is much more history t and Karl Stevens spoke on behalf of the Keay Field Association. Mr. Steven stated that the Association had a long history of partnering with the City to provide both a storage dump and the use of the athletic fields for various organizations and school activities. He stated that currently Spaulding High Schools Junior Varsity Baseball Team is using it as their home field and it is used as a backup field for Varsity and Babe Ruth League. Mr. Stevens stated that he wanted to continue to partner with the City and is hopeful that an arrangement can be made. Mr. Storer stated that he believes the current agreement puts the expense of water and metering on the City, he said he believes that the required backflow device could also be expensed by the City. Councilor Keans stated that a new agreement where the City can use the parking lot for snow storage if needed and the association will continue to support the local athletic teams sounds reasonable. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that the City's attorney could write up an agreement without difficulty. ***Councilor Keans made a motion to recommend that the full council to give the City Manager authorization to enter into an agreement with the Keay Field Association for water irrigation ,future snow storage use, and City use of the athletic fields. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. The motion passed unanimously.***

5. Legislative Testimony

Mr. Storer stated that he had sent two letters to the legislature on behalf of the City for two separate issues. He stated that both had come to him at the last minute and although he realized he should get Council approval in advance, he had sent the letters in because he believed it was important for the legislature to see support from Rochester prior to voting. Mr. Storer stated that he had sent a letter in reference to the Senate Bill SB368. He stated that this bill was to invest State of NH capital funds in a shared monitoring effort to track critical water quality and biological parameters in the Great Bay. Mr. Storer stated that several communities had been working collaboratively to study the impacts on the Great Bay. He stated at there are still critical gaps in the data collected and because the resources are limited he thought it was important to have the State of NH investment as well. He said that the bill had passed the Senate and that it referred to the House finance Committee. The other bill that Mr. Store had supported was the House Bill HB1428. He stated that this bill was for the State of NH to fund its obligations relating to the State Aid Grant Program (SAG). Mr. Storer explained that Rochester and other Communities had planned projects and funded them prior to 2008 based on approvals from NHDES that stated these projects would be eligible for SAG funding. Since that time the State of NH has not consistently funded this program. When not funded they go on a delayed and deferred list. He cited the recent Wastewater Headworks Project as one of the projects that is pending disbursements from the SAG program. Councilor Willis stated that both of the bills are important and he went on to say that the Council should give all support possible. He stated that the Great Bay Estuary testing and data collection is imperative and is needed to determine any issues

moving forward with the pending Wastewater Treatment NPDES permit.

Councilor Willis made a motion to recommend that the full council give support of both SB368 and HB1428. Councilor Varney seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Utility Billing Quarterly Invoicing - UAB

Mr. Storer stated that the issue of monthly billing had been referred to the Utility Advisory Board (UAB) by this Committee. He stated that it had come up at the March Public Works Committee Meeting due to a landlord issue raised by a property owner in Gonic. That owner had a tenant that did not report a leaking fixture. Mr. Storer stated that monthly billing would have alerted the landlord much sooner and would do so for all property owners. He stated that the UAB understood and agrees that monthly billing would be optimal but it is not a cost effective option at this time. Mr. Storer stated that the UAB was in favor of an abatement policy that would provide landlords and other property owners with a onetime credit for these types of issues. Mr. Storer stated that he had found sample abatement policies on line at the Town of Exeter's website and he stated that he found two others. One was in Maine and one in Massachusetts but all were similar. Councilor Keans asked if landlord tenant issues were typically the problem. Mr. Storer stated that those issues did account for many of the abatements, but plumbing leaks, irrigation and other issues do occur and result in many abatements. He cited vacant property issues where plumbing has frozen and caused extremely high bills. Councilor Keans stated that landlords need to be responsible for issues at their properties. Councilor Willis stated that an ordinance that governed the abatement policy would make UAB decisions to deny or abate more uniform. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that of the few petitions he has heard at his level it is easy to follow the ordinance and the UAB decisions. He stated in rare instances of hardship he has modified the UAB decisions or granted additional hardship abatements. Councilor Varney stated that the example lists negligence as a reason to deny abatements and asked if the UAB would be able to determine negligence. Mr. Storer stated he believed that they would be able to. Councilor Varney suggest that Mr. Storer draft a policy and bring it back to the Committee next month. He said the Committee could then send it to the UAB for review prior to sending it to the Codes and Ordinance Committee.

7. Flat Rate Sewer Fee – Metering all customers

Mr. Storer stated that he had looked at the issue of the \$199 quarterly flat rate fee for non metered sewer customers. He stated that this amount is consistent with EPA, USGS and NH DES estimate for an average family's usage. He stated that when he averaged the residential use in Rochester the average residential use is much lower with the average use in the \$110 range. Mr. Storer explained that it is possible with a private well system to meter the water coming into the house and that he doesn't understand why anyone would prefer the flat rate over metered use. Councilor Keans suggested that if the water is run past the property the flat rate fee might encourage them to tie-in to the water

system. Mr. Storer stated that if that was the case then he understood why we would want to bill that way. Mr. Storer stated that he was looking for guidance as whether the City Council would want to encourage metering on private wells. There was discussion on how property owners could finance the meter and the following motion was made.

Councilor Willis made a motion to recommend that the full council approve City Staff work toward metering all private well customers that are being charged the flat rate sewer fee. Councilor Hamann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Old Wakefield Road – Property Transfer Request

Mr. Storer stated that Paul Edgar has sent the City Manager's office a letter as he wanted to donate a landlocked piece of land to the City. Mr. Storer stated that when discussed at a Management Team meeting no department had an interest in the parcel. Mr. Storer described the land and stated that it was adjacent to a conservation property. Councilor Keans and Varney suggested the City Manager encourage the property owner to deed it over to the conservation property owner as the City does not have an interest in the property.

9. Pavement Funding

Mr. Storer stated that his understanding is that the Committee had reached a consensus for paving Whitehouse Road and Lowell Street this year. He stated which sections of Lowell Street to be paved would depend on funding and the department had broken it out into sections with funding estimates. Mr. Storer stated that he had looked into funding the pavement program in advance of the budget and unless the Council was willing to do a supplemental from fund balance the first year, and then budget annually for the year following that budgets adoption, or if we were to go a season without paving there was no real way to get ahead in the way we fund the work. The Committee discussed the process of bidding and funding at length. Councilors Keans and Gray were opposed to going a season without paving. Mr. Storer stated if he knows what streets are approved for this year's paving, he could have the bid out in advance of the final budget approval. Councilor Willis stated he could include wording that said the award of the contract would be contingent on funding. Councilor Varney stated that they would approve the streets to be paved at the next City Council Meeting and then Mr. Storer could start preparing bid documents.

10. FY17 Budget Discussion

Mr. Storer stated that he was pleased with the way the budgets for FY17 had come together. He stated that he had met the City Manager's directive on a zero percent increase for the O&M budgets. He stated that he believed that the CIP is well planned out and that there are good options for the Council to consider. Mr. Storer stated that he had a few "Issues and Options" regarding staff upgrades but he would like to discuss the GIS/Asset Management Technician Position that he is requesting. He stated that this position would be important to taking the mapping to the point of interactive smart maps that is his goal. He stated that the position would really work with all departments and

bring the City of Rochester up to the standards that soon will be mandatory for meeting some of the MS4 initiatives. He stated we would be mapping all buildings, city lights, pump stations, manholes, and water valves to name a few things. He stated that there is a request for the purchase of Asset Management Software in the FY17 CIP. Mr. Storer stated we were looking at the software VUEWorks that is used by Dover, Somersworth and Portsmouth. Councilor Hamann stated that he fully supports this position. He stated that as part of the Information Technology Team he is aware of the need for this position. Councilor Hamann also stated that he recently saw how useful the technology was when he had attended a presentation on the PFOA topic and the presenters could easily access maps and information on individual properties with a click of the mouse. Councilor Willis suggested a part-time position. He stated that he recognizes the need for a dedicated staff position for the project as data lapses lead to inaccuracy. Councilor Keans asked if we would be able to enter the older information on the infrastructure into the new mapping systems. Mr. Storer stated that it would be able to be done and that current staff would be trained on how to collect the data and the new position would be the person that integrated all of the data into smart maps that could give you an unlimited amount of information on whatever asset you were inquiring about. Councilor Gray stated that it is hard to staff a part-time position. He stated that the MIS had a position posted for a long time and could not fill it for lack of applicants. Councilor Gray suggested hiring consultants to do the work. Mr. Storer mentioned a possible partnership with another community.

Rt 11 Sewer Pump Station Project - Councilor Varney asked why the Rt11 Pump Station is listed in the CIP Granite Ridge TIF budget as needing upgrades due to the active development in the area. He stated that if the Granite Ridge current development is driving a PS upgrade it should have been looked at in conjunction with the project. Mr. Storer stated he would get back to the Councilor with more information.

Water Line Loop – Councilor Varney said he noted that the water loop from Whitehall Road to the Granite State Business Park was in the CIP for the Granite State Business Park TIF and he is not convinced that this is a necessary project. He would like Mr. Storer to update him on the need for the project. Mr. Storer stated he would get back to the Councilor with additional information.

Arena Roof – Councilor Varney asked for the status of the roof project at the ice arena. Mr. Storer stated that he is preparing a presentation with the Arena Director, Chris Bowlen, for next month's meeting. He stated that he had met with a contractor and they will be updating the Committee in May.

11. **Tiger Grant Applications**

Mr. Storer stated that staff had looked into making a grant submission for the Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery Grant Program (TIGER). He stated that this is a very competitive grant and that, due to time constraints, we would not be making a submission this year. He stated that he would like to look at a group of

projects in the same area as the proposed North Main to Wakefield Connector and that would require additional information and data gathering. He specifically mentioned the possible railroad crossing for Allen and Glenwood, and having a full four lanes of traffic on Rt. 11 north of Rt. 16. The deadline is April 30, and putting together a comprehensive package is not possible. Councilor Willis suggested that the TIGER Grants may not be available again depending on the presidential election results.

12. Project Updates

Milton Road EDA Project - Mr. Storer stated that the project has been awarded to the low bidder, SUR. He stated that the preconstruction meeting is scheduled for Tuesday April 26, 2016. Councilor Varney suggested a public meeting to present the construction schedule to the property owners within the project area. He stated it could be done in conjunction with the Ward 1 meeting at Tara. Councilor Keans suggested that they might get better attendance if it was held at the East Rochester School. Mr. Storer stated that he would have it scheduled for May. He stated that he would like to do a ground breaking ceremony with the Mayor, Councilors, the Construction Company and key staff along with a Market Basket representative. He stated that he would work with the consultant and the Economic Development Department to coordinate.

Annex Renovation - Mr. Storer stated that the bid for the Annex Project would be out within the next week or two. Councilor Willis asked if there was any dedicated space available to set up for video productions. He stated that staff is required to set up and breakdown video equipment each time they record. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that he is working with MIS to find a space in the vacated spaces once staff has moved over to the Annex.

Franklin Street / Western Ave Project Mr. Storer stated that this project is ready for bid and should be out within the next week.

HSIP Project Salmon Falls Road – Mr. Storer stated that staff and Urban Tree worked to take down many of the trees in the project area as this needed to be completed by April 14 per the requirements of federal grant money and the Endangered Species Act. He stated that the bid will go out soon but residents may be expecting it sooner since the tree removal.

13. Other

Haying Agreement – Mr. Storer stated that this was sent to the Committee from the City Manager's Office. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that he had signed an agreement with Mr. Randal Parsell last year to hay the fields on Pickering Road and Councilor Torr had mentioned then that haying can be lucrative and there may be other options available. Mr. Fitzpatrick said that Mr. Parsell came in recently and he wanted to renew the agreement. Mr. Storer stated that Dave Green also has an agreement for the areas located around the lagoons closer to the plant. Mr. Fitzpatrick asked Mr. Storer to check in with other communities to see if they have any of these types of agreements.

Gonic Sawmill Dams – Mr. Storer stated that staff is preparing an agenda bill for a

supplemental appropriation for the next phase of the Gonic Dams Project. He stated that the State of NH DES is again managing a grant for the environmental assessment. He stated that there is no costs to the City it is a 100% Grant for approximately thirty four thousand (\$34,000).

Ledgeview Drive Playground – Mr. Storer that he had been down to the Ledgeview Development Park in Gonic. He stated that this is a City maintained park that is falling apart. Mr. Storer wanted to see if the Council would support dismantling it and restoring the grass in the area. Councilor Willis stated that he was ok with taking it down. Councilor Gray was ok with taking it down but thought we should gather usage data to see if it was getting any use.

Hanson Pines Pavilion – Mr. Storer stated that this newly constructed pavilion was seeing an excessive amount of cigarette butts being discarded and stated that he would like to discuss posting it as a no smoking area. Councilor Varney stated that when they posted the playground end of the Commons there was considerable amount of push back from the residents and that he would like to avoid going through that again. Councilor Keans suggested putting our receptacles for the cigarettes. Councilor Willis agreed and thought we should start there and look at it again if continues to be a problem.

Roadside Trash issue – Mr. Storer stated that staff was clearing roadside trash and that we were trying to contact the Strafford County Correction group to assist. Councilor Torr stated that they had done an excellent job in the area of Little Falls Bridge and on

Chestnut Hill Road – The details of the upcoming event were broadcast. Any residents watching are invited to attend the downtown clean-up event. The schedule was to meet at the Central Square monument on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at 8:30

Rochester Pride Day -

Councilor Hamann made a motion for adjournment at 9:17 pm. The motion was seconded by Councilor Willis. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Lisa J. Clark, City of Rochester Office Manager.