

## REGULAR MEETING PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE of March 31, 2022

Meeting of the Public Service Committee was held in the office of the DPW, 50 Manca Drive at 8:30 AM on March 31, 2022.

Members Present: Councilor James M. Walsh, Chairman; Councilor Alek Dernalowicz; Administrative Assistant Christine Harty

Attendees: Dane E. Arnold, DPW Director; Rob Oliva, City Engineer; Neil Viner, Senior Civil Engineer.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Councilor James M. Walsh called the meeting to order at 8:30 am.

### **OPEN MEETING RECORDING**

ANNOUNCEMENT – any person may make a video or audio recording of an open session of a meeting, or may transmit the meeting through any medium, subject to reasonable requirements of the chair as to the number, placement and operation of equipment used so as not to interfere with the conduct of the meeting. Any person intending to make such recording shall notify the chair forthwith. All documents referenced or used during the meeting must be submitted in duplicate to Secretary of the Committee, pursuant to the Open Meeting and Public Records Law. All documents shall become part of the official record of the meeting.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

Motion to accept the minutes of the meetings dated January 13th & February 17th, 2022, as written. Motion made to accept minutes by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor James Walsh, all in favor motion carries.

### **ABATEMENTS WATER/SEWER**

**10 Robillard Street:** Homeowner, Denise Santiago was contacted to attend meeting for appeal. Was unable to attend, third time appeal has been on agenda.

Councilor James Walsh, resident was given three opportunities for attendance and action was deferred twice. At this point the item will not be deferred. Given a payment has been made on the account under appeal, would like to provide customer a 1-year payment plan for repayment of large outstanding bill under appeal, with no interest accrual. Provision of payment plan would be customer maintains account current on quarterly basis.

Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor James Walsh to allow payment plan on charges under appeal (with no accruing interest) and the provision all subsequent quarterly billings remain up-to-date, current in payment status, all in favor, motion passes.

**135 Greenwood Street:** Property Owner Ruddy Paulino is present for appeal. Is here before committee to appeal large water bill of multi-family property he owns. Property had a significant toilet leak occur, of which he was unaware at the time or would have repaired. Leak resulted in a 2,500-dollar quarterly water bill.

Councilor James Walsh, states the water leak that occurred would have passed through both systems in the City for treatment. Therefore, cannot see providing a reduction in the charges.

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, asks customer what he seeks in his appeal to the committee. Customer states some type of payment plan.

Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor Walsh to provide customer a payment plan with no accrual of interest for one year, the provision that all subsequent quarterly charges are maintained current.

## **ORDINANCE PROPOSALS**

Dane Arnold: recently had an outside consultant review our city specifications and ordinances pertaining to water and sewer. Have not been updated in 20 years. They were reviewed and compared with other cities and towns and with the state law requirements. Following this review is the yellow highlighted areas which either need updating or removal.

Councilor James Walsh: would like to know what prompted the review of this information? For instance, some information in the Significant User part under Table No. 553-20, Local Limits appears not currently calculated, noted as NC. Why would this not be removed given that notation?

Dane Arnold: can go back and revisit this information and remove anything unapplicable at this time and resubmit.

Councilor James Walsh: It is my view, and I'm sure that of yours Mr. Mayor (Mayor Michael Nicholson is present at meeting), to have the City Law Department review before submission, as they appear not to be in ordinance amendment form. Request to Law Dept. reviewal and revision to ordinance or code amendment form before submission.

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz: has a question in regarding the DPW/Survey Dept. Specification and/or Subdivision Rules and Regulations. Are those sections that are approved by Council as well or adopted by the DPW department on their own?

Dane Arnold: they are adopted by the DPW, they have just been reviewed. An example of the review needed would be such as G. under section 567-8 Specifications were it begins as gravel sidewalks, etc., specification still indicates sidewalks to be gravel.

Councilor James Walsh: Stormwater and Erosion Control Regulations.

Rob Oliva: Yes, these are regulations we can adopt, our consultant CEI (currently working on our MS4 compliance) put together for us, adding more teeth to the ordinance. They are regulations that provide greater detail on the application of stormwater permits and requirements for such, adds more detail.

Mayor Michael Nicholson: Addresses Chairman Walsh noting this is the regulation that is based off the interpretation of the Ordinance recently passed by the City Council.

Councilor James Walsh, question is who the authority to adopt these rules/regulations? City Council?

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, suggests send the Stormwater and Erosion Control Regulations to the Law Department as well for review and decision on what procedure the City is to take to adopt the regulations.

Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor James Walsh to forward Significant User Specifications & Stormwater and Erosion Control Regulations to City Law Department for review and decision on what procedure to take for City to adopt.

Dane Arnold: will send City specifications to Law Dept. as well.

## **WATER LOAN**

Dane Arnold: The original letter for the water loan written back in February indicated a request of 1.5 million. Since then, cost of oil has increased significantly. Recalculated the estimates for paving list and now asking 1.8 million. Cost has increased from 72 to 85 dollars a ton for bituminous concrete. The pricing is on an escalating/de-escalating slope, as the State notifies MA Broken Stone monthly what they can charge. This cost is only for the streets under the Water Loan Project. The requested amount is built into the current and

upcoming water rates. The rates will cover the amount of loan request, however any new projects in the future will require a review of the current rates at that time.

Final page of water loan packet defines streets broken down as follows: those under water loan, sidewalks, and streets to be covered by City funds.

Councilor James Walsh, any schedule determined yet for Chapter 90 funds?

Mayor Michael Nicholson, Legislature has passed a 200-million-dollar Chapter 90 bond bill, of which we will see approximately 597-thousand-dollars. Also in the works is an addition 200-million dollar of winter recovery funds. This money is for road repair projects related to any winter improvements, line painting, potholes, etc. The formula for determining funding of this money is solely based on mileage of road, rather than mileage of road over population as Chapter 90 is. This is a test run for legislation, possibly rewriting/changing the Chapter 90 formula down the road. This Winter Recovery Fund has passed the House and Senate and is heading to Governor for signature. Will have a better idea come Mid-May on the dollar amount if any. The minimum we will receive from state is 597-thousand-dollars (Chapter 90). The Water Loan request will head to council on April 19<sup>th</sup> following the Finance Committee meeting.

Motion made by Councilor James Walsh, second by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz to place information on file, all in favor motion carries.

### **REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS**

Dane Arnold: In reviewing my budget there are a few line items affected by the increasing fuel costs. Fuel usage for the entire City (all municipal vehicles) is generally 220,000-dollars a year. Last few months have seen a 12% spike. We currently have an available balance until the end of fiscal year at approx. 60,000 dollars. Estimating will need possibly 70-150-thousand to finish the year.

Councilor James Walsh, asks if there are any areas within the Dept/City we could modify the usage of vehicles? Ex., Building Dept., are now performing inspections virtually. Perhaps there are other areas in city where business can be conducted virtually?

Dane, Other two accounts affected by the increase cost in oil is Street Lighting will have a deficit and Road Maintenance, used for potholes, as the cost of mix has also increased.

Water Main Project, second phase to begin 2nd-3rd week of April. The mains are in, will be completing a few service connections and placing the main line online.

Transmission line is at about 90% design and will go out to bid in sometime in April.

Paving schedule to begin as soon as possible, hopefully the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> week May. To be on schedule, esp. with the ongoing Water Main Project. There is no schedule for Chapter 90 at this time.

Pearson Blvd. between Williams Restaurant and the rotary scheduled to begin May 1<sup>st</sup>. 140 is another project to begin summer of this year. Both are tip projects.

Working on a Grant with Long Island Sound for the Wastewater Treatment plant upgrades, looking to automate the modifications that have been made.

Rob Oliva: Currently coming up to speed on all the projects, including the MS4 permit requirements. Chris Coughlin is here and a resource. Have an update on the rotary plans (handout is given). Plans are at 100%, waiting on the engineer to provide a proposal to do the right-away easement plans, for all the temporary and permanent construction easements required. Will be on schedule for September 2022 bid and Spring 2023 construction.

Bike Path Bridge plans are now 25%. Engineer in conversation with National Grid about property/right-away issues there. Now that at 25% (minimum required) state will jump in with the finalizing of the design. This is also a tip project and is currently scheduled for 2026.

There was recent discussion of a spotlight or streetlight on Blanchard, driveway coming out of High School. Spoke with National Grid, won't do a light that will shine into the driveway, considered a liability. Left with two options. Place a brighter streetlight than we have at the current location closest to the driveway. Or contact a contractor to run secondary power onto the poles in the driveway, allowing them to put lights onto the driveway themselves. Chris Coughlin is currently obtaining a quote to complete the wiring from Coviello.

Councilor James Walsh asks for a map or diagram of the options to review at next meeting.

### **REPORTS & REQUESTS FROM COUNCILOR'S**

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz: No requests.

Councilor James Walsh: Is the finalization for uptown rotary plan is scheduled for 2023 construction? Remaining issues are just the construction easements? Identifying their locations?

Rob Oliva: yes,

Motion to adjourn, Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor James Walsh to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 am. Roll Call vote: Councilor Alek Dernalowicz yes, Councilor James Walsh yes. Motion passes.

Next meeting scheduled as needed.

All documents submitted at this meeting are stored in the office of the DPW 50 Manca Drive for any review.

Respectfully submitted:  
Christine M. Harty, Administrative Assistant