

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – JANUARY 26, 2017

Meeting of the Public Service Committee was held in the DPW Office, 416 West Broadway, on Thursday, January 26, 2017.

Members Present: Councillors Nathan Boudreau and Craig Cormier. Councillor Scott Graves was absent.

Attendees: DPW Director Dane Arnold; City Engineer Chris Coughlin; and, Principal Clerk and Secretary Denise Merriam.

CALL TO ORDER

Councillor Nathan Boudreau, Acting Chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m.

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. No one recorded the meeting.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

On a motion by Councillor Craig Cormier and seconded by Councillor Nathan Boudreau, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the December 1, 2016 Meeting, as printed.

REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS

DPW Director Dane Arnold:

- The Snow & Ice Account is \$110,000 “in the red” and the “snowy season is approaching.” The DPW snow and ice crew has been dispatched more times this year than in prior years. The “green salt” costs more per ton; however, there will not be any sand to sweep from the streets in the spring, saving “wear and tear” on the street sweepers.
- The sanders are old and need to be replaced. The Mayor is aware of the situation and the department might be able to obtain funding for two used trucks.
- One sidewalk tractor is inoperable and cannot be repaired. The cost of a new tractor is approximately \$100,000.

Councillor Boudreau questioned whether the City would save money if an Ordinance is adopted that would require residents to clear sidewalks adjacent to their properties, noting that removal should be quicker and that it would save the City money.

Mr. Coughlin said that by Ordinance, the City could issue citations to residents that do not clear snow from sidewalks within a designated period, adding that this it is done in other communities.

Mr. Arnold stated that the City spends from 30 to 40 hours clearing snow from sidewalks, and only after all the streets have been cleared. He added that it can take up to two days following a snow storm before the crews can start clearing the walks. He noted that perhaps when the DPW integrates the Water and Sewer Divisions, the process might be completed timelier [with the additional personnel].

New Buildings: Design plans have been approved by the Planning Board and will proceed to the Conservation Commission in two weeks.

Pot Holes: The DPW works every day to fill potholes.

City Engineer Chris Coughlin:

- **Green Line Trail** - National Grid will provide the City with an easement to connect the trails and that the City might be able to receive \$3 million from the State to build a bridge.

Councillor Boudreau asked if the Trail would be by the Hospital.

Chris Coughlin responded, saying that the Trail will run from the Downtown northerly to the existing Rail Trail.

Councillor Craig Cormier questioned whether the \$3 Million for the bridge “is a ballpark figure.”

Mr. Coughlin responded, saying that the \$3 Million price tag is only for the bridge and does not include the cost of the Rail Trail.

Councillor Boudreau questioned whether a survey had been conducted to determine the number of persons that use the Trail.

Mr. Arnold replied, saying that the current Trail “is never empty in good weather.”

Mr. Coughlin noted that the Rail Trail project is included in the State TIP for 2021.

Councillor Craig Cormier commented that the project “is four years out.”

Mr. Coughlin said that the project could be undertaken sooner “if the City maps it.”

Mr. Arnold added that it takes two years to go through the process.

- **Street Lights** – The City is not contracting with Honeywell to change street lights to LED, since the City is pursuing a grant to receive 30% off the cost.

Mr. Arnold added that the City is “a Green Community,” so the City might be able to save up to 50% off the cost.

Councillor Boudreau asked if an estimate has been obtained.

Mr. Arnold said that the cost might be close to \$800,000, noting that the City has to pay for the total cost and then seek reimbursement through the grant award at a later date.

REPORTS & REQUESTS FROM COUNCILLORS

Councillor Boudreau:

He received a call about dirty snow on Suomi Road, saying that the residents do not want the City to place grindings on the road again.

Mr. Arnold replied, saying that if the City does not fill in the roadway with grindings, then it will not be able to plow the road. He added that when the grindings are frozen, “they don’t plow up,” and noted that Suomi Road is an unaccepted way and that the City is not required to plow or pave the road.

Councillor Boudreau expressed appreciation for the work performed on Parker Street.

Councillor Craig Cormier:

He noted that Coleman Street at Bates Road “is ripped up every year.”

On a motion made by Councillor Craig Cormier and second by Councillor Nathan Boudreau, it was voted to adjourn at 5:03 p.m.

All documents submitted at the meeting are stored at the DPW Office, 416 West Broadway for review.