

REGULAR MEETING PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE of February 2, 2023

Meeting of the Public Service Committee was held in the office of the DPW, 50 Manca Drive at 8:00 AM on February 2, 2023.

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

Attendees: Dane E. Arnold, DPW Director; Rob Oliva, City Engineer

CALL TO ORDER

Councilor James M. Walsh called the meeting to order at 8:00 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.

ABATEMENTS WATER/SEWER

25 Main Street: Property suffered a water break on Christmas Eve. Dino D’Antonio is present representing property owner, Millennium Holding Group LLC. States building is empty, only a boiler is currently running. Had checked property on Friday, all looked good. Returned on Monday to find property was flooded (all four floors to basement), shutoff had froze and blew out. Water Department upon inspection found an additional meter in the building that is inaccessible, had been estimated for years (stated vacant/not used). In addition, the meter found would not meter the water loss, not tied into that line. However, the meter that was reading and tied into line with break, did not register any excessive water usage indicative of this leak, that meter has been replaced. In addition, prior billing period indicated double the usage (prior to reported break). Dane makes recommendation, has provided owner with new meter, suggest wait until meter replacement is completed at location and revisit abatement/metered usage.

Decision by Committee to table abatement until meter replacement is complete allowing for additional information regarding metered usage at location.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion to accept the minutes of the meeting dated December 1st & 15th, 2022, as written. Motion made to accept minutes by Councilor George C. Tyros, second by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, all in favor motion carries.

REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS

Dane Arnold:

- Skating rink has installed, currently weather is creating issue.
- Snow & Ice Account at a deficit. This winter with more ice conditions than ever, salt use is high. States current vendor is wonderful to work with, product is received in timely manner.
- Snow removal to begin downtown and South Gardner this evening. Indicates cars parked on streets during parking ban in town have proven to be issue.
- Budget due February 15th, asked to be level funded. Compiling projects and wish lists, in the works.
- Have heard verbally received the million-dollar plus grant for transmission line. Do not know as of yet how to obtain funds. Unsure of details currently. May need to approach council for matching funds.
- Long Island Sound Grant for wastewater. Were told not qualified, but applied with EPA, to receive a 1.4 million dollar grant.
- Leachate pump station needs to be replaced and upgraded for the current and new landfill expansion. Takes flow from landfill and sludge landfill. Is a mile and half force main that pumps to gravity system on West Street.
- Dyer Street sewer line, televised 20,000 feet of line, found section leaking, working on in-house design no estimated cost yet. Looking to get out to bid over summer, likely to be over 50K.
- Once televised, found cracks, and need for sewer relining. Looking at approx. 125K throughout City.
- Have 25K in funding for disk golf around Pearly Brook.
- OC playground wooden structure is beyond its life. Looking to be about 125K for in-house removal, prep site & have company come in to do installation.
- Pickle ball court at the Oliva Case playground. Will be new construction/small court.
- Pursing new salt shed installation. Meeting now with Clear Span (under state contract) regarding dome fabric structure
- Looking into sign shop expansion over bays at DPW garage. Space currently used for storage. Lines and sign department has grown over the years. Department is involved in much throughout the City.
- Working DEP to do a chlorine refresh. Increase chlorine level within City, will clean up pipes. A common practice to follow installation of new water pipes. Some practice refreshes yearly.
- Paving – handout. City broken down with severity & cost of repair. Has not been re-evaluated since last year. Some likely to be in worse condition. To pave worst of City would be approx. 3.3 million. To pave the worst two groups, likely be 10 million. Receive about 600 million yearly from City and another 100 in WRAP funds. We become further and further behind each year. To pave entire City would be approximately 40 million.
- Found & purchased a used sidewalk tractor for 29,000, in great condition. New would cost 160,000.

- Each year must adjust Veolia contract based on CPI value. This year the CPI is 8.1%. Was a 121,000 increase to the contract, carried through lifetime of contract. Dane notes, has added 3% increase for projection. This increase hit the water/sewer rates hard.

Councilor Walsh inquires, anything the Committee can do to help with any of these discussed topics/projects? Dane, would be good to review with Committee draft budget prior to submitting.

Rob Oliva:

- Uptown Rotary. Appraisals completed, letters out. On agenda for Council meeting for order of takings.
- Crystal Lake Spillway. Fuss and O'Neill Inc. under contract now for feasibility study. Underway now.
- Pedestrian bridge over Route 140 for bike trail is approaching the final 25% for Mass DOT. Once complete will have a design public hearing sometime in April.
- Sludge landfill, meeting with MEPA to discuss abutters situation. Many comments and questions, is an ongoing process with many moving parts. Next step is for MEPA to make decision if project should be subject to submitting an environmental impact report. City will be notified if EIR is required. If required could add months to project.
- Mill Street bridge, future project. Is in poor condition according to the MA DEP. Would like to obtain consultant to review what to do. Move forward to tip list to meet with designer. At some point will include with budget in Engineering Department.
- Route 2A/Route 68 intersection. Has issue with land takings. Would like to move to tip list. Intersection is problem with truck turning. Need to review geometry of intersection (lights, pedestrian crossing, etc.). Plans not to 25% but would like to proceed.

Sophie Dorow:

Responded by email stating her only updates are related to projects within City Engineering Department.

REPORTS AND REQUESTS FROM COUNCILORS

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz: No requests today.

Councilor George C. Tyros: No requests today.

Councilor James Walsh: No requests today.

Motion to adjourn, Motion made by Councilor George Tyros, second by Councilor Alex Dernalowicz to Adjourn the meeting at 9:08 am. Roll Call vote: Councilor Alek Dernalowicz yes, Councilor George C. Tyros 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