

## REGULAR MEETING PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE of August 25, 2022

Meeting of the Public Service Committee was held in the office of the DPW, 50 Manca Drive at 4:00 PM on August 25, 2022.

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; Trevor Beauregard, Conservation Director

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Councilor James M. Walsh called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm.

### **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 meeting dated July 26, 2022, as written. Motion made to accept minutes by Councilor George C. Tyros, second by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, all in favor motion carries.

### **ABATEMENTS WATER/SEWER**

**53 Lynde Street:** Dane indicates meter at location was accessed and read for the first time in 7 years. Water Department understood property to be vacant resulting in minimum billings. Recent meter reading indicated underestimation of usage. States a case like this is unusual. In past would only bill back 2 years to provide relief.

Representative of property, Karen Murphy attends meeting to present case of appeal. States property is owned by Church, appears vacant as they occupy the location on Sundays for services. Was under the impression the minimum bills were accurate, as location is occupied minimally unaware no readings had been taken of water meter. Did at one point have contractor on location using water to complete work being completed. That usage would not have entered sewer system. Also does not feel charges for underestimated water/sewer use should be all billed at the current rates given it was usage over period of 7 years.

Councilor James Walsh, installation of outside meter reader would be part of the solution. Adjust billing to 2/7 of charges. Councilor Dernalowicz and Councilor Tyros agree on both suggestions.

Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor George Tyros to allow payment plan on 2/7 of the charges under appeal resulting in an adjusted charge of \$ 723.29 (with no accruing interest) to be paid in two quarterly increments and the provision all subsequent quarterly billings remain up-to-date, current in payment status. Also, to allow Water Department access to install a radio reader, all in favor, motion passes.

**10 Robillard Street:** Dane states homeowner, Denise Santiago was contacted by mail regarding her payment plan and lack of current payment. Following letter owner made payment on 8/21/22 of 340.00. This amount does not cover current billing charges and amount agreed to on arrears at time of payment plan. What would Committee like to do?

Councilor Walsh, letter sent to customer following appeal decision on March 31<sup>st</sup>, letter gave no details to payment dates, customer may not have been clear on amounts to be paid on charges in appeal, letter only stating a one-year period to pay. Property owner contacted water department at time letter was sent this month and indicated full payment of appeal amount will be paid off in October 2022. Recommends defer action until December.

Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor George Tyros to defer any action and revisit the status of 10 Robillard Street water/sewer abatement in November 2022, all in favor, motion passes.

## **REPORTS FROM DEPARTMENT HEADS**

### **Dane Arnold:**

Completing paving downtown. Lost a day due to rain in forecast. Line painting for parking and centerlines is set to go. Pulverizing of Crestwood began today, then in as early as tomorrow or next week to pave.

Contract issue with Lawrence Street walk project, leading to a delay. Dane states would be better to do when school is out, delay causes possible conflict with start of school year. Councilor James Walsh agrees.

Will begin pulverizing of Coleman, Douglas, Robillard, Wickman, Draper and Foss in September, two-week project. Plan is to pulverize and pave in sections completing also ramps, berms and sidewalks.

To set the grade of road for ramp at intersection of Graham and Parker to avoid puddling of the water.

Revoli is wrapping up, continuing to work on punch list.

We are down 7 positions in the Department and currently in process of hiring.

The dozer at the sludge landfill had a catastrophic failure. The dozer is used to process and grade the sludge. The engine repair was to be 68K. Opted to trade model in and purchase new dozer with a retail price of 235K, under state contract price lowered to 150K and negotiation with trade final price of 111K. Used encumbered monies set aside this FY for purchases of pickup trucks.

Councilor James Walsh asks if the pothole patrol is out in field? Noting pothole in road at intersection of Comee and Pearl Street. Dane states “yes we are, but limited staff”.

### **Rob Oliva:**

New fitness court in progress at High School. City received funds from Blue Cross Blue Shield for equipment station with a 40' x 40' pad and insulated top. DPW is prepping sight now. This was a funding of 175K in equipment from BCBS and other grants. Set to be complete by October.

Wayside Dam project is moving forward with final design. Out to the next funding cycle then moving forward to wrap up one piece of the design for this flood control project.

Uptown Rotary is moving along. All notices to abutters are out for the easements. Donation certificates were included. Next step will be takings. Timeline is waiting on final sign off for right of way issues to complete design portion. Construction to begin in summertime.

Bike Path project is moving along. National Grid is working on their issues, should be in final design soon.

EPA Stormwater report is due end of September. Comprehensive Environmental under contract to complete larger tasks of report.

Councilor George Tyros asks if drawings/plans are available on the city website of the various projects ongoing, Bike Path, Uptown Rotary, etc. Rob Oliva follow-up, be sure they are.

Trevor Beauregard:

Bike Path project is at 25% in design phase. Funding is lined up to finish design from Parker out to Route 140. Waiting on National Grid now, parties are at the table and working it out. One challenge is separating out truck traffic and foot traffic. Where trail ends and bridge landing provides access to national grid for their substation, working through this issue. Also trying to get in contact with the Watkins family regarding topography at cemetery, another challenge with project.

Due to begin interview process soon for new Conservation Planning Agent.

Councilor James Walsh, update to status of sludge landfill?

Dane, hired contractor for peer review of portion of DPW study that is under jurisdiction of Conservation Committee. Awaiting report.

## **POLE PETITION**

**Keyes Road** – A Petition by National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc., Keyes Road – To relocate 1 Jointly Owned Pole on Keyes Road beginning at a point approximately 700 feet southeast of the centerline of the intersection of West Street. Relocate Pole #2 across the street to accommodate for bridge construction and upgrade to a 45-foot class 2

Rob Oliva, engineer plans of Tighe and Bond vary from that of National Grid petition regarding pole locations. Unsure if Council will need a new pole petition request where the engineer plans are slightly different than that of sketch in pole petition.

Councilor James Walsh, appears an updated sketch should be provided to City Council of pole location, esp. in regards to pole locations.

Item to remain on calendar and request the City Engineer, Rob Oliva, to contact National Grid requesting they submit a new petition based upon Tighe and Bond's plans. Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor George C. Tyros, all in favor motion carries.

## **REPORTS AND REQUESTS FROM COUNCILORS**

Councilor George C. Tyros: No requests today.

Councilor Alek Dernalowicz: Inquires of culvert on Union Street. Rob, went out with Dane to inspect, structurally sound at this time. Should be addressed at some point to replace due to age.

Question of utility poles at Bents Pond on West Broadway, damaged by plows, question if structurally sound. Rob, will go out to inspect.

Concern received from resident stating crosswalk signs at intersection of Timpany Blvd and West Broadway possibly not working. Dane, possible electrical issue? Units are old. Will look into matter.

Thanks to the DPW for addressing fallen tree on Travers Street.

Councilor James Walsh: Ongoing discussion regarding weight restrictions of commercial vehicles over 2.5 tons on certain Public Ways. There was question if our streets were approved through the DOT. Question remains unanswered at this time.

Motion to adjourn, Motion made by Councilor Alek Dernalowicz, second by Councilor George Tyros to Adjourn the meeting at 5:01 PM. 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