

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, August 14, 2008 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 P.M. by the Vice-Chair.

Present: Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr., Vice-Chair
Councilman John E. Lanni
Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone
Council President Aram G. Garabedian

Absent: Council Member Maria A. Bucci, Chair
Councilman Emilio L. Navarro

Also Present: Council Vice-President Paula McFarland
Councilman Anthony J. Lupino
Councilman Terence Livingston
Mayor Michael Napolitano
Ernest Carlucci, Director of Administration
Vito Sciolto, City Solicitor
Pat Quinlan, City Council Legal Counsel
Anthony Sylvia, Director of Public Works
Dave Ferguson, Traffic Safety Manager
Maria Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE:

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Resolution authorizing the Abandonment of a portion of Moon Ave.** (Public Hearing) (Cont. 7/17/2008).

On motion by Council President Garabedian, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this Resolution. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS/NEW BUSINESS:

Rodent Control in the Stadium area *and Brookside

Report from Administration on plan of action

Report from Rodent Control officer

Mr. Sylvia appeared to speak (on behalf of the Rodent Control Office)and stated that since the Council meeting, when this issue came up, this has been a priority to him, more so then normal. He has met with residents of the area, Council Vice-President McFarland and the Rodent Control Officer and they have developed some ideas on addressing this problem. We have developed and will be distributing educational materials to approximately 600 residents in that area.

Councilman Lanni stated that at the Council meeting, it was mentioned that neighborhood restaurants might not be in compliance. He asked Mr. Sylvia if, during his investigation, this was the case. Mr. Sylvia stated that he has not seen any information showing that they are not in compliance. Since the publicity on this matter, the restaurants have started doing things differently, doing better housekeeping.

Councilman Barone asked Mr. Sylvia if anyone has looked at the source of this problem during his investigation. Mr. Sylvia stated that the issue is about food source. In many cases, it is the way the residents leave their trash on the property. The problem may not necessarily be the restaurants. The Public Works Department and the Inspections Department cannot handle this problem. Together, these two departments need to work on this and he is looking at the possibility of bringing in an outside source to help us.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that the phone calls continue and now the problem has spread to Forest Hills. The constituents calling her are stating that they are told by the City that they can't get an appointment until next week.

Mr. Sylvia stated that, in light of this evening's discussion, he will put together a proposal to identify the funding and seeking a consultant to help the city in an immediate solution and a long term plan to properly train the City employees for the future.

Councilman Barone stated that to him, this is an emergency. We need to look at getting an outside source now. He suggested the possibility of piggy backing a State contract, as Mr. Carlucci suggested to him.

Mr. Carlucci stated that his suggestion to Councilman Barone is tomorrow he will, through Purchasing, check to see if the State has a contract the City can ride on, if not, he will expedite to go out to bid for a vendor.

Councilman Livingston stated that at the last Council meeting, he sent an e-mail to Mr. Sciolto to research the problem at Rosedale and Brookside and the status of where this is in Court. Mr. Sciolto stated that he believes this is set for the next Court session.

Mayor Napolitano stated that he and Mr. Sylvia visited the site of 34 Gordon St., where there was an extensive rat problem. He read correspondence from the property manager of what he will be doing to clean the property. He stated that he will send a letter to every resident on Gordon Ave. and Marlborough St. with a copy of the letter from the property owner. **Mr. Sylvia** stated that he visited the property again today and noticed, already, some changes in the cleanup of this property. **Council Vice-President McFarland** stated that this property has been vacant for two years and it has been cited numerous times over the last few years because it has not been properly maintained.

Mayor Napolitano stated that one of the biggest problems we have in the City is we only have two Minimum Housing Inspectors in the City. The increase in foreclosures makes it impossible for two people to handle the whole City. CDBG receives monthly reports of foreclosures, there needs to be more coordination between CDBG and Minimum Housing. We need either more staff or a global solution to this problem. He asked the Council to consider the issue and possible solution to this issue.

Roberta Costa, 92 Gansett Ave., appeared to speak and stated that her gardener today found one dead rat and reset seven traps in her yard. Her yard is well-maintained and she keeps her trash contained. She no longer feels safe and satisfied living in this City.

Belkis Voisinet, 116 Appleton St., appeared to speak and stated that she has found four dead rats in her house already. We expect the City, as taxpayers, to help.

Hope Pilkington, 12 Selkirk Rd., appeared to speak and stated that there is a rat problem at the boat ramp at Stillhouse Cove. This is a public park and needs to be addressed.

Anthony Liberatore, 18 Bank St., Director of Parks and Recreation, appeared to speak and stated that the problem started at Chapel View development. They did no pre-setting of traps, which they are supposed to do when doing a construction site, which was done at the Stadium when putting in synthetic turfs. He indicated that McDonalds and Taco Bell on Reservoir Ave. were shut down because of infested rates prior to them being torn down and rebuilt, same as CVS on Reservoir Ave.

Gladys Cok, owner of three properties in Edgewood, 176 Bartlett; 147 Wheeler and 106-108 Arnold. She stated that she has spent \$4,600 to address the rodents problem in her house. She cannot afford this kind of money.

Council Vice-President McFarland suggested to Mayor Napolitano, that instead of sending out letters, the Administration compile a comprehensive mailer of each department in the City, phone number and what that department does, similar to the director former Mayor Traficante sent out fourteen years ago, which she still has. This would be helpful to every homeowner in knowing who to call when they have a problem.

Councilman Lupino stated that he had made a request and then made it to a demand to Council President Garabedian and the Mayor that the Council receive a weekly update regarding this problem. That was three and a half weeks ago and he has not received an update and does

not know why. It appears that the rodent problem is more pervasive than we were led to be. Maybe there should be a special meeting just to address this issue.

Sockanosset Crossroad and New London Ave. traffic study – specific dates and traffic counts and who actually is doing the study. (Requested by Councilman Lupino).

Natick Ave. Engineering Study Report. (Requested by Councilman Lupino)

Councilman Lupino stated that he addressed the above two items at the July City Council meeting and at that time, had requested that they be continued to the next meeting and should not be before this Committee.

8S-08-1 Ordinance in amendment of Title 8 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Health and Safety” (Mandatory Recycling).

Mr. Sylvia appeared to speak and stated that this Ordinance is proposing a new program “No Bin No Pickup”.

Councilman Lanni asked why this Ordinance is necessary since the City has a Recycling coordinator who already cites people who do not recycle. **Mr. Sylvia** stated that we do have a Recycling Coordinator, John DeMaula, who is doing a great job and we are looking to maximize our recycling program.

Mr. Carlucci stated that this Ordinance would be making our collection rates even higher for recycling.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that she has received some concerns from the older residents where they feel recycling will be a burden on them if they do not have anything to recycle a certain week and their trash will not be picked up. She asked how this will be effected and who will be monitoring from Waste Management to make sure their trash is picked up. **Mr. Sylvia** stated that he does not have an answer of who will be monitoring this.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked what if the residents take their recycling bin in due to inclement weather, their trash will not be picked up. She asked how this would be addressed. **Mr. Sylvia** stated that he has not considered this scenario. We are open to change, this is a starting point.

Council Vice-President McFarland asked how the recycling will be monitored for businesses, since there is no business in the City that recycles. She asked how businesses will be addressed in this Ordinance. **Mr. Sylvia** stated that businesses fall under State regulations. One of the goals is to develop a program addressing businesses or modify this Ordinance. **Council Vice-President McFarland** stated that businesses are included in the last page of this proposed Ordinance.

Councilman Livingston suggested that the Administration meet with Council Vice-President McFarland to try to address the issues mentioned this evening.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Council President Garabedian, it was voted to table this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

8S-08-2 Ordinance in amendment of Title 8 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled “Health and Safety” (Penalties for Environmental Violations).

On motion by Council President Garabedian, seconded by Councilman Lanni, it was voted to table this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

8S-08-3 Ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Works to execute a grant of a utility easement relating to a Cranston High School East construction project located at 845 Park Ave., Cranston, RI.

No one appeared to speak in favor or to oppose.

On motion by Council President Garabedian, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

8S-08-4 Ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Works to execute a grant of a utility easement relating to a Woodridge School construction project located at 401 Budlong Rd., Cranston, RI.

No one appeared to speak in favor or to oppose.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Council President Garabedian, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

8S-08-5 Ordinance authorizing the Director of Public Works to execute a grant of a utility easement relating to a Budlong Pool construction project located at Aqueduct Rd., Cranston, RI.

No one appeared to speak in favor or to oppose.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Council President Garabedian, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees