

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, July 12, 2007 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Council Member Maria A. Bucci, Chair
Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr., Vice-Chair
Councilman John E. Lanni, Jr.
Councilman Emilio L. Navarro
Councilman Jeffrey P. Barone
Council President Aram G. Garabedian

Also Present: Councilman Anthony J. Lupino
Frank Migliorelli, Deputy Director of Administration
Aubrey Lombardo, Assistant City Solicitor
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Council President Garabedian, 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:

Status of draft of ordinance requiring a bond from Utilities. Chair Bucci

Solicitor stated that a letter has been drafted and is waiting to be approved by Solicitor Sciolto and it will then go out to all the utilities stating exactly what is in their contracts and in the State Law. An Ordinance is in the process of being drafted. She is working with the Public Works Department and hoping to have an Ordinance drafted by the next Public Works Committee meeting. She stated that the City bonds other things, she and Solicitor Sciolto cannot find any precedent that we bond for utility companies who do work in the City.

Councilman Navarro stated that we need to find out what percentage of the companies are doing big jobs or more work in the City.

Councilman Lupino stated that this issue really needs to be addressed with the utilities because a lot of the utilities use sub-contractors to do their work. He spoke regarding the Western Cranston sewer lines. He stated that he has attended numerous Planning Commission meetings and we have had Veolia Water appear and Veolia continues to state that they have no contract with Western Cranston sewer and they are not responsible for maintaining Western Cranston sewer. We have not been able to get the correct information of who is responsible for this. The Planning Commission is looking to Veolia to approve tie ins. They are just saying they can do it because they can handle capacity, but they do not maintain them. He is asking that the Administration and the Council get together and try to resolve this issue.

Ernie DePari, Highway Superintendent, appeared to speak and stated that he receives complaints every day as far as the streets not being repaired properly by the utility companies after they complete their work. Providence Water is the worst of all the companies. We have to hold them accountable for the roads they work on. The City does as much repairing as possible with the employees he has. Councilman Lanni asked Mr. DePari, of the paving Highway does, what percentage is caused by the utility companies. Mr. DePari stated at least 80%. Councilman Lanni stated that he would like to see how much the City would save the taxpayers if we forced the utility companies to bring the condition of the roads up to compliance when they are done with their projects.

Council President Garabedian stated that an administrative function needs to be established where an inspection is done for every job that is done, who the contractor was, a bond posted and if they do not do the job, they be charged under the performance bond. He recommended that two Council members meet with legal counsel and Administration and put together all the information and develop a strong Ordinance.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this item to next month's meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

Chair stated that she had asked that installation of check valves on Amanda St. be placed on the agenda. This is not listed on the agenda, but there are members of the public who are present and would like to address the Committee regarding this issue. She asked if any members of the Committee object to hearing the members of the public. No one objected.

Emily Perrotta, 126 Amanda St., appeared to speak and stated that from the last meeting at which this issue was discussed, the residents were to get together with Veolia Water and Council members to discuss this and it has been three months and nothing has been done. Check valves is not the solution. Representative from Veolia, at the last meeting, stated that this is not a solution, but it would help.

Chair stated that this issue is being discussed this evening to give the approval to have the valves installed.

Councilman Barone stated that he is in favor of this, but this needs to be done by Ordinance because money needs to be allocated. We also need to ask Veolia Water if the valves are going to solve the problem, what is going to solve the problem and this should be incorporated in the Ordinance.

Councilman Lanni agreed with Councilman Barone and stated that this should be in form of an Ordinance, but we also need to have Veolia be held responsible to do what they are supposed to do. We also need to get a timetable from Veolia of when this problem is going to be fixed on their part.

Councilman Lupino stated that at the last meeting, Veolia did state that there were certain infrastructure upgrades that they inherited when they took over the system that were excluded from the contract.

Chair stated that an Ordinance will be introduced at the next Council meeting to address the installation of check valves.

Debra Callahan, 125 Amanda St., appeared to speak and asked how long it will take to pass this Ordinance. Chair stated that the Ordinance will be introduced at the next Council meeting to be heard at the August Public Works Committee meeting to be passed and adopted at the August City Council meeting. Councilman Lanni suggested that a Resolution be drafted to follow the Ordinance and have the Solicitor look at the contract and determine what Veolia Water can and can't do.

Petition from National Grid - 4 Exchange St. and 5 Vinton Ave.

Feb 15, 2007 Replacement of Steel Gas Main lines:

(Cont. 4/12/2007, 5/21/2007 and 6/14/2007)

Chair stated that the utility company has asked for a continuance since the representative who was to attend this meeting is out of town.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this petition. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition from Verizon New England - Excavation Phenix and Park

March 7, 2007 to dig splice pit to repair damaged cable

(Cont'd. 4/12/2007, 5/21/2007 and 6/14/2007)

March 19, 2007 - to repair crushed ducts in MH

(Cont. 5/21/2007 and 6/14/2007)

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this petition. Motion passed unanimously.

State Recycling Program (Cont. 4/12/2007, 5/21/2007 and 6/14/2007)

No one appeared to speak.

Chair asked that City Clerk notify Suzanne Arena, who originally asked that this item be placed on the agenda, attend the next meeting.

On motion by Councilman Lanni, seconded by Councilman Barone, it was voted to continue this petition. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Briggs Farm Athletic Complex installation of lights: Western Cranston Little League field

Frank Deo, nearby resident, appeared to speak and stated that he does not feel lights at this field are necessary and it is not fair to the neighbors in the area and it is an inconvenience to the neighbors. When this field was built, the neighbors were told there would be no Sunday games. There have been practices at this field on Sundays as early as 7:00 AM. The neighbors were also told that there would be no loudspeakers and now there are loudspeakers being used. Grass is not being cut in the batting cages. The signs on the batting cages state not to be used before noon on Sundays. They are being used by the leagues every day at all hours.

Michael Varrato, President of Western Cranston Little League, appeared to speak and stated that this issue was brought up in 2004. As to the grass in the batting cages not being cut, he will take this responsibility as the league's. He thinks the league has been a good neighbor.

Council President Garabedian stated that we need a proposal indicating what the field is going to be used for and the hours the lights will be on and address this with the neighbors.

Anthony Liberatore, Director of Parks and Recreation, appeared to speak and stated that letters were drafted and sent to the neighbors regarding this proposal. He stated that some of the restrictions if the installation of the lights is approved are no inning starts after 9:25 P.M. and no matter what inning the game is in, lights go out at 10:00 P.M. If approved, there would be four galvanized steel poles, two at 60' and two at 70'. The 60' poles have four lamps each and the 70' poles have 9 lamps. There is no glare to these lights and no light would be shining at any home in the area.

Mr. Varrato stated that this field would be for players twelve years old and younger.

Mr. Liberatore stated that the cost to install the lights is \$45,000 and will be paid for by the league in full. He indicated that he stated to Mr. Vorrotta that when the electric meter is installed, it would be billed directly to the league and Mr. Vorrotta agreed to that. No City funds will be used.

Council President Garabedian asked how many times this field would be used. Mr. Vorrotta stated from May to June or July and some All Star Games. It would probably be used approximately 60 times from April to October. There is a fall season, which is when they would utilize the lights.

Councilman Navarro stated that his concern is the enforcement. We need to have some rules and regulations in place so that the neighbors are assured that the rules are enforced either by the league or Parks and Recreation. He asked that the Parks and Recreation Director put together a contract in an Ordinance form stating all the rules and regulations agreed upon by the City and the league.

Councilman Barone stated that he is in favor of this request, but he agrees that this should be done by Ordinance stating all the rules and regulations.

Councilman Lanni stated that he is not opposed to this, but since there is a noise Ordinance, he stated that the Police can test the loudspeakers before they are utilized, to make sure it passes the noise decibel level so it does not inconvenience the residents in the area.

Mr. Varrato stated that he is not opposed to having the sound system checked by the Police Department. The loudspeakers are normally not used during the regular season. They are only used during tournaments.

On motion by Councilman Barone, seconded by Councilman Navarro, it was voted to approve this request and refer it to the full City Council. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Vice-President McFarland stated that this request should be before the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees