

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, September 16, 2010 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 P.M.

Present: Councilman Mario Aceto, Chair
Councilman Anthony J. Lupino, Vice-Chair
Councilman Robert J. Pelletier
Councilman Richard D. Santamaria, Jr.
Councilwoman Michelle Bergin-Andrews
Council President John E. Lanni, Jr.

Also Present: Councilman Emilio L. Navarro
Councilman Paul H. Archetto
Robin Muksian-Schutt, Director of Administration
Gerald Cordy, Deputy Director of Administration
Chris Rawlson, Assistant City Solicitor
Robert Strom, Director of Finance
Maria Medeiros Wall, City Clerk
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Council President Lanni, seconded by Councilman Pelletier, 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:

- **RI Resource Recovery: Status Report from Administration and Law Dept. on billing**

Mr. Strom stated that we have received a rebate check in the amount of \$60,000 from RI Resource Recovery for our recycling.

Chair asked what the status is of the \$2 million owed to the City. Ms. Schutt stated that Solicitor Kirshenbaum was not able to attend this meeting. All she knows is a letter was sent to RI Resource Recovery and, if needed, a show cause hearing will be held.

City Clerk indicated that Solicitor Kirshenbaum contacted her today and stated that he had a conflict and could not attend the meeting this evening.

Councilman Lupino stated that there should have been something prepared for this meeting. He would like, prior to the Council meeting, an explanation of what has transpired. Chair suggested waiting until the Council meeting for an update and if they have not paid us the \$2 million, we will issue a show cause hearing.

Councilman Pelletier asked that we put the Attorney General's Office on notice of our intentions. **Chair** asked Solicitor if this would be the procedure. Solicitor stated that he does not believe this is the correct way of doing it, but he will speak to Solicitor Kirshenbaum.

Council President Lanni stated that there are millions of dollars owed to the citizens of Cranston and we have to move forward on this.

Councilman Lupino asked that for the next Council meeting, he would like an update on the Inter-jurisdictional Agreement we sent to Warwick, West Warwick and Johnston.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Street Lighting Policy: Report from Administration**

Mr. Cordy stated that he spoke to National Grid two weeks ago and was told that they are turning the lights on at an average of 150 per night and the City is receiving phone calls from constituents indicating that their lights were being turned back on. National Grid is still in the process of turning the lights back on.

Councilwoman Bergin-Andrews asked how many lights are left to be turned back on. Mr. Cordy stated that we can't get an accurate count. He will try to get a more accurate figure for the Council meeting.

Councilman Aceto asked what the policy is National Grid is following as to the order the lights are being turned back on. Mr. Cordy stated that there is no policy that we are aware of.

Councilman Lupino asked for status of electric bill that we are paying for the lights on State roads. Mr. Cordy stated that as they remove the lights on the State roads, the bills will stop coming to the City. The reason we are paying for those lights is like all other cities and towns. At some time, the City requested to have the lights put on those roads. He also stated that all lights on State roads that run through the City are owned by the City and the City is responsible for the electric bill. The plan is to have the lights removed every third light on the State roads in the City, with the exception of where there was a traffic signal, those lights are to stay on at the suggestion of the Police Department and Traffic Engineer.

Councilwoman Bergin-Andrews stated that the State maintains the roads when plowing them, they are their roads. She questioned why we are not taking some kind of action so the Court can determine who is going to be responsible for paying the electric bill. She does not want to take the State's words for it that we have to pay it.

Solicitor indicated that by State Statute and case law, the State does not have to light State roads. This could cause other cities and towns to also go into litigation for this same issue, but it is something that could be looked into.

Chair stated that since the electric company answers to the PUC, he asked if we could draft a letter on behalf of public safety, to the PUC stating that this is a public safety matter. Ms. Schutt stated that we could try.

Councilman Pelletier stated that there is a safety concern that needs to be addressed before financial concerns.

- **Natick Ave. Bridge**

Ms. Schutt stated that per the Director of Public Works, application will be submitted to RI DEM tomorrow. Right now, we are at 75% of design phase on the bridge. If we are on target, application should be approved by January 1, 2011. Construction could be started in the Spring and advertised in February. If construction is delayed until the Summer, advertising would be in April or May.

Councilman Pelletier asked for an update at the next Council meeting regarding this issue. Chair stated that this would be up to the Council President.

Councilman Lupino stated that there is a guardrail installed and it is not steel, it is wood. He asked who would be responsible for repairing this guardrail and there are no reflectors or anything that advises people that it is there. Ms. Schutt stated that she will check into this.

Councilman Pelletier stated that there is a pole at Wildflower and Scituate Ave., which is very badly damaged and is dangerous. This has been there for approximately two to three months. He asked that this be looked into.

- **Request from National Grid for pole location at Webster Ave.**

On motion by Councilman Pelletier, seconded by Councilman Lupino, it was voted to approve this pole location. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees