

**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12, 2014
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
ROOM 208
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

Members Present: Chair Carl R. Chisem
Councilman David Bauer
Councilman James B. Streeto
Councilman Thomas Serra
Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska

Staff Present: William Russo, Public Works Director
Thomas Nigosanti, Chief Engineer
Tina Gomes, Chief Management Analyst

Chair Chisem opened the Public Works and Facilities Commission Meeting at 7:02 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated January 8, 2014 and February 12, 2014. Councilwoman Russo-Driska seconded approval for the February 12, 2014 minutes. Councilwoman Russo-Driska and Councilman Serra abstained from the approval of the January 8, 2014 meeting minutes due to their absences. Councilman Streeto made a motion to approve both minutes. Councilman Bauer seconded approval of both minutes. Minutes were unanimously approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Howard Reid spoke in regards to the public hearing portion of the February 12, 2014 meeting in which he had attended. He wanted to follow up on the discussion regarding the need for extending sidewalks and the new intersection. Director Russo stated that he spoke with Weston & Sampson in terms of what needs to be done and advised them to proceed. He wants this commission to endorse the projected work of the sidewalks on East Ridge Road and Ridge Road going to Randolph Road. The original plan was for sidewalk around the school, but for an extra \$180,000.00 it was determined that the entire area should be sidewalk. This extra fee can be incorporated into the road bond.

The only caution involved would be the removal of about 6 trees down by the cemetery on the Ridge Road side. These trees are right on the existing sidewalk but the forestry commission will work on the re-plantings of new trees. Deputy Director Dobmeier set aside \$20,000.00 for the tree removal and re-planting. In terms of bettering the area, Director Russo urges that the commission supports the new sidewalks on the streets.

Director Russo attended a pre-budget hearing to secure the funding, which consists of \$50,000.00. The principal and superintendent were also at the meeting and are fore the changes with the school. The intersection will be brought to a safer and more practical 4-way stop. There will be a bus loop that will go about 25 feet from the front door. The cars will come in heading north, so that the door side will be facing the school and they will exit heading south. With a total of 368 children in the school, a drop off area is necessary. The loop will not be open to public, it is intended for busses picking up and dropping

off only. The driveway side will be used for the parents that are picking up and dropping off. It was suggested that there needs to be a monitor outside making sure that there are no parents dropping off their children in the bus drop off area.

In terms of moving forward, letters will be sent out to the public with will be affected by these changes letting them know of the endorsement and the moving forward of the project. Jane Harris and Deputy Director Dobmeier are anticipated to attend the next meeting to further discuss details.

The public comment portion of the meeting was closed at 7:29 P.M.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Order to Vacate and Posting of Unsafe Structure at 14 Laurel Street – Director Russo stated that Chief Building Official, Dean Lisitano, condemned the house at 14 Laurel Street. The back of the house is in neglect and the roof caved in. Atlas Fence was hired for \$1,100.00 to put fencing around the property and Michael Wrang, a Middletown engineer and builder, was also hired for \$500.00 to secure the property. Tina Gomes has the money to pay for this out of Blighted Structures.

It is unknown whether or not the homeowner's insurance will pay for the damage due to neglect. This blighted structure may come up again in the future. In terms of an appropriation, General Council may not have the money to take the structure down and then go after them legally.

Director Russo stated that he spoke with Dean Lisitano whom mentioned that the homeowner did not come into contact with his insurance company, which leads the commission to believe that nothing is going to be done on his end to alleviate the problem.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Building Permit Refund, 475 Ballfall Road – Motion was made by Commissioner Bauer to accept and forward the building permit refund for 475 Ballfall Road to the council. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Streeto and approved unanimously.
- b. Discussion for Consultant on Park Renovations – Director Russo spoke about the condition of the fields after inclement weather. After speaking with a firm regarding field turf, he was informed that a lot of towns have been using it. They are doing a study with Snow School and Hubbard Park to look at field turf for the city. The firm's initial proposal was \$7,500.00 and Director Russo is working with William Warner, the director of Planning, Conservation & Development in terms of getting the work started.

Director Russo estimated that Snow School's field would cost around \$500,000.00 to complete the work. After discussion, the commission came to a conclusion that they support the idea of having new turf on the fields but not until everything is prioritized based on the need of the field and which field needs to be worked on first. Cost accounting will need to be analyzed in terms of operational cost and usage.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bauer to postpone the discussion with a renovation consultant at the Regular Public Works & Facilities meeting in May. It was noted that the motion proposed on a comprehensive study of the cities recreational facilities. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Russo-Driska and approved unanimously.

- c. Discussion on Palmer Field Rates for Field Rental and Sign Advertisements – Councilman Bauer made a motion was made to amend the agenda and postpone the discussion to the next regular meeting. Motion was seconded by Councilman Streeto. Motion was approved unanimously.

Director Russo requested to table the discussion because the fees aren't ready yet. It may be a lengthy discussion based on the ordinance in terms of fees for Marie Norwood. The Public Works & Facilities Commission has to be on the same page because it will then go to Finance and Government followed by the Common Council.

- d. Sidewalk Snow Shoveling Ordinance – Motion was made for approval. The motion was seconded for purpose of discussion. The ordinance is brief but it doesn't speak about enforcement and what the process is that's involved. Commissioner Russo-Driska brought up a statement from the last meeting in regards to adding into the ordinance something about enforcement and who is going to do the enforcing.

Director Russo stated that after working with the Deputy General Counsel, item 5b is new. The language that originally stated that the city will clean the sidewalks was removed from the ordinance because we do not have the resources. The Conformance Inspector will be the enforcer of these issues and he will keep the records. The fine was upped from \$50.00 to \$75.00 for the first offence. It will increase by \$25.00 for each storm thereafter during the same fiscal year, and the fine will never exceed \$250.00.

Director Russo stated that 125 \$50.00 tickets were mailed out in regards to sidewalks not being shoveled. Majority of the public pays the fines and letters are consistently being mailed out to the residents.

It was suggested that the ordinance should include under the letter C, the verbiage "during the same fiscal year" so that it is clear that there is a reset in July. Motion was made to move the ordinance to the General Council for study with the language change. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Serra and approved.

- e. Accepting 6 Streets for Town Aid Funding – Director Russo stated that these are new subdivisions that need to be accepted by the council so town aid can be applied for. Street names will not be chosen by this commission as they were already chosen by the previous Public Works Commission. This commission will only be accepting the 6 streets as city streets so that town aid can be applied for.

The contractor constructing the streets will have to build the streets up to the city's standards. Once everything is inspected and accepted the process will be complete. The streets are the developer's responsibility until the decision to make them city streets is accepted.

Motion to move approval was put on the table by Councilman Serra and seconded by Councilman Streeto. Motion was approved unanimously.

- f. Budget for Public Works Department & Parks Department – Director Russo stated that he brings the budget to the commission before it is brought to the council. Not much has been changed in terms of Public Works. The total increase is \$389,804.00 due to winter snow, vehicle repair, sand and salt material and operations.

The Parks Department has an increase of \$16,000.00 due to contractual salaries and other related matters. Everything else was left the same and is still in the process of being reviewed to maintain efficiency.

- g. Budget for Sanitation Department – There are no changes made to the budget for the Sanitation Department.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. February 2014 Overtime Report – The Commission received copies of the overtime report.
- b. February 2014 Building Permits - \$27,775.89 was made in the month of February which is a substantial amount for such a cold snowy month.

OTHER

- a. February 2014 Monthly Report – Highway Division – the Commission received copies of the monthly report for Public Works Department
- b. February 2014 Weekly Reports – Parks Division – the Commission received copies of the weekly report for the Parks Department.

As there was no further discussion, the Public Works & Facilities Commission meeting was closed at 8:23 P.M.

Minutes of the 1-29-14 General Meeting

Started at 7:05 PM

E-Board members in attendance:

Christine Bourne ,Jeff Knakal, Leslie Spatola, Jim D'Antonio, Sylvia Morello, Bill Sheedy, Brian Young, Ed Thibodeau and Roberta Price both from AFSCME.

Minutes approved by Judy Kudrak and Jeff Knakal seconded

No Treasurer's Report -Brooke Carta absent

Members were encouraged to use their vacation time and to make sure you have the appropriate number of weeks so that they are not taken away from the member.

Upgrade requests needed to be in.

The President appoints the negotiating committee.

Members will have time to review the contract proposal .

Motion was made to end meeting closed at 8:06 PM by Bill Sheedy and seconded by Sylvia Morello