

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

June 16, 2009

3:30 P.M.

Councilman Rico, Chairman, called the meeting of the Public Works Committee to order, with Councilpersons Ladd, Scott, Berz, Murphy, McGary and Gilbert present. City Attorney Michael McMahan and Shirley Crownover, Assistant Clerk to the Council, were also present.

Others present included Dan Johnson, John VanWinkle, Steve Leach, Jerry Stewart, Dennis Malone, Jim Templeton, Lee Norris, Justin Holland, Gene Hyde, Chief Parker, Donna Kelley, Dallas Rucker, Paul Page, Larry Zehnder, Daisy Madison, and Beverly Johnson.

Before beginning a discussion on the agenda, Adm. Leach made mention of the Summit of Softball meeting, which the Council is invited to attend on **Tuesday, June 23rd at 10:00 a.m.** He noted, also, that the field trip would include the “Summit of Garbage”, stating that they had a lot of issues with the old landfill facility—that when the Council tours the Summit of Softball, they are allowing them to take them over to the Summit of Landfills.

Adm. Zehnder asked that Councilmembers RSVP to Wanda Eckstein in his office, stating that so far only one councilmember had agreed to go on the kayak outing on Thursday. Councilwoman Berz stated that she would love to take part in this; however it was on the night of “Sweet Diversity”. Adm. Zehnder assured her that there would be time for both.

Adm. Leach stated that later in the meeting there would be a presentation on “Neighborhood Calming” and that John VanWinkle was present for this. He stated that before getting into a discussion on **Ordinance (h)**, he would proceed with the agenda.

Resolution 7(d) authorized a contract for Summit Landfill Gas Extraction Systems Additions to SCS Field Services in the amount of \$294,260, plus a contingency amount of \$29,340, for a total amount not to exceed \$323,600. He called on Jerry Stewart

Mr. Stewart stated that Summit Landfill is closed, and he showed the location of the Summit of Softball. He noted that the existing gas system has 50 wells; that methane gas has to be reported to the State and that we had to do a survey to determine if any gas is migrating off-site—that the potential was there but there was none; that last summer they did a full Study to look at the wells and gas systems and made a schedule of the repairs that needed to be made. He stated that they were putting in five additional wells and gas probes because of the potential; that we have to maintain a landfill for 30 years after it is closed—that this is part of our obligation.

Adm. Leach noted that when this was an active landfill, there were no neighbors but when it closed down, we have all these activities going on, and we have to be good neighbors—that these are dynamic and changing all the time; that we have to have a long-term commitment to be good neighbors.

Councilwoman Scott asked about a contract in the past to tap this gas, wanting to know how it worked, and if we maintain what they tap and go with different companies to do this.

Mr. Stewart responded that we contract with vendors to make electricity out of it; that the original wells were put in in 1999, and we contracted with one particular company and were looking at other alternatives—that it is either us or one contractor. Adm. Leach added that we are responsible.

Councilwoman Scott stated that she was not arguing that point; that she wanted to understand about having just one person to maintain. Mr. Stewart stated that it is under his contract, with Councilwoman Scott asking if this is the second contract? Mr. Stewart reiterated that this is our obligation, and we have to make sure it is tied in. Councilwoman Scott asked how many contractors we use? Mr. Stewart responded just one who deals with the gas system. She asked if he would pick up there and have revenue? Mr. Stewart responded that there is revenue sharing but that this was a topic for another day. Councilwoman Scott asked that the Council be enlightened on things they were not happy about at another time.

Adm. Leach stated that **Resolutions (e) and (f)** are similar, both being agreements with EPB to relocate existing facilities within an existing EPB easement. The first was Old Hixson Pike Roadway Improvements Project and the next was Northpoint Boulevard Extension Phase 2.

Mr. Malone explained that when we do roadway projects we are obligated to relocate EPB private easements as required to obtain the right-of-way; that we are responsible for paying if we force them to relocate. In the case of Northpoint, it is private property, and there is no road and four telephone poles, and we are requesting them to relocate.

Resolution (g) authorizes an amendment to an agreement with Civic Engineering for implementation of Azteca City Works at the Waste Water Treatment Plant to increase the contract amount by \$9,600 for additional services required, for a revised total amount not to exceed \$39,470.00. Mr. Stewart explained that this was precipitated by our moving to Oracle and also Cityworks—that there has to be interfacing to develop.

Resolutions (h), (i) and (j) are similar and authorize Elemi Architects to temporarily use rights-of-ways on East Main St. to install signage. Mr. Malone noted that all three are temporary uses for signage. Adm. Leach added that we look at the size of the sign and clearance; that all are in right-of-ways and above the sidewalk and curb—that generally there is an 8 ft. clearance. He stated if some had not seen the western part of E. Main that he thought they would be astounded at our progress.

Resolution (k) authorizes the Mayor to accept an endowment grant from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development in the amount of \$200,000.00, with no requirements for any matching funds, to purchase and plant trees in various areas of Chattanooga. Adm. Leach called on Gene Hyde.

Mr. Hyde mentioned the land that had been cleared for the Volkswagen plant and the alarm shown by some by the de-forestation and would like to see trees planted to take the place; that we had come up with \$200,000.00, and he presented a Planting Plan for this \$200,000.00—that on the front end it is a gift or donation to the City, and we are going to scatter some of the money into neighborhoods; that we will do something with Public Works for replanting along streambanks. He noted that Adm. Zehnder is always asking for extra trees. He added that also money for administrative costs will leverage with grant money to extend the dollars even further. He noted that this is a rare opportunity that has come along and is the first time we have seen \$200,000 with very few strings attached—that it is a great opportunity.

Councilman McGary asked if there was any criteria for neighborhood tree planting? Mr. Hyde responded that this is a small item that he and Mrs. Johnson have to work out; that there are neighborhood enhancements on an annual basis; that this is a target for neighborhood associations, and he could not give any details right now.

Ms. Johnson stated that this money came at an appropriate time; that they would develop guidelines for specific categories and would develop guidelines based on equity across all nine districts, which is similar to the way we handle other dollars.

Councilman McGary asked if neighborhood associations would get this information, with Councilwoman Scott asking if this would be folded into our regular program.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR JUNE 23, 2009

Resolution (d) authorizes Sanjay Actuarya to temporarily use the right-of-way at 7725 Lee Highway to plant shrubs, subject to certain conditions. This is north of Bonny Oaks.

Resolution (e) authorized Ken J. Defoor to temporarily use the right-of-way at the center of the round-about at the new phase of North Point Boulevard to install a sprinkler line under the roadway for landscaping, subject to certain conditions.

Councilman McGary asked if the planting of shrubs at 7725 Lee Highway is temporary? Adm. Leach explained that shrubs can always be removed and that the planting will be done with this understanding.

Adm. Leach explained that next week there would be a Resolution added dealing with traffic operations; that we thought we had a good contract with JDH, but they cannot meet their obligations, and they would like to re-award this contract, not to exceed \$90,000, to the second bidder, who met the requirement; that there was a building that had leaked for many years and needs a good roof. Councilman Murphy asked if this had already been awarded? Mr. Malone explained that we gave the first bidder 10 days, and he could not execute and would assume the cost; that there is a 5% difference in the two prices. Councilman McGary asked about protocol and if the project needed to be re-bid? Attorney McMahan explained that it goes to the next lowest bidder.

Adm. Leach went back to **Ordinance (h)** on tonight's agenda relative to garbage and refuse. He noted that there were some questions by Councilwoman Scott and that Justin Holland was here to answer them.

Councilwoman Scott stated that this Ordinance changes a lot of things; that for a lot of good reasons it is real specific, and she was learning through this process how difficult this was and how much expense was involved; that she had learned there were 500 requests to repair cans monthly; that she had people calling about trash cans because they were not under the impression they would have to wait this long a time; that some neighborhoods had been waiting for cans for two and one-half to six weeks; that according to this Ordinance you get a can and if you lose or damage it, the responsibility is on you, and you have to lease another one for \$60.00 unless it is damage by the City's truck. She wondered why we could not accept another alternative for cans to be purchased locally—that some people would like to have a can with the proviso that if something happens to the can, the responsibility is theirs. She stated that it was her thought that people should have the option of getting their own can—then they would own it and Public Works would have control over the can; that it is costing \$100,000 a year for cans, and we would be shifting that cost to people who want to purchase their own cans; there would also be tax revenue if the cans were bought locally and people purchased their cans. She questioned why this would not work?

Mr. Holland responded that we would lose control; that if we just picked up any container, we would lose our grasp on the schedule, mentioning strip malls and commercial who would buy a lot of cans and set them out.

Councilwoman Scott stated that she was thinking mainly of residential cans; that we already have rules for seven cans for multi-plexes; that Public Works would identify acceptable cans, and she thought this would be doable; that if Public Works saw more than two, they would only pick up two cans.

Mr. Holland responded that he agreed in part, but if they damaged private property, the City would be liable to some degree.

Councilwoman Scott stated that there could be an Ordinance saying that the City does not replace cans.

Attorney McMahan added that we could take a release from residents, saying that the City was released from all damage; that he could fix a document such as this.

Mr. Norris asked Councilwoman Scott if her concern was about the delay in getting cans or people having the option to buy one?

Councilwoman Scott responded “both”—that people are waiting on cans and the City is having to do manual pick-ups, which is not efficient; that people should be given the option to lease versus owning their can and would take responsibility for their can.

Mr. Norris asked if the City would be responsible for repairing the cans that people purchased?

Councilwoman Scott responded “no”—that they would be responsible for getting them out at the right time and in the right place, and the cans would have to meet city standards.

Chairman Rico stated that we were “beating this to death”.

Attorney McMahan stated that he thought it was the concern of the Department that this would be an administrative headache with a hodgepodge of cans.

Mr. Holland stated that it usually takes six days to get a can; that we had gone for a month now but usually the waiting time is just six days.

Councilwoman Scott stated that since April 27th is a lot longer than six days.

TRAFFIC CALMING

Before Mr. VanWinkle began his presentation, Adm. Leach handed out “Join Biweekly Curbside Recycling” to everyone for their vehicles.

Mr. VanWinkle stated that it was good to be at this meeting; that we had new councilmembers that need to be orientated to what his department does. He stated that the most common request that he gets is to try to do something about speed in neighborhoods; that until a year ago, they did not have a “magic wand”, but they now had a tool that is working well in a Neighborhood Traffic Management Program. He stated that guidelines were developed in 1987, and these guidelines can be seen on the City’s website; that they requested that neighborhoods are provided a copy of these guidelines, and the neighborhood needs to get a petition from the neighborhood with 2/3 of the residents signing the petition to be submitted that agrees there is a problem. He went on to say that often they send the guidelines out and hear nothing more about it, which indicates that it probably is not a big problem; that if they don’t hear back, this sits in a holding file.

Councilman McGary asked how many signatures they had to have? Mr. VanWinkle reiterated 2/3 of the residents and only one signature per household; that once they got the petition, they do a Traffic Study to show traffic volume, speed, and accident history—that they get a score for each category, and if it qualifies, when we have the funding available, then we work with the neighborhood. He continued, stating that speed humps are the most common tool and showed a picture of Old Mission Rd. in 1996, stating that the humps significantly changed the speed with a 29% reduction—that the numbers stayed down and there was a drop in traffic volume because people who were cutting through the neighborhood got on the road that they should have been on in the first place.

Mr. Vanwinkle continued, stating that the City Attorney said speed humps were not in the manual and did not consider them legal—that these traffic devises could not be supported legally; that in 2000, the manual had guidelines and speed humps were legitimized. Since then we have seen significant increases in their use, and he provided pictures to back this up.

Councilwoman Scott wanted to know how much speed humps cost? Mr. VanWinkle stated that the price had now come down to \$700.00; that they worked very closely with neighborhoods and did not put them right in front of a house and driveways; that they tried to locate them so that there would be the least inconvenience. He showed pictures of how they are built on a site, stating that they are removable because sometimes neighborhoods change their minds. He noted that it did not destroy the pavement if they were removed.

Mr. VanWinkle continued to show pictures of where speed humps are located, stating that they were guaranteed for 2-3 years and did hold up well.

Councilwoman Berz wanted to know what the waiting time was to have these installed? Mr. VanWinkle responded that it depends on the funds—usually about a year. She wanted to know if people were told on the front end that it could be this long, after they have done the work of getting a petition that it would still be a year. Mr. VanWinkle responded that it depends on when they come in—that we have a waiting list and now have 11 projects ready to go.

Councilman Murphy wanted to know how much they had spent? Leonard, who works on this program, stated that they did about 10-15 a year.

Mr. VanWinkle summarized, stating that there had been a significant drop in speed, mentioning putting in a circle in Valleybrook where there had been a four-way stop. He noted that Stop Signs are not to be used to control speed. He noted that the most calls came from District 5, followed by Districts 6 and 9. At this point he provided the web page information.

Councilman Murphy, again, asked if there was any table of cost? Mr. VanWinkle responded that it depended on the price of fuel.

Mr. VanWinkle had mentioned two different types of applications, and Councilwoman Berz wanted to know if the price was the same. Mr. VanWinkle responded that it depends on the contract, and he would welcome any calls that the Council might forward to him about this. He also urged the Council to take a tour of their shop to see what they do—that this is often shown to third graders.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.