

BURLINGTON PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION
645 Pine Street
Minutes - February 15, 2012

Commissioners present: Nathan Lavery, Mark Porter, Maxwell Tracy and Jared Wood

Commissioners absent: Robert Alberry, Margaret Gundersen and Marc Sherman

Commissioner Lavery called the meeting to order at 6:26 p.m.

Item 1: AGENDA: Commissioner Lavery asked if there were changes to the Agenda; no changes.

Item 2: PUBLIC FORUM: Commissioner Lavery invited members of the audience to come forward to speak on items NOT on the Agenda:

Steve Norman, Ward 4 resident representing the Alliance Francais of the Lake Champlain Region and the Walk/Bike Council: He and Director Goodkind will continue to talk over the next month about bilingual signage. The Walk/Bike Council met yesterday; on their behalf, Mr. Norman requests that bike route signage continue to be posted this spring. Mr. Norman also requests that the signs that came with the bike lockers be posted as soon as possible so the public will know where they are located. Director Goodkind will talk with Nicole Losch, Transportation Planner and Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Manager about the Council's request. Discussion continues with Director Goodkind on bilingual signage for the city.

Item 3: ADDITION OF HANDICAP SPACES IN FRONT OF 208 FLYNN AVENUE
(Joel Fleming, Public Works Engineer)

See Commission packet for February 15, 2012 Memorandum from Mr. Fleming and attachments. A business owner requested two additional handicap-accessible parking spaces in front of 208 Flynn Avenue, which houses twenty businesses, as there is currently only one handicap-accessible space on site. After soliciting feedback from the businesses and receiving no negative feedback, staff recommends designating ONE handicap-accessible space in front of 208 Flynn Avenue, just off an existing handicap-accessible ramp.

Commissioner Tracy moved to accept staff's recommendation to add one handicap-accessible space in front of 208 Flynn Avenue; Commissioner Porter seconded. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Because this space serves a complex of businesses and not a homeowner or tenant, there will be no "sun setting," or planned reconsideration of this space designation.

Item 4: 2012 STREET RECONSTRUCTION WORK LIST
(Erin Demers, Public Works Engineer, Street Capital Program Manager)

See Commission packet for February 7, 2012 Memorandum from Erin Demers.

Ms. Demers presented the "Proposed 2012 Street Reconstruction Program List" for the Commission's approval, which includes *estimated* costs (based on 5% increase over last year's prices) for the over 3.5 miles of street reconstruction, a new crack seal program on 2008-2009 streets, and carryover work from 2011. The work is for the calendar year as opposed to the fiscal year and uses funds appropriated as part of FY 2013 dedicated solely to street capital (per charter).

Once the Commission's approval is secured, staff hopes to complete all contract documents by February 17th and invite bids for the work.

Ms. Demers posted the proposed street reconstruction program list on the DPW website last month, "Tweeted" and posted it on Facebook. Per ordinance, notices of street reconstruction will be sent to residents on affected streets (prior to April 15th) and 2-5 days prior to beginning the work, staff will hang notices on every door.

Commissioner Tracy moved to accept the proposed 2012 street reconstruction program list in its existing form; Commissioner Porter seconded. Unanimous approval.

Discussion: Commissioner Lavery's request: Once staff accepts the final bid, if there are extra funds available, they revisit the status of Mansfield Avenue rather than considering a street slated for reconstruction on next year's list, and come back to the Commission to explain their findings and/or ask the Commission to approve the possible addition to the list. This request was made after Commissioner Wood voiced concern over the condition of Mansfield Avenue, coupled with the volume of commuter and emergency vehicle traffic. Commissioner Wood asked that it Mansfield Avenue at the very least be patched this year. Commissioner Wood also brought to staff's attention the deterioration of the east side of the Mansfield Avenue sidewalk which is asphalt; staff said that they are aware of that area and are monitoring it.

Item 5: WATER FINANCES AND NEED FOR FY 2013 RATE INCREASE

(Laurie Adams, Assistant Director – Water and Wastewater Treatment; Rich Goodwin, Assistant CAO for Finance, Clerk/Treasurer's Office and Steven Goodkind, Director)

Draft budget has been submitted to Clerk/Treasurer's office. The Water Division's 30-year bond will be paid off at the end of this fiscal year (\$1.3M/year for the past 30 years primarily dedicated to the treatment plant and the reservoir covering). Beginning in FY 2013, Water will be able to begin a 30-year capital plan which includes relining reservoirs, water distribution system, new finished water pump at the water plant, water valve replacements.

Water hopes to add one more water operator to their staff and implement a shift change to maximize safety and teamwork.

Over the past two fiscal years, the water rate has remained the same; if a water rate increase is indicated, the Mayor will propose one and the City Council will approve it. The budget for Water used to come before the DPW Commission for acceptance/adoption; now, the budget goes directly to the Clerk/Treasurer's office and will then be brought before the Commission for adoption.

The discussion on Water will continue at the March Commission meeting.

Item 6: WASTEWATER FINANCES, NEED FOR PROMISSORY NOTE AND FY 2013 RATE INCREASE (Laurie Adams, Assistant Director – Water Quality; Rich Goodwin, Assistant CAO for Finance, Clerk/Treasurer's Office and Steven Goodkind, Director)

See 2-page handout titled, "Wastewater Department" distributed at the meeting. A draft budget for Wastewater has been submitted to the Clerk/Treasurer's office.

Based on the financing that went into the \$52M investment into the wastewater system, there are two loans, one of which had a balloon payment of \$4M that was paid in FY 2010. Another balloon payment (\$14.5M) is coming up on January 1, 2014. Beginning in FY 2009, Wastewater rates were increased in

order to position Water to refinance the \$14.5M and \$4M (refinancing the \$4M did not occur; this amount was simply repaid).

Mr. Goodwin compiled the information in simplified terms on the two-page handout. He asked that the Commission write at the top of the second page, "Investor" (the second page is identified with the last line reading, "Beginning Cash"). Commissioner Lavery asked if this two-page document could be posted so that the public following the recording of this meeting could follow along more easily.

In order to avoid redundancy and the possibility of erroneous recording, the minutes-taker has not attempted to type up Mr. Goodwin's presentation and refers readers to CCTV's recording of this meeting (www.cctv.org).

Mr. Goodwin is asking the following of the Commission:

- 1) To accept this two-page communication, a quick financial update on a conversation that discusses fund balances, cash flow and the refinancing of a \$14M bond;
- 2) Approve - once Mr. Goodwin drafts it - an agreement for Wastewater to reimburse the City for the pooled cash by June 30, 2014;
- 3) Allow Assistant Director Adams and Mr. Goodwin to return to the Commission with a possible rate increase for FY 2013, to accelerate the reimbursement to the City (they will attend the March meeting).

Commissioner Porter expressed concern that issues having a financial impact on people are often, as in this case, presented at separate times. He would prefer to see potential/expected increases presented at once, giving taxpayers the whole picture for the fiscal year (e.g., this potential wastewater rate increase, school budget vote on the March ballot, projected increase to municipal taxes to cover the shortfall equal to the loss of multiple fire and police officers, other potential increase proposals once the new administration is in place, etc.). Commissioner Lavery clarified that the Commission is not expected to vote on these increases/the budget; the budget comes from the Mayor's office and is presented to the Commission for their information only.

The debt was incurred approximately 20 years ago. The voters gave the approval for Wastewater to do a refinance when the balloon payments became due and payable. The approval was given because of the 40-50 year life of the asset. Because we are a municipality, the only methodology is "straight line" (versus acceleration).

Item 7: FY 2013 BUDGET UPDATE (Steven Goodkind, Director)

DPW is being asked to absorb a 3.5% COLA increase, which is doable. Though it is a budget proposed by the Mayor, DPW is proposing three new positions:

- Hiring a Stormwater technician, funded by Stormwater fees;
- Hiring another trade inspector, funded by trades permit fees without an increase;
- Hiring another Water Distribution worker, funded through Water rates.

Item 8: FY 2012 BUDGET UPDATE (Steven Goodkind, Director)

See handout titled, "Department of Public Works, Summary Operating Budget—January 31, 2012, FY 2012 Reports."

- Director Goodkind noted that though the Engineering Division shows a deficit, it is due to a billing issue and actually have receivables which far exceed the deficit shown on the budget sheet.
- Snow program is currently running below the expenditures originally predicted (approx. \$300,000 in the black, though winter is not over yet). Saving some fuel, overtime and equipment maintenance due to the lighter winter. Any leftover money will go back into the city budget.
- Water treatment budget: Appears on paper not to be doing as well as last year, but that is as a result of the change in the accounting process. Water is not doing worse than last year.

Item 9: MINUTES OF 1/18/12

Commissioner Wood moved to accept the Minutes of January 18, 2012 as recorded; Commissioner Porter seconded. Unanimous approval.

Item 10: CHAIR’S REPORT: No report.

Item 11: DIRECTOR’S REPORT (Steven Goodkind, Director)

- Working on bilingual signage with Nicole Losch, Transportation Planner and Bicycle/Pedestrian Program Manager, and Steve Norman of Alliance Francais of the Lake Champlain Region and Walk/Bike Council. Director Goodkind has a file he will give to Mr. Norman to review and offer suggestions on. Director Goodkind and Ms. Losch continue to look for funding sources for this endeavor.
- Will update the Commission on the Wayfinding project at the March meeting.
- Gave a presentation on sidewalks with Ms. Losch at the last City Council meeting. Director Goodkind and Ms. Losch continue to look at ways to fund and prioritize the work that needs to be done.
- Recrafting the Performance Report. Hopes to meet with Commissioners Lavery and Porter in about a week to discuss it.

Item 12: COMMISSIONERS’ COMMUNICATIONS

Commissioner Tracy

- Concerned about recent accident at Pearl and Union Streets. For the long term, Director Goodkind has asked the NPO for a corridor study. For the short term, Norman Baldwin, Assistant Director – Technical Services is working with the Burlington Police Department to obtain a copy of the police report (which the responding officer has 30 days to complete). DPW staff wants to review the facts and understand what occurred and take corrective measures if necessary or possible.
- Traffic calming at North Winooski Avenue near the Food Shelf: No traffic stop at present and vehicles travel fast through there. Director Goodkind asked Commissioner Tracy to call him the next day for more information.
- Gave high praise to Megan Moir, Stormwater Administrator, for going above and beyond for the residents of Decatur Street.

- Requests a crossing guard at the intersection of Pearl and Union Streets. Director Goodkind said that a warrant (technical test) would need to be met and if a warrant is met, funding will need to be secured. Director Goodkind will talk with Assistant Director Baldwin about the request.
- Residents have reported being pleased that one of the two poles supporting the new street signs will be removed once the ground thaws. Decatur Street residents are grateful that their street sign was replaced.
- Expressed appreciation for improvements to the Archibald Street/Winooski Avenue intersection (crosswalk and signals). Director Goodkind said that more improvements are planned for that area.
- Concerned that storm drains on North Winooski Avenue have not been cleaned out after the State reconstruction project. Director Goodkind asked Commissioner Tracy to call him the next day to discuss it further.

Commissioner Wood

- Expressed appreciation to Director Goodkind and the staff responsible for removing all of the 30 mph speed limit signs after the implementation of the city-wide 25 mph speed limit. Requested that the extra one at the Queen City Parkway bridge be removed. Director Goodkind will ask staff to investigate, and reminded the Commission that while the actual extra speed limit signs have been removed, removal of the posts will not occur until the ground thaws.
- Going northeast on Route 7 just past the Rotary, or approaching the Champlain School on Pine Street, there are 25 mph signs with flashing signals which are activated during school hours: suggested removing the flashing signals. Director Goodkind said that the flashing signals warn drivers of the school zones. Staff continues to discuss more uniform signage in school zones.
- Requested that an additional 25 mph sign be posted on Pine Street just north of Home Avenue (as cars pick up speed going down the hill when traveling north).

Item 13: COMMITTEE REPORTS: No reports.

Item 14: POLICY UPDATE: No policy updates.

Item 15: ADJOURNMENT: **Commissioner Wood moved** to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m.; Commissioner Tracy seconded. Unanimous approval.