

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
FEBRUARY 2, 2010**

ATTENDANCE: Andy Conroy, Chairman; Laurel Lindstrom; Kelly Straniti;
Doug Hempstead; John Tobin; Nora King; Fred Bondi

STAFF: Hal Alvord, Director DPW

OTHER:

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Conroy called the Public Hearing portion of the City of Norwalk Public Works Committee of the Common Council meeting on Tuesday, February 2, 2010 to order at 7:02 p.m. in Norwalk City Hall Room 101, First Floor, 125 East Avenue, Norwalk, CT. regarding reducing the three tons free policy at the transfer station and yard debris site to a policy of one ton free. Dated at Norwalk, Connecticut this 22nd day of January 2010. Mr. Conroy said he will leave the Public Hearing open until 7:15 p.m.

While the Committee held the Public Hearing open, Mr. Alvord explained that last year, at the start of a process that FEMA was going through, and because of Katrina, they have to go certified with all flood control levees that were constructed in accordance with required plans. They discussed it with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). It was brought to the City's attention that the levees have to be re-certified each year. The City sent out solicitations to the following four firms – Tighe & Bond, Milone & MacBroom, Wright Pierce, and GEI Consultants, and they received quality proposals back. There are three different flow analyses on what the 100-year flow is in that channel, one by the ACOE, one by the State DEP, and one by FEMA. The City is required to use FEMA's flow. The levee has been there since 1961, and is stable. The ACOE inspects it every two years. Tighe & Bond conducted extra work in determining the amount of work involved, and won the bid at \$57,700.

The Committee members discussed the late receipt of the Committee packets, saying they had just received them today. Mr. Alvord will look into how the packets were mailed.

Mr. Bondi mentioned there was a garbage pickup problem on Smith Street. Ms. King said she has received phone calls from residents in Rowayton that the area by the traffic island and near the chain link fence is full of leaves and other debris. The debris takes up much of the sidewalk and therefore makes walking hazardous.

Mr. Conroy closed the Public Hearing at 7:15 p.m. No one from the public attended.

Mr. Conroy wished to have Mr. Thomas Hamilton's letter regarding the "Three Tons Free" Policy – Transfer Station and Yard Debris Site entered into the record:

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** I understand that the Public Works Committee is holding a public hearing tonight on a proposal to reduce the “Three Tons Free” policy at the City’s Transfer Station and Yard Debris Site.

As you know, the City is facing an extraordinarily difficult budget situation for FY 2010-11. We are taking many steps to reduce spending, and quite frankly, we are looking for new sources of revenue to help the City to balance the budget for FY 2010-11. While the recommended operating budget will not be complete and released until next Monday, I can tell you that I have assumed that the Common Council will eliminate the “Three Tons Free” policy entirely for FY 2010-11, and I have included \$300,000 of additional revenue resulting from this change in the recommended budget.

Obviously, the Common Council will ultimately decide what the most appropriate City policy is with respect to free tonnage of the City’s transfer station, and if the Council determines that it is unable to support the elimination of the free tonnage policy, the Board of Estimate and Taxation will need to adjust projected solid waste revenue downward by \$300,000. Unfortunately, if the Board of Estimate and Taxation is required to make this adjustment, it will mean that the tax levy will need to increase by \$300,000 to make up for this revenue shortfall.

I appreciate that the economic environment we are in is causing all of us to make difficult budget and service level choices, but I want the Common Council to make this decision with full information, and to be aware that its ultimate decision concerning the “Three Tons Free” policy will have a direct impact on the City’s mill rate for FY 2010-11. **

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Project updates – See attached project status sheet.

Bridges:

Mr. Alvord explained that he had taken the DEP office of the LIS out to the bridge site to show them their safety concerns and to have them understand it is no longer safe to try to restore it, along with no longer being economically feasible. The DEP had sent a letter to Hartford outlining the concerns, agreeing with the City officials about the concerns, and recommending a Certificate of Permission be issued by the DEP. The certificate would allow the City to demolish the bridge by removing as much overburden (walls, pavement, etc.) from the arches, and then dropping the arches into the river. The price would be approximately \$150,000, which is a significant reduction, if they are able to do this. The cost should be divided equally among Norwalk and Darien, at \$75,000 each.

Ms. King mentioned that a concrete plan should be put in place, outlining demolition and construction, along with a possible plan for a comprehensive footbridge and revitalization of the area. Mr. Conroy said that he had asked the Public Works Department to include

the footbridge in the capital budget. Mr. Alvord confirmed that a footbridge item at that site has been included in the budget, but there is no design for the bridge because there are no funds for the design. It was confirmed that the capital budget is \$340,000. He is awaiting word from the DEP for the go-ahead of the demolition of the bridge before they re-program the capital budget. If the DEP doesn't approve it, the cost goes up to approximately \$680,000. He said they put \$80,000 into the 2011-2012 budget for a footbridge, similar to the one behind Silvermine School, which cost them \$35,000. It is a shorter span, and there was no need to put in the abutments. The permitting process alone takes some time, and the project couldn't have been done in 2010-2011. Darien DPW has told Mr. Alvord that they are not interested in installing a footbridge at the site.

Mr. Alvord said that as soon as the capital budget is approved, they can put out the bid package instead of waiting until July 1, 2010. The funds have been appropriated by the Council.

Some discussion took place among the Committee members regarding safety, the share of the cost between Norwalk and Darien, the timing of the project, and the budget costs.

Drainage/Sewer Extension:

Mr. Alvord said that the debris in Olmstead Pond was not from Penna, but was debris that got thrown there before the project got started. Mr. Alvord confirmed that the debris cleanup that Penna was required to do was done. He said that a crew will go to the pond for further cleanup in March, depending on the weather.

Mr. Alvord mentioned that they have had meetings with all the property owners who they will need easements from, either some variation on existing easements because of pipe alignments or construction easements, on Buckingham/Lockwood.

Mr. Alvord said that the Highland Avenue project is almost complete.

Mr. Alvord said they may have found a solution with CL&P and the Keeler Brook project. There is a section of the current stream that they need to construct a diversion channel on. The only place they can do that is right between a CL&P transmission tower. They are now looking at a concrete channel.

Mr. Alvord said there are remaining drainage issues in the Bouton Street area.

Mr. Alvord said that in response to the 5 Mile River project, Congressman Shays will call the ACOE, the ACOE will have another meeting, and then ask the City to provide proof of flood damage in order for them to do a benefit cost analysis.

Traffic:

Mr. Alvord said that there are five packages on the list that are in the process of preparing a bid package for the last 4 ½ years with the DOT.

Ms. Lindstrom asked about the Strawberry Hill Ave Safe Routes to School project. The scope of the project has been taken way back, with regard to the length of the road. Mr. Alvord said they have not given up on convincing the DOT that they don't need a total reconstruct on Strawberry Hill Ave. Mr. Alvord said he doesn't want to set up a public information meeting on the reduced scope project until he is aware of the DOT's position on this.

The Committee asked Mr. Alvord for a timeframe for projects, saying that it appears that many of the projects are very lengthy in completion. Mr. Alvord said that it is a matter of trading off resources from one job to the other. He said he would have a meeting with Mr. Linnartz to re-assign job priorities.

Roads:

Mr. Alvord said the general road paving project is not on target. He said he has asked for \$5M each year in the budget, but has only received \$4M. In 2009, all the paving projects in the plan were completed except for Sasqua Road, which needed drainage. It will be paved in the Spring, which will then complete the 2009 plan. Mr. Alvord will send the Committee a list of the streets and a paving plan. He said the 5 year list is on the website.

2. Norwalk transfer station (December 2009 report provided at January 2010 PWC meeting. February 2010 report not yet available.)
3. Additional information items.
 - a. Old Tokeneke Bridge
 - b. Strawberry Avenue Safe Routes to School
 - c. ARRA Pavement Preservation

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PORTION

1. Public Input (Visitors to the Committee meeting may speak to any item on the agenda. Comments shall be limited to no more than five (5) minutes per speaker.)

There was no one present from the public to speak.

BUSINESS PORTION

1. Approve the Minutes of the Public Works Committee meeting of Tuesday, January 5, 2010.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, JANUARY 5, 2010.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Approve reducing the “Three Tons Free” policy at the transfer station and yard debris site to a policy of “One Ton Free”.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE REDUCING THE “THREE TONS FREE” POLICY AT THE TRANSFER STATION AND YARD DEBRIS SITE TO A POLICY OF “ONE TON FREE”.**

It was estimated that there will be approximately \$45,000 in savings to the City.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH SIX (6) VOTES IN FAVOR (BONDI, CONROY, KING, LINDSTROM, STRANITI, TOBIN) AND ONE (1) VOTE OPPOSED (HEMPSTEAD).**

3. Approve the Fourth Taxing District property extensions through September 30, 2009 per the list dated January 15, 2010.

**** MS. KING MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOURTH TAXING DISTRICT PROPERTY EXTENSIONS THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2009 PER THE LIST DATED JANUARY 15, 2010.**

Mr. Alvord said that by ordinance, the 4th Taxing District is defined as properties connected to the sanitary sewer collection system. Once a property has been added to the 4th Taxing District, it then gets City garbage collection.

Some discussion took place among the Committee members regarding property owners taking out permits for the sanitary sewer collection and then getting moved over to the 4th Taxing District, therefore being charged for a premium tax for the sewer hook up and then having their property assessed as a Rowayton property. It was mentioned that this happened to a few property owners that were notified by mail of the change, but there was no proof that could be found in Committee meetings. Some discussion took place regarding the permitting, the services, and the different taxing districts.

**** MOTION PASSED WITH SIX (6) VOTES IN FAVOR (BONDI, CONROY, HEMPSTEAD, LINDSTROM, STRANITI, TOBIN) AND ONE (1) VOTE ABSTAINED (KING).**

4. Approve the draft of Proposed Chapter 93, Stormwater, Illicit Discharge and Connection, of City code and forward to the Ordinance Committee of the Common Council for appropriate action.

**** MR. CONROY MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Alvord confirmed for Ms. Lindstrom that the storm drainage system is separate from the sanitary sewer system.

Mr. Alvord confirmed for Mr. Hempstead that the Flood and Erosion Control Board Ordinance has been in place for a long time. It is not current at the time. He said the Common Council can act instead of the Flood & Erosion Control Board. The only disadvantage in eliminating the Chapter on the Flood & Erosion Control Board is that there are statutes and DEP regulations that require the City have an Ordinance or a Flood and Erosion Control Board in place to make them eligible for certain grant opportunities. The Committee discussed more about this stormwater ordinance and decided to table this until the next Public Works Committee.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO TABLE THIS ITEM UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute the Second Amendment to the Agreement for Professional Engineering Services with Tighe & Bond, Inc. for the design of the Lockwood Lane Storm Drain Improvements for additional services in accordance with Tighe & Bond letter of January 22, 2010 for a sum not to exceed \$9,000.00.

Account No. 09084027 5777 C0421

**** MS. LINDSTROM MOVED THE ITEM.**

Mr. Alvord said he is comfortable with Tighe & Bond coming back to ask for more money for the project, as there is always a risk when work is done underground.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement for Professional Engineering Services with _____ in connection with the Certification of the Norwalk River LPP Levee in accordance with the proposal dated _____ for a sum not to exceed \$ _____. **(Proposals due Friday January 29, 2010; results to be provided at meeting.)**

Account No. 09094027 5777 C0440

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE ITEM AS AMENDED.**

The firm is Tighe & Bond, and the proposal is dated January 29, 2010. The sum should not exceed \$57,700.00. He said that while the City has had experience with two of the

other firms that presented bids, Tighe & Bond had a quality proposal and looked at the future to potentially gather information to address other issues.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. Amend Council authorization of August 11, 2009.

a. As approved August 11, 2009

Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to enter into an agreement with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. to provide engineering services for the Design of State Project 102-334, West Avenue Traffic Signal System Upgrade, for an amount not to exceed \$148,677.28.

Account No. ConnDOT – 80% federal grant through DOT (account to be established)
NRA – 20% local match from RDA capital account
(account number to be established)

b. Amended authorization for approval

Authorize the Manger, Richard A. Moccia, to enter into an agreement with Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. to provide engineering services for the Design of State Project 102-334, West Avenue Traffic Signal System Upgrade, for an amount not to exceed \$162,677.28.

Account No. 09030910-5777-C0277 (80% federal; 20% RDA)

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED ITEMS A & B.**

Mr. Alvord confirmed that \$14,000 was added to this.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEXT PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING:

Tuesday, March 2, 2010 7:30 p.m.
Room 101, Norwalk City Hall

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services

DRAFT