

**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
OF THE COMMON COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
MARCH 3, 2009**

ATTENDANCE: William Krummel, Chair; Fred Bondi; Douglas Hempstead;
Carvin Hilliard; Laurel Lindstrom; Kelly Straniti (7:40 p.m.)

STAFF: Hal Alvord, Director

OTHERS: Diane Cece; Diane Lauricella; Larry Ruttenberg

Mr. Krummel called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and noted that there was a quorum present.

Public Participation Portion

1. Public input.

Mr. Ruttenberg, Buckingham Place, said that he was here for his monthly update on the Buckingham Place drainage project.

Ms. Diane Cece, Olmstead Place, said that she was here for an update on the Olmstead Place drainage project. She also said that she objects to the fill in the blanks on items 6a and 6b and will object if items are added to the agenda.

Ms. Diane Lauricella, resident said that she was here to talk about four things: she asked if the meeting back up information can be scanned into the City's website. She said that she did not see revenue sources included in the operating budget. Ms. Lauricella said that there is no consistent school recycling program. She said that speaking with the Board of Education will effectuate a program. The League of Women Voters is trying to get the City to do a district wide school recycling program, which will result in savings. Ms. Lauricella said that she wants to be sure there will be enough staff, following the staff reduction being brought about by early retirement. Ms. Lauricella said that regarding items 2a&2b, 3a & 3Band 4a&4b, she wants to be sure that anyone that cuts into roadways will be fined.

Ms. Straniti joined the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Ms. Lauricella said that she looked forward to the discussion on the status of the Norwalk Transfer Station.

There were no other members of the public who wished to speak.

2. Project updates - See attached project status sheet.

The Committee reviewed the following items:

Bridges:

Old Tokeneke Bridge – Mr. Alvord said that Darien does not support this project. The First Selectwoman, Evonne Klein said that they are unable to budget any funds because they need \$18 million for their flood control program.

Mr. Hempstead asked Mr. Alvord if the City could post DOT notices on their website. Mr. Alvord said that they could as soon as they have sufficient information from the DOT. Mr. Bondi asked if the City could use the DOT electrified signs. Mr. Alvord said that was a good idea and will suggest that.

Drainage/Sewer Extension:

Buckingham/Lockwood pipe replacement: Mr. Alvord reported that they are waiting for the DEP permit for the Buckingham/Lockwood project. The weather has been an issue with the Olmstead Place project. He said however, that they have started dredging the pond.

Storm water Authority Pilot Program: Mr. Alvord reported that he read the interim report and it says that Norwalk, New Haven and New London are not ready to implement a storm water authority pilot program without significant changes to their legislation. Mr. Alvord said that he will distribute copies of the executive summary to the Committee.

Stormwater Management Plan: Mr. Alvord reported that he has \$40,000 left from the \$100,000 that was appropriated. He said that he requested \$250,000 in the capital budget, but that request was not supported.

Bouton Street: Mr. Hilliard asked about this item. Mr. Alvord said that they do not know what other structural things they can do in that watershed area.

Traffic

Safe Routes To School: Ms. Lindstrom asked for an update. Mr. Alvord said that this item is not high on the priority list.

Roads

East Avenue Improvements (I-95-Winfield): Ms. Lindstrom said that the meeting date has been changed to March 17, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. followed by a presentation at 7:00 p.m. Mr. Alvord said that the DPW has the street plans, but is not sure about the DOT bridge plans. The plan is to minimize the taking of any property.

Fairfield Avenue Improvements: Mr. Hilliard asked about this item. Mr. Alvord said that they are asking for \$1.5 million in the capital budget. They had a commitment from the Federal Highway Administration and through SWERPA were able to get this project moved up.

Route 1 Improvements: Mr. Alvord reported that the State is not doing any improvements. There are significant bottlenecks there. He said that the DPW is going to manage the project and has \$1.6 million in committed funds. Mr. Alvord added that they need \$20 million to do the entire job and would have to take properties.

Scribner Avenue: Mr. Hilliard asked about this item. Mr. Alvord said that is a concept for the reconstruction of Scribner Avenue to Flax Hill Avenue.

West Avenue Earmark: Mr. Alvord said that these are infrastructure earmarks that are peripheral to the project.

Water Pollution Control Authority

Consumption-based billing study: Mr. Hempstead asked when they will get this. Mr. Alvord said that it was on the last Finance Committee agenda, but was removed. It will be on the March 12, 2009 agenda.

Parking Authority

Haviland Deck: Mr. Bondi said that the deck looks good.

Webster Lot Reconfiguration Phase III: Mr. Alvord reported that another driveway is going to be installed on Martin Luther King Drive. He said that of all of the pre-existing LDA's the only one who didn't sign was the North Main Street Association. There are 15 parking spaces on their property. Those parking spaces will be fenced in with their own driveway onto MLK Drive.

Other

GIS Master Plan: Mr. Alvord reported that the Committee had their third meeting to day and he is heartened by the direction they are headed in now. He said that they have already saved money. Mr. Alvord said that eventually all departments will be able to access GIS from their desks.

LDA coordination: Mr. Alvord said that this is a huge drain on staff time.

Business Portion

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO APPROVE THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

Approve the Minutes of the Public Works Committee meeting of Tuesday February 3, 2009.

The following correction was made to the minutes:

Page 3: East Avenue Improvements: should add: *Ms. Lindstrom asked Mr. Alvord if the meetings noted, regarding the East Avenue Improvements meant that this project was about to move forward.*

Last paragraph *comment* should be changed to *contact*.

**** MOTION PASSED AS CORRECTED WITH TWO (2) ABSTENTIONS:
MR. HILLIARD AND MS. STRANITI**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

2a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with FGB Construction for Project No. PM 2009-1, Proposed Pavement Management Program, for a sum not to exceed \$1,697,780.50.

2b. Authorize the Director of Public Works, to issue Orders on Contract to FGB Construction for Project No. PM 2009-1, Proposed Pavement Management Program, for a sum not to exceed \$169,778.00.

**Account No. 0909 4021 5777 C0021
030000 2602 (\$96,497.32)**

Mr. Alvord said that the funds have been appropriated. Mr. Krummel asked if there is going to be a change to the roads being worked on. Mr. Alvord said that there would not be a change. He said that he has every expectation that they will add streets to this.

Mr. Hempstead asked for an updated list of streets. Mr. Alvord will e-mail the list to the Committee members. Mr. Alvord said that he received a lot of bidders for all of the requests.

Ms. Lindstrom asked if this would be a good time to address Ms. Lauricella's comment about the recovery of funds. Mr. Alvord said that has nothing to do with this item.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MS. STRANITI MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

3a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Fred N. Durante for Project No. PM 2009-2, Proposed Bituminous Concrete Permanent Pavement Repair, for a sum not to exceed \$276,740.00.

**3b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to Fred N. Durante for Project No. PM 2009-2, Proposed Bituminous Concrete Permanent Pavement Repair, for a sum not to exceed \$27,674.00.
Account No. 030000 2602**

Mr. Alvord explained that this is for the permanent patch contract. Mr. Hempstead asked Mr. Alvord if he has worked with this company before. Mr. Alvord said that he did not, but their references were very pleaseD with them. Mr. Bondi said that they have been around a long time. Mr. Krummel asked if this will take care of the cuts made by the utility companies. Mr. Alvord said that it would. He noted that this will be paid by the patch fees which will cover the cost of the permanent patch.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. BONDI MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

4a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Asphalt Paving Systems for Project No. PM 2009-3, Proposed Crack Sealing and Micro-Surfacing, for a sum not to exceed \$211,480.00.

**4b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to Asphalt Paving Systems for Project No. PM 2009-3, Proposed Crack Sealing and Micro-Surfacing, for a sum not to exceed \$21,148.00.
Account No. 0909 4021 5777 C0021**

Mr. Alvord reported that only two people bid on this item and neither were Connecticut firms. He said that he believes that the micro surfacing scared people away. Mr. Alvord explained that the micro surface can extend the life of a road for 10 – 15 years; it is a protective film.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

5a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Earthmovers, Inc. for Project No. DRG 2008-2, Proposed Drainage Improvements at Mary Austin Place and Silvermine Avenue, for a sum not to exceed \$314,886.00.

5b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to Earthmovers, Inc. for Project No. DRG 2008-2, Proposed Drainage Improvements at Mary Austin Place and Silvermine Avenue, for a sum not to exceed \$31,487.00. Account No. 0908 4027 5777 C0424

Mr. Alvord explained that they rejected what would have been the lowest bid. In reviewing the bids, Cosgrove had significant errors in their bid.

The successful bidder was Earthmovers of Danbury, CT.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. BONDI MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

6a. Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Nagy Bros. Construction for Project No. DRG 2009-1, Calf Pasture Beach Road Culvert Replacement and Roadway Improvements, for a sum not to exceed \$244,988.50 [Bids due Friday February 27; results to be provided at meeting.]

6b. Authorize the Director of Public Works to issue Orders on Contract to Nagy Bros. Construction for Project No. DRG 2009-1, Calf Pasture Beach Road Culvert Replacement and Roadway Improvements, for a sum not to exceed \$24,500.00. [Bids due Friday February 27; results to be provided at meeting.] Account No. 0906 4021 5777 C0352

Mr. Alvord said that they had more bids than anticipated. Nagy Bros. was the lowest bidder. Mr. Krummel asked if this could have been brought up at a subsequent meeting. Mr. Alvord said they would then have to wait another month. The bid came in on Friday.

Mr. Krummel said that some people feel that putting an item on the agenda with blanks does not allow for sufficient review. Mr. Alvord explained that all bid packages are done by the Purchasing Agent and are based on his workload. Mr. Hilliard said that this would be a problem if they did not accept the low bidder, otherwise he said that he does not see a problem.

Mr. Hempstead asked if there was a particular place in the bid packages that gives preference to Norwalk companies. Mr. Alvord said that there was not.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Note: Contract execution for 5 and 6 pending re-appropriation of existing capital funds.

Mr. Alvord explained that prices for both Mary Austin Place and Calf Pasture Beach increased since the funding was appropriated. Mr. Alvord initially thought he was going to have to request a re-appropriation, but has since found that funding is available from usable accounts.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

7. Technical correction:

a. Item authorized by Council on February 10, 2009:

Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Westport Electric Co., Inc. for the installation of new wire and miscellaneous components associated with the Washington Street Historic Street Lighting for a sum not to exceed \$45,150.

**Account Nos: 09-07-040-40210-0-5777-C0380 \$28,650
09-00-091-05701-C0009 \$16,500**

b. Corrected item to be authorized:

Authorize the Mayor, Richard A. Moccia, to execute an Agreement with Wanat's Westport Electric Company, Inc. for the installation of new wire and miscellaneous components associated with the Washington Street Historic Street Lighting for a sum not to exceed \$45,150.

**Account Nos: 09-07-040-40210-0-5777-C0380 \$28,650
09-00-091-05701-C0009 \$16,500**

Mr. Alvord explained that the company changed their legal name from Westport Electric Co, Inc. to Wanat's Westport Electric Company, Inc.

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** MR. HEMPSTEAD MOVED THE FOLLOWING ITEM:**

8. Eliminate the 1.5 tons free policy at the Transfer Station and Yard Debris Site.

Mr. Alvord said that since the time that the Common Council established the 1.5 free ton, the public coordinator's position was been eliminated. He said that as a result, the Department will have a serious problem with handling the new policy.

Mr. Hilliard asked what the numbers will be. Mr. Alvord said that since July 1, 2008, 92 residents exceeded 3 tons and over 800 people exceeded 1.5 tons. As of May 1, 2009,

three of the four clerical staff will be gone and there will be no one to administer the program. Mr. Hempstead asked if they could issue a sticker. Mr. Alvord said that there needs to be some thought put into this issue. Mr. Alvord explained that they can let people in for free or have no free tons; they do not have the capability to do anything more complicated. They are going to have new software at the Transfer Station with a credit card reader so people will pay at the site and there will be no need for billing. Mr. Alvord said that the software is not the best; even the new software can't program a zero charge up to a specific limit.

Mr. Alvord explained that personal vehicles will not go across the scales and will not be charged. Mr. Bondi said that he recommended 1.5 tons so not to burden the people who have been getting three tons free. Mr. Alvord said that he is concerned about people dumping their trash in the street.

Mr. Bondi said that he made the motion for 1.5 tons so not to burden the people who were getting three free tons. Mr. Straniti said that she likes the 1.5 ton suggestion.

**** MOTION FAILED BY A SHOW OF HANDS WITH THREE IN FAVOR (MR. HEMPSTEAD, MS. LINDSTROM AND MR. KRUMMEL) AND THREE IN OPPOSITION (MS. STRANITI, MR. HILLIARD AND MR. BONDI)**

Mr. Krummel said that as the Chairman of this Committee he will consider bringing this to the Common Council for a vote.

Mr. Hempstead suggested holding a public information session or a public hearing. Mr. Krummel said that he would take that suggestion under advisement. Mr. Alvord said that they have to hold a public hearing because of the change in the fee.

Mr. Bondi noted that at the Common Council meeting someone who voted for his motion can make a motion to reconsider the vote.

Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to know the number of people who went over the scale and the weight. Mr. Alvord said that the current software can not create such a report. Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to know how much over 3 tons the 92 residents have gone. He suggested issuing a sticker for people who go over the scale. Ms. Straniti said that she would like to see different alternatives presented at the next meeting or the following meeting, followed by a public hearing.

Mr. Alvord said that they can't implement the 1.5 ton charge because they will not be able to bill the residents after May 1st because the position is being defunded.

General Information Portion

1. Norwalk transfer station.

Mr. Alvord reported that they have an electronics drop off six days a week as well as oil and battery collections six days a week. Because of an outstanding issue with CRRA, Mr. Alvord said that he has withheld payment to them. He said that he sent them quotes and they agreed to credit the funds which will be used to complete those outstanding items.

Mr. Alvord said that he expects that they will experience 25 – 26,000 tonnage on an annual basis. Mr. Bondi asked if the City's tonnage has decreased. Mr. Alvord said that it has; they had 100,000 tons going across the floor a year.

Mr. Alvord said that Wilton is taking their garbage directly to Meadow Street. In addition City Carting's commercial garbage is going to Meadow Street and they have maxed out at their tonnage limit. Mr. Bondi noted that there are no traffic jams at Meadow Street. He said that the City lost \$2.5 million and if it hadn't it would not have had to have taken a budget cut this year.

Ms. Lindstrom asked if what is allowed at the Transfer Station is posted on the City website. Mr. Alvord said that IT is redoing the website. Mr. Hempstead said that they did a fabulous job at the Transfer Station and it is very convenient.

Mr. Alvord said that as of July 1, 2009, residents can put plastics 1- 7 in their blue recycling bins.

Mr. Krummel said that this was the time to address Ms. Lauricella's comments about school recycling. Mr. Alvord said that they worked with the schools last year, but they do not have people who can go to the schools every day. Unfortunately, he heard that the Custodians are dumping the recyclables with the trash. Mr. Alvord said that they are going to go back to do a refresher with the schools because this is going to become more important after July 1st when the City will be earning \$17.50 per ton.

Mr. Bondi said that the Board of Education has to cooperate. Mr. Hempstead asked if throwing recyclables in the trash is fineable. Mr. Alvord said that it is, but he does not have people to enforce the trash violations. Mr. Bondi suggested hiring an Ordinance Officer to enforce the various ordinances. The person would get paid what they collect.

Ms. Lauricella said that she is in the Waste Management business and would like this Committee to have a Recycling Blue Ribbon Task Force. She said that there is a lack of political will here. The students and teachers are not engaged enough. Mr. Krummel said that there is a big disconnect with the administration of the schools; Public Works has done all it can. Ms. Lauricella said that they have not. She said that she would be dead if she waited for a call from Ms. Pensiera. Ms. Lauricella said that the current staff

is not getting the job done. They are wasting tens of thousands of dollars. Mr. Krummel said that the disconnect is at the Custodial level and not with the DPW.

2. Solid waste regulation as a result of Council action on 1.5 tons free policy.

Mr. Alvord said that this item was on the agenda for information and may change depending upon what the Common Council decides.

Ms. Lindstrom said that it is difficult to see the changes. Mr. Alvord said that four scenarios were presented at the last meeting; this incorporates the 1.5 ton change and only one paragraph applies. Mr. Bondi said that the policy does not indicate when it is closed. Mr. Alvord said that the plan is to re-open the yard debris on Saturday starting in July. Mr. Hempstead said that there would be a revolution if they do not open in the spring. Mr. Alvord said that could not balance the budget without doing it this way.

Mr. Hempstead suggested that if they were going into close-down mode at the leaf site to keep it open once a week rather than totally closing down. Mr. Alvord agreed that he would like to keep it open, but does not have the staff.

Ms. Lindstrom said that she was concerned that landscapers will dump elsewhere. Mr. Hempstead said that he would like to find a reasonable solution.

3. Special appropriation request – solid waste.

Mr. Alvord reported that he went before the Board of Estimate and Taxation last night and was approved for \$540,000. The solid waste budget was built with the Meadow Street option.

4. Special appropriation request – asphalt.

Mr. Alvord reported that he submitted a special appropriation request to the Board of Estimate and Taxation for \$50,000 which was approved. He said that he is being very cautious about pot holes. When he gets reports of pot holes, they are addressed with cold patch. In addition, they have to be concerned about liability issues. This was a very bad winter for roads.

5. Special appropriation request – uniforms (deferred).

Mr. Alvord said that he sent a special appropriation request to Finance. They decided not to send it to the Board of Estimate and Taxation. He said that the laundry service is abysmal and their solution is to purchase the uniforms and have the employees launder them themselves. Their contract already allows the employees to do that. This request will be presented to the Board of Estimate and Taxation between now and the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Lindstrom asked Mr. Alvord why there was no special appropriation for snow removal. Mr. Alvord explained that they are authorized to pay the bills, and those bills will be reconciled at the end of the snow season.

6. FY 2009-2010 DPW Operating Budget Overview.

Mr. Alvord explained that he has a \$1 million deficit to make up. Of the eight positions being eliminated, four of those are currently filled. Mr. Alvord said that he built into the operating budget that the Saturday yard debris site will be restored the bulky waste pickup program will be eliminated, the yard debris collection will be reduced to one per month and there will be no weekend support to neighborhood clean ups. Ms. Lindstrom asked how restoring the Saturday yard debris site will impact the budget. Mr. Alvord said that it will be a change.

Mr. Alvord said that they are going to be impacted by staff taking early retirement. He said that of the 20 people being offered early retirement, he anticipates that 13 will accept. He added that he believes that six people in the Parks and Recreation Department will also accept the early retirement. The City is required to post those positions for 10 days before they go out to the public. He expects there will be 18 vacancies and will promote from within. There are going to be 12 laborer positions open.

People taking early retirement will be leaving on May 1, 2009. Mr. Alvord said that he met with all of the supervisors today. He is trying to get the supervisors and managers to understand this; it is going to be a bumpy road between then and September.

Mr. Alvord said that he has been looking at restructuring the Highway section and is going to move the traffic staff to the highway section.

Ms. Lindstrom said that it would be helpful to be able to compare the old re-organizational chart with the new one. Mr. Hempstead asked if there are changes to the job descriptions. Mr. Alvord said that there is a new position – Traffic Maintainer II, but he can't afford to have a specialized position, so that position will be a Maintainer II instead. He said that he needs to have as much flexibility as possible. He said that they are restructuring the way they work.

Mr. Hempstead said that since this is a reorganization, it has to go before the Common Council. Mr. Alvord said that he did not have a problem with that, but never did it four years ago when he created the Traffic Division and the Customer Service Division.

Ms. Cece said that she was concerned that when supervisors are changed from a specific geographical area to a functional area they lose the history of the area. Mr. Alvord said that none of the Foremen have been with the Department long enough to have a history of their areas. Ms. Cece said that she understood.

Mr. Alvord added that although there are great benefits in residents knowing their foremen that can create inefficiencies that can't be overcome. He said that Foremen are required to overlap in certain areas where they have an enhanced knowledge of the City.

Mr. Alvord said that he and Mr. Hazelcamp met with each person who will be losing their job. The Committee discussed the reduction in staff.

**** MR. BONDI MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 10:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services