

## **PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE**

4:00 p.m., Wednesday, November 5, 2008

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, November 5, 2008 in the Public Works Building at 1303 Palm Boulevard, Isle of Palms, South Carolina. Attending the meeting were Committee members Cronin and Loftus, Chairman Bettelli, City Administrator Tucker, Public Works Director Pitts, Assistant to the Administrator Dziuban and City Clerk Copeland.

1. Chairman Bettelli called the meeting to order and acknowledged that the press and the public had been duly notified of the meeting in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

### **2. Approval of Previous Meeting's Minutes**

**MOTION: Councilman Cronin moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of October 2, 2008 as submitted; Councilman Loftus seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

### **3. Citizens' Comments**

Bev Ballow, 3009 Waterway Boulevard, stated that she has become a member of the Migratory Shore and Sea Bird Nesting Group; she learned that there are nesting birds on the roof of the "Red and White" grocery store, which should be nesting on the beach. She noted that one nest had been marked out last year just below the renourishment area in Wild Dunes and there could be nests this year. The group has put forth a couple of suggestions for beach communities that would protect the nests which are very well camouflaged; they were as follows:

- Persons who must take vehicles onto the beach should drive on wet sand because the nests are in the dry sand areas; and
- Information about the nesting habits of shore and sea birds be included in the informational kiosk that is planned for Front Beach.

### **4. Departmental Reports for October 2008 – Director Pitts**

Director Pitts stated that the outstanding event for October was the pumping of water from flooded streets on the island; pumps were running eighteen (18) days of the month. Pumping started again on November 4 for flooding at 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue; after running all day that day, the street was filled with water again the next morning and required further pumping. The Public Works Department would continue to monitor that area of the island. The Director commented that water was standing on the road between 56<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues; he reported that, once 53<sup>rd</sup> Avenue was drained, the pump would be moved to that area.

The volume of garbage for October 2008 was at a four (4) year low; Director Pitts attributed the reduction to the slowing of the economy.

Councilman Loftus asked if the pump that was damaged belonged to the City; Director Pitts indicated that it was. Councilman Loftus then questioned the replacement cost; the Director stated that he was looking into the cost of a motor because the pump itself was good.

The City's oldest pump, probably fifteen (15) years old, finally wore out; therefore, the City lost the two (2) pumps that it owned. In response to Councilman Loftus' question, Director Pitts reported that replacement cost of one (1) pump in 2008 had been \$10,270.

Administrator Tucker commented that, since the City was not in a position to complete the drainage project between 53<sup>rd</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup>, the City needed to own more pumps rather than be forced to rent pumps. She explained that problems occur in trying to obtain the rental pumps with only two (2) sources in the area; there were also other entities in the area that compete with the City to rent the pumps; there was considerable time lost when pumps had to be rented between locating the pumps and getting them in place. The Administrator remarked that the City would always have use for the pumps since there were problem areas that would not be affected by the 53<sup>rd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> drainage project. Administrator Tucker encouraged the Committee to consider increasing the number of pumps when budget considerations for 2009-2010 begin; Director Pitts expressed his opinion that the City should have four (4) pumps with four inch (4") hoses, not six inch (6").

Councilman Cronin asked if the garbage truck that had been involved in an accident was back in service; Director Pitts answered that the repairs were being completed and that the truck would be in use the following day. The Committee members were informed that the other driver had been at fault and that the driver's insurance had contacted the City regarding the repairs that are estimated at \$1,051.

## **5. Old Business**

### **A. Status of Debris Removal RFP**

Assistant Dziuban reported that there had been no change in the status – the RFP was with the City's attorney for legal review. She noted that she had been in regular communications with him; the attorney has assured her that the RFP "is in his queue and that he is working diligently and that he knows (the Committee) is waiting and that he will be responding as soon as possible."

## **B. Report of Household Hazardous Materials Collection**

Chairman Bettelli noted that he had reported on this at the October City Council Meeting and the figures were included in the Public Works Committee meeting packets. He did comment on the excellent response from the community especially since the weather was bad. Director Pitts was asked to contact Charleston County Recycling to get a date for the spring collection, and Administrator Tucker suggested that a date in late February or early March (before the Front Beach parking lot contractor opened the parking lots) would be best.

Councilman Cronin stated that the residents had been well informed, i.e., the advertising means had been very effective. The advertising media had been the City's website, the message boards, *The Island Eye* and a flyer sent by Charleston County; Councilman Loftus noted that there was to have been notification from the Wild Dunes Community Association, as well.

## **6. New Business**

### **A. NPDES Compliance Review**

Administrator Tucker reported that this was the City's first compliance review and that the City had received a satisfactory grade. Councilman Cronin asked how "Public Education and Outreach" and "Public Involvement and Participation" had been assessed if the inspectors did not interview residents; Director Pitts informed the Committee that Charleston County had hired Clemson University to be responsible for public education.

### **B. Establishment of Key Drainage Problem Areas List**

Included in meeting packets was a report made by Detective Sergeant Caldwell that included numerous photographs of the flooding that created hazardous conditions on October 24 and 25, 2008, as well as information provided by one of the island's residents. At the request of Chairman Bettelli, Director Pitts is developing a list of the worst areas of flooding and then prioritizing it. Director Pitts reported that he and Building Director Kerr had met with DOT and they will be addressing the flooding problems from 106 Carolina down to Breach Inlet where a flapper valve must be replaced. From this list, Chairman Bettelli anticipated building a plan for which areas could be addressed and, of those areas, which areas were economically feasible to address with the funds that were available. Director Pitts stated his opinion that the flooding in Old Circle of Forest Trail could be resolved by cleaning the stormwater collection box; the cleaning is included in year 5 of Eadie's contract.

Councilman Loftus initiated a discussion about possible resolution to the drainage issues around the 53<sup>rd</sup> area before Wild Dunes began construction for Phase Three of the Villages. Administrator Tucker responded that the City could go ahead with the 53<sup>rd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenue drainage project if Wild Dunes were to grant the City an easement from Palm to Palmetto Boulevard. There was a problem associated with that because they do not know what is to be engineered for Phase Three; therefore, Wild Dunes would most likely require that the City agree to move, relocate or change whatever was put in place – at City expense. There is the possibility that they would not require such action on the City's part, but the City would be taking a very large risk if it were to proceed. Administrator Tucker stated that estimates had been gotten for a directional bore under the back gate; the cost was very high. Councilman Loftus suggested getting Wild Dunes involved to be proactive with the drainage issues in that area, and he expressed his frustration waiting on Wild Dunes to proceed with Phase Three.

Councilman Bettelli voiced concern for the City to get involved with another large and expensive project in the present uncertain economic conditions. He explained that there is currently no infrastructure in that area, so the project would involve establishing the drainage system itself. Councilman Cronin recounted that the plan with Wild Dunes was for the City to pay the difference to have a larger pipe installed, but not the re-doing of the entire area by waiting for Phase Three of the Villages.

If the Wild Dunes scenario were to be ignored, the only remaining alternative would be a pumping station. The Administrator explained that a permanent lift station could be constructed; she noted that lift stations require a great deal of maintenance and tended to fail when needed the most. Lift stations can also become over-washed knocking them out of commission just like the mobile pumps. Although she did not believe the lift system to be a good solution, she did note that such a system would assist more areas than 53<sup>rd</sup> through 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues; whereas the plan presently being considered would assist only a few residents and offer no relief from flooding for residents on 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, for instance.

When asked about the cost of the planned 53<sup>rd</sup> to 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues drainage project, Administrator Tucker responded that initially the estimate had been eight hundred thousand dollars (\$800,000), but the cost rose to one million two hundred thousand dollars (\$1,200,000); her best "guestimate" today was that the project would cost closer to one million five hundred thousand dollars (\$1,500,000). That price would include the collection on the avenues, paying for the larger pipe and the new outfall that would be required.

Councilman Loftus expressed interest in investigating the lift station concept, but he was told it would be a multi-million dollar project for which the City did not have the budget to deal with at this point in time. Councilman Cronin voiced concern over the fact that,

between 52<sup>nd</sup> and 40<sup>th</sup>, there is the issue of septic tanks, whereas houses on 53<sup>rd</sup> through 57<sup>th</sup> are on public sewer.

By way of consolation, Administrator Tucker noted that the island only got this type of flooding rain once or twice a year, that the flooding actually affected a limited number of residences and to remedy the problem would require a huge amount of money. She suggested that the City inquire about using some of the stormwater management fees to offset some of the expense. Councilman Loftus proposed that the City look into using some of the County's green funds, which Isle of Palms cannot use because it has grown out.

The Committee agreed to keep this subject on the agenda as the City continues to look for sources of funding and the best solution for the island.

On the subject of pumping, Administrator Tucker informed the Committee that the City has taken the position on private streets that, if an emergency vehicle could not maneuver the street to respond to the residents in the houses, the street needed to be pumped. For an example, she commented on the dogleg between 56<sup>th</sup> and 57<sup>th</sup> Avenues where the flooding was usually the worst and where it transitioned into a private road; Director Pitts noted that the ocean side of 48<sup>th</sup> Avenue was another serious flooding spot that was a private road. The Administrator sought agreement from the Public Works Committee on continued deployment of pumps in the manner described; the Committee stated their support in the judgment of the Administrator and the Public Works Director. Director Pitts did report that his protocol has been to address 53<sup>rd</sup> and 46<sup>th</sup> Avenues first, to move to 51<sup>st</sup> with 48<sup>th</sup> being the last street pumped since it was totally private – not public on either end.

**C. Award of Contracts in Excess of \$10,000 - None**

**7. Miscellaneous**

Administrator Tucker informed the Committee members that she had been selected as a member of Charleston County's Green Committee which is concerned with solid waste and trash. She stated that the purpose of the committee was to give advice and guidance to Charleston County Council on issues in that area; it has been given both long and short-term issues with which to deal.

Next Meeting Date: **4:00 p.m., Monday, January 14, 2009.** Should the need arise, the Chairman will call a meeting in December 2008.

**8. Adjourn**

**MOTION: Councilman Cronin moved to adjourn the Public Works Committee at 5:00 p.m.; Chairman Bettelli seconded and the motion PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Respectfully submitted:

Marie Copeland