

## MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

City Council Chambers

September 24, 2020 3:00 PM

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chair  
Councilor Matt Gerding  
Councilor Kenneth Vincent  
Councilor Martin Pepin, standing in for Councilor Martin Dumont

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore  
Finance Director Scott Smith  
Director of Public Works Michael Bobinsky  
City Engineer Gary Lemay  
Greg Kirchofer Operator of the Water Treatment Plant  
Ammy Ramsey Deputy City Clerk

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Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 3:04 PM

### MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

*Motion made by Councilor Vincent, seconded by Councilor Gerding, to approve the minutes of the July 30, 2020 meeting. Motion was approved 3-0-1 by a roll call vote, Councilor Pepin abstains.*

### ORDINANCE NO. 5-21, ZONING AMENDMENT – BEES

Councilor Witham stated that this ordinance was referred back to this Committee by the Mayor to obtain more detail, and the City Staff was tasked to get more details concerning how other communities in the area have dealt with this issue.

City Manager Belmore requested Interim Planner Carole Ogilvie look into what the neighboring Cities have in their ordinances regarding bees. A memorandum was presented to the Committee to review and consider the suggestions presented. He believes there was a consensus to allow bees with parameters.

Councilor Witham mentioned that he does like the elements given from the Interim Planner's memorandum concerning zoning districts and allowing bees in all districts except Business, Commercial, and Industrial. Councilor Witham also stated he likes using a metric to determine how many may be kept such as the number of colonies allowed in an area, but would like a definition of what "a colony" is. He also mentioned he likes the set back and signage recommendation.

Councilor Gerding stated he agrees with Councilor Witham but he noticed the memorandum mentions barriers and is not sure that is necessary. He also would like clarification of what “a colony” means. Gerding also mentioned the need of a permit and if there will be a fee along with conditions.

There was some discussion concerning the present Ordinance concerning chickens and whether or not it would be handled the same way, and if home occupation would be a condition to consider.

Councilor Vincent stated he noticed a member of the audience may have something to say and inquired with Councilor Witham if the Committee would allow her to speak. The Committee approved Jennifer Soldoti to speak to the subject of bees.

Jennifer Soldoti informed the Committee on several questions they asked. She stated that a colony is best described as a hive. A hive is a series of wooded boxes stacked on top of each other and described what happens inside the hive and how the bees reproduce, maintain the hive, and produce honey. Soldoti mentioned the State regulates the sale of honey that is harvested. She also described a hive may consist of 5 to 6 boxes high, and that a thriving hive could have around 40,000 bees.

Councilor Witham mentioned he would prefer the word hive instead of colony.

Councilor Vincent stated he believes we need this activity considering bees are in danger and we need them for many reasons including pollination.

Councilor Witham stated he would like to have the City Staff bring back a red lined version of this Ordinance that will include which districts are allowed to have bees, the matrix of lot size and hive allowance, a setback of 20’, and signage if the hives are on a vacant lot.

Councilor Vincent inquired about the purpose of signage. Councilor Witham stated that it would notify people that there is a hive on the property, and if the owners name and contact information in case something happens so the owner can be contacted.

Councilor Gerding stated he does not feel barriers are needed but does like the setback of 20’. He also inquired about the hive being considered as an exterior structure in the Historical District.

Councilor Witham mentioned a stipulation of the hive not being in the front yard.

Councilor Vincent stated he does not agree with barriers because he feels it should look as natural as it can around the hive.

#### SIDEWALK TRACTOR/PLOW REPAIR UPDATE

Councilor Witham explained he requested this item to be on the agenda because of the maintenance cost approaching \$30,000.00 in some years. Witham confirmed with Finance Director Scott Smith if a lease purchase is the way the City would go about replacing a sidewalk tractor. Director Smith responded in the affirmative.

City Manager Belmore confirmed with Public Works Director Michael Bobinsky that the manufacturer and dealer does project the life expectancy to be 6-8 years and the current machine is 12 years old.

Councilor Vincent inquired with Director Michael Bobinsky about the cost of a new sidewalk tractor and what the cost of a bobcat with rubber tracks and a plow would be. Bobinsky stated that the cost for a new one is between \$160,000.00 to \$250,000.00 and a skid steer is around \$80,000.00. He also mentioned that a skid steer would not be able to perform all the functions a sidewalk tractor can do, they are more difficult to turn and generally work better on lone straight stretches of sidewalks.

Director Michael Bobinsky described what other options they did look into to be cost effective while also considering the multipurpose need of the tractor. He also informed the Committee of the different brands and models, attachments, and the majority of repairs needed. Councilor Vincent inquired if there are any warranties that come with the new purchase. Director Michael Bobinsky informed the Committee of the different warranty packages available.

Councilor Witham likes the idea of putting the sidewalk tractor into the CIP and suggested fire apparatus as well. There was some discussion regarding funding for a new tractor and a proposal will be presented at the next meeting.

#### PROJECT UPDATES

a. Veterans Park Main Street Sidewalk

City Manager Belmore stated the reasons for the delay of the construction and informed the Committee that the project will begin next week. Rye Beach Landscaping will be contracted to remove the old sidewalk and prep for the new one, and Matrix will pour and set the concrete. Belmore mentioned that the last panel of sidewalk adjacent to Fayette Street will not be done because if we do it may result in us needing to do additional work going up Fayette St.

b. Blackwater Road Repairs

City Manager Belmore mentioned that the repair will be done this weekend.

c. Cemetery Road Complete Streets

City Engineer Gary Lemay informed the Committee that this project is on schedule and will go to bid in November/December and the work will start in the spring. Designs should be available for the next meeting.

d. Spring 2021 Paving Bid Packet

Councilor Witham stated that this was approved at the last meeting and will be going out for bid.

## WATER TREATMENT PLANT REPAIR

City Manager Belmore informed the Committee that one of the filters at the Water Treatment Plant is beginning to release some of the media into the clean water process and this issue has come up over the past several weeks. He also explained the need and cost for an engineer to come and figure out what is causing the problem. After the problem is identified they will have a better understanding of what is causing the problem and a cost of the repair will then be determined.

Greg Kirchofer Chief Operator of the Water Treatment Plant explained the filtration process at the water treatment plant and stated the problem they have noticed is that some of the media from the filtration process has discovered in the bottom of the clear well. He explained the media is the sand and other material the water is filtered through to aid in the cleaning process.

There was some further discussion pertaining to the process of removing the media and the engineer finding the problem and getting a cost to repair the system and replacing the media. Kirchofer also explained that the other 3 cells of the filtrations system will be able to handle the demand of the water system and there should be no issues with water shortage.

## MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Gerding stated he appreciates the work that is being done at the cemetery access roads.

Councilor Witham mentioned the pedestrian sign post at Rite Aid is missing, and a patch in the pavement on High St. from the water main break has settled. Director of Public Works Michael Bobinsky stated he will look into the post and that the pavement settlement is included in a series of water main breaks and they will be looking into having them fixed.

Councilor Witham mentioned that a wireless provider has been doing some work on the water tower and the scrap has been scattered around. Finance Director Smith stated that the company that did that work should be taking care of that today.

## ADJOURNMENT

***Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Gerding seconded by Councilor Vincent, motion passed by voice vote 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 4:03 PM***

Respectfully submitted,

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Ammy Ramsey Deputy City Clerk