

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

City Council Chambers

November 5, 2020 3:30 PM

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chair
Councilor Matt Gerding
Councilor Kenneth Vincent (via Zoom)
Councilor Martin Dumont

Administration/Staff present: City Manager Bob Belmore
Finance Director Scott Smith
Director of Public Works Michael Bobinsky
City Clerk Jonathan Slaven
City Engineer Amber Ferland
Planning Secretary Dana Crossley

Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 3:32 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON OCTOBER 13, 2020

Councilor Gerding moved to approve the minutes of the October 13, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Vincent and passed 3-0 by voice vote. Councilor Dumont Abstained.

ORDINANCE NO. 5-21 ZONING AMENDMENT AGRICULTURE (BEES)

Councilor Witham said Ordinance No. 5-21 was sent to this Committee for amendments. Manager Belmore explained the Chicken Ordinance was used as a template and incorporates the Committee Councilors' comments made during past meetings discussing this proposal. Manager Belmore described the updated language proposed for the Ordinance Amendment as outlined in Director Mears November 2nd memo.

Councilor Witham said he appreciates the consistency of aligning this with the backyard chicken Ordinance and thinks the annual permit requirement is good for tracking purposes. He mentioned a concern in regard to hive placement on the side or rear yard of a corner lot as issues could arise as they do at the Zoning Board level.

Councilor Gerding urged consistency in the use of the term "hive". He noticed "colony" was mentioned and perhaps it should be hive rather than colony for consistency's sake. All agreed. Additionally, Witham suggested that the Nuisances section might be difficult to enforce. After discussion, Belmore suggested that it be deleted in its entirety.

Councilor Dumont said the amendments were acceptable, but would like to consider a certified inspector to look for problem bees. Councilor Witham said without knowing if this type of certification exists, he is hesitant to agree with adding it. Councilor Vincent said within the bee-keeping community, there is a certain knowledge and research or a class people take in order to educate themselves.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to move the Ordinance to City Council with the proposed changes discussed. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0 by voice vote.

ACCEPTANCE OF THE TRI-CITY ROAD SIDEWALK (TARA FIELDS PROJECT)

Manager Belmore said the City has received a report from the Horsley Witten group regarding the expansion project at Tara Fields Apartment Complex and staff agrees it is ready for acceptance. Committee members discussed the recent corrections to the sidewalk construction.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to sponsor a Resolution to accept the Tri-City Road Sidewalk. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0 by voice vote.

CITY OF ROCHESTER REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL WATER FOR DEVELOPMENT PER INTERMUNICIPAL WATER AGREEMENT

Manager Belmore explained that the request from Rochester is provide water for new homes in an existing development, Addison Estates, on Old Rochester Road.

Councilor Gerding asked if the current homes in the development are on Somersworth's water. Director Bobinsky replied that we are already providing water to this area and the request is for fourteen additional homes in the Addison Estates MHU development.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to approve the request and bring to full Council. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0 by voice vote.

DEVELOPER REQUEST TO ACCEPT ENTERPRISE DRIVE AS A CITY STREET

Manager Belmore stated Brian Stern is the owner of the property on Enterprise Drive, which has yet to be fully developed. He has requested the City start the process on accepting the road. Manager Belmore said it is not typical that the City accept a road until construction is done, but a policy decision is necessary on whether to accept the road before it is built out.

Councilor Witham expressed concern about tapping into utilities after the road is built out. Councilor Vincent said he doesn't think special measures should be made and we should continue with our current practices. Councilor Dumont said he does not think there is enough information to make a decision. He said a road should be fully compliant if they want us to accept it. Councilor Gerding said he sees no point in being responsible for maintenance before anything is developed.

Consensus reached to not pursue acceptance at this time.

COAST REQUEST RE: CMAQ PROJECT

Manager Belmore stated he received a letter from Brad Nichols requesting that COAST partner with them to place equipment into our new equipment at their expense through the CMAQ grant process to allow for traffic preemption equipment for buses. Councilor Dumont mentioned that the equipment has not been approved by the State and does not want to be a guinea pig to test it out. There was also further discussion that the project's purpose is to increase traffic movement timing through all the traffic signals therefore we haven't yet realized what any further need is.

A consensus was reached to deny the request at this time.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Vincent voiced concerns about the sidewalk condition on a section of Main Street near the new Veterans Memorial and would like to see it fixed. Councilor Dumont agreed that upgrades are needed for the sidewalks and said he hopes instead of an annual plan we can discuss these issues as they are brought up. There was discussion regarding efforts to increase annual funding.

Councilor Vincent made a motion to have the City Manager spend the money to get the work done. The motion was second by Councilor Dumont and failed 1-3 by voice vote.

Manager Belmore informed the Committee he has begun discussions with Unitil who would like to build a new natural gas station where the boneyard is behind the Superfund Site. He said he attended a kickoff meeting this week and they wanted to know if there is any interest in the City to negotiate. Councilor Witham inquired if this would replace the current station on Bartlett. Director Bobinsky replied in the affirmative. Councilor Gerding said the location seems like a better location and is, therefore, interested in moving forward.

A consensus was reached to have Manager Belmore proceed with negotiations with Unitil.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Gerding seconded by Councilor Dumont, motion passed by voice vote 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk