

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM PLATFORM

January 14, 2020 4:00 p.m.

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

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
 Director of Planning and Community Development Michelle Mears

As Chair of the Somersworth Public Works and Environment Committee, I, Councilor David Witham find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Committee have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform. The public was asked to submit comments via email to jslaven@somersworth.com or bbelmore@somersworth.com by Wednesday, January 13, 2021 at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Witham called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON DECEMBER 1, 2020

Councilor Gerding made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2020 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dumont and passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

ORDINANCE NO. 5-21 ZONING AMENDMENT RE: APICULTURE

Councilor Witham stated Ordinance No. 5-21 was referred back to this Committee to review which zones it will be permitted in and compare it to current regulations regarding backyard chicken permits. Manager Belmore said City Staff has provided information on what zones chickens are permitted, the quantity of chickens allowed, as well as the number of current chicken permit holders. Councilor Witham stated he does not see the need to change the Ordinance as it is submitted before the Committee today. Councilor Gerding asked if any comments were submitted on the subject. City Manager Belmore and City Clerk

Slaven indicated they had not received any. Councilor Gerding said the way the Ordinance reads now makes the most sense since it only permits bees in single-family, residential zoning districts, he stated that the Ordinance could be amended in the future if there seemed to be a need. Witham noted that a variance could be requested from those out of allowed zones as presently written.

Councilor Vincent noted that those who keep bees do not typically take the hobby lightly and go through much due diligence prior to keeping them. He stated he approves of the Ordinance as it is submitted today.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to endorse maintaining the current language in Ordinance No. 5-21. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

PROJECT UPDATES/TIMELINES:

A. Franklin/Fremont Drainage Bids

Manager Belmore explained the City received five bids for the project. The low bidder, Vortex, has been vetted and their references checked out. The bid amount (\$29,900) is within the budgeted amount of \$40,000. Manager Belmore also informed the Committee that the contract was above his spending authority and he suggested perhaps the Finance Committee could authorize the funding needed for the project as it is within their spending authority. Belmore also suggested adding a contingency amount for the project. Councilor Witham asked about the details of the project. Director Bobinsky stated the drainage pipe is a clay storm line on Fremont Street leading out to Franklin Street. City Engineer Ferland stated the repair of the pipe is done by lining the pipe and curing it with ultra-violet light. She stated it is a non-invasive approach and should provide an additional 50 years in lifespan to the pipe.

Councilor Dumont made a motion to recommend approval of the low bidder, Vortex, for repair work to the Franklin St./Fremont St. storm line. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 4-0 by roll call vote.

B. Road Resurfacing Bids

Manager Belmore explained the City received three bids for the project. Adding all three streets together, the low bidder was Continental Paving. Manager Belmore explained we have the funding for Nadeau Street and the Council approved resurfacing streets; however, Director Smith will provide how available funding presently lines up especially in relation to the alternate High Street project. He stated City Engineer Ferland will also be reviewing the specifications and math to ensure accuracy. Councilor Witham stated he is glad to see Continental looking to work in the City as his view of their work around the State and reputation is good.

C. Cemetery Road Complete Streets

Manager Belmore explained to the Committee that we hope to go out to bid for this project by the end of January or beginning of February with construction hopefully beginning in May.

Manager Belmore requested some clarification about a potential alternate bid associated with this project. There was direction given by Council to pave the area in and around the parking lot by the High School and CTC. However, the School has expressed interest in having some drainage improvements as well as paving at Maplewood Elementary School.

Councilor Witham agreed that it was intended to pave the road off Memorial Drive and looping through the parking lot and not the entire lot. The Committee agreed with Councilor Witham.

D. TAP Grant

Director Bobinsky stated the key issue with the TAP grant is that in the process they have discovered the need to create some temporary and permanent easements on High Street from Washington Street to Franklin Street. He stated the easements are currently being reviewed by NHDOT and the City will await their reply before CMA Engineering initiates any discussions or negotiations with property owners. Councilor Witham asked if this will be bid out in 2021 or 2022. Director Bobinsky stated they hope to bid the project out in the spring or summer of 2021. He also noted that we have to deal with what is referred to as conflicts of interest since the design engineer is not permitted to be the construction engineer. He stated that once construction is ready, we will not be able to utilize CMA Engineering for construction and inspection services and we may have to seek another consultant. Director Bobinsky added that he is checking to see if the City is permitted to utilize its third-party engineering firm. Councilor Gerding inquired about repairs of the retaining walls included in the project and how it will be handled with property owners. Director Bobinsky stated the grant covers the cost of the retaining walls and he will be coordinating the details with the property owners.

E. CMAQ Grant

Director Bobinsky stated that during the preliminary design process, discrepancies between the City and NHDOT Right of Way survey data have emerged. The existing signal pole equipment at High Street and Kelwyn Drive at High Street and Andrews Drive (Target Store Intersection) was determined to be located outside of the existing High Street Right of Way. Director Bobinsky said that a new Right of Way Phase is being added to the project and the City has requested that NHDOT amend the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Final design will be able to begin prior to the proposed amendment. Director Bobinsky also noted conflict of interest issues regarding engineering services similar to the TAP grant project for sidewalk improvements along the High Street corridor.

WILLAND DRIVE STREET LIGHTS

Councilor Witham mentioned concerns about the lack of lighting on Willand Drive, specifically when entering from Route 108. He wanted to see if we could either improve the existing lighting or add additional lights. Director Bobinsky agreed with Councilor Witham's observation and said Willand Drive has minimal lighting. He stated he would get price quotes for adding additional lights. Councilors Witham and Gerding both stated they support getting price quotes for additional street lights.

MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Witham asked if there are any updates on the Utility Pole License issue. Manager Belmore explained that the information is currently being reviewed by the City Attorney. He said property owners are experiencing electrical voltage issues on Clement Road and Green Street and according to Eversource, it is an emergency as PUC regulations are not being met. Councilor Witham stated he would defer to staff on the decision regarding it being an emergency. Councilor Witham also noted that if the waiver is granted, perhaps the City could require the removal of the duplicate pole within a certain time period.

Councilor Witham stated he drove by a downed utility pole on Blackwater Road with a marked stake nearby where the new pole is ostensibly to be installed. If he is correct about the placement of the new pole, the location would create traffic line of sight issues.

Manager Belmore described Resolution No. 25-21, on next week's City Council Agenda, to release dedication of a paper road that abuts the Somersworth Fire Station and asked if any members of this Committee would like to be added as sponsors. All stated they would like to be added.

Councilor Gerding asked if there was an update on the nitrogen discharge issue in Great Bay. He stated that Director Bobinsky and City Engineer Ferland have been on conference calls regarding the issue and will schedule the item on this Committee's agenda once staff has a recommendation. He also noted that a decision needs to be made by April, 2021.

Councilor Witham inquired about a status on the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Director Bobinsky indicated a third clarifier is poured and cured and some additional equipment and parts are on order with some delays, but the project's completion is still targeted for November 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn made by Councilor Dumont seconded by Councilor Gerding, motion passed by roll call vote 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk