

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM PLATFORM  
April 19, 2021 4:00 p.m.

Committee Members present: Councilor David A. Witham, Chairman  
via Zoom: Councilor Martin Dumont, Vice Chairman  
Councilor Matt Gerding

Absent: Councilor Kenneth Vincent

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

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

As Chairman 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 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](mailto:jslaven@somersworth.com) or [bblmore@somersworth.com](mailto:bblmore@somersworth.com) by Wednesday, March 29, 2021 at 12:00 noon.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON MARCH 29, 2021

***Councilor Gerding made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 29, 2021 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dumont and passed 3-0 by roll call vote.***

COMPOSTING PILOT PROGRAM

Manager Belmore stated the Company, Mr. Fox will charge \$69 for one tote to be placed at the Public Works facility between the cardboard and waste oil. Mr. Fox will pick up contents weekly and bill monthly. Councilor Dumont mentioned a potential issue of attracting animals. Manager Belmore said we can try it out and discontinue if issues arise. Councilor Witham said he likes that the terms with Mr. Fox are flexible and is willing to give it a try. Councilor Gerding stated Mr. Fox recommended just one tote for now and he is in favor of this. Councilor Witham inquired if this needed a Council vote. Manager Belmore and Director Smith both agreed it did not need Council approval and was well within the Manager's spending limit.

Councilor Witham inquired where the funding for this would come from. Director Smith responded that we could use funds available in the Solid Waste (i.e. Pay-Per-Bag) Fund by using the .10 cents amount applied for recycling or other solid waste expenses. The committee agreed that this was a good idea.

***Councilor Gerding made a motion to approve entering into an agreement with Mr. Fox to place one compost collection tote at the Public Works facility. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dumont and passed 3-0 by roll call vote.***

#### SIDEWALK BETA PLAN PROPOSAL

Manager Belmore spoke regarding a plan for an assessment of the condition of the City's sidewalks. He recommends a sole source, BETA Group, Inc., to do the assessment as they did great work on a similar assessment of the City's roadways. Belmore informed the Committee that the proposal is \$13,000 and recommended using funds from the current year's sidewalk maintenance appropriation. Councilor Witham stated he appreciates the detail BETA utilizes in their assessment to include handicap ramps, warning panels, etc. Councilor Dumont inquired if this would be a good time to revisit the idea of moving utility poles that are in the middle of the sidewalk. Director Bobinsky stated he has been in conversations with Consolidated Communications and he is actively working on this issue. Manager Belmore stated he understands Council's concern for the City's sidewalk and reminded the Committee that many road and utility projects the City takes on include repairs and improvements to sidewalks.

***Councilor Dumont made a motion to support utilizing BETA Group Inc. to perform an assessment of the City's sidewalks. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 3-0 by roll call vote.***

#### CEMETERY ROAD SEWER IMPROVEMENTS

Manager Belmore stated as per Council's request, the engineer for the Cemetery Road Complete Streets project was asked to seek additional information from S.U.R. Construction on costs associated with replacing two force mains at 48 and 50 Cemetery Rd. The estimate received was \$23,000 and Director Bobinsky recommended a 20% contingency to bring the estimate up to \$27,600. Director Bobinsky said he knows excavation work is necessary and we want to ensure the protection of the existing force mains. Councilor Witham inquired if the 2-inch force main will be replaced all the way to the existing ejection pump. Bobinsky said he understands the force main will be replaced to the edge of the property lines. Councilor Gerding stated he has been contacted by the residents who have already requested the extension of the sewer service to their homes to reiterate their interest in their request. Gerding said he prefers the extension and is open to utilizing sewer funds to do so, but understands the issues that come with such an extension. Councilor Gerding stated he is agreeable to replacing the force mains, but will vote no on this issue only because he prefers extending the sewer main for these homes.

***Councilor Dumont made a motion to support the replacement of the existing force mains with new 2" force mains, installing in a trench, and connecting to the downstream manhole for a cost of \$27,600. The motion was seconded by Councilor Witham and passed 2-1 by roll call vote. Councilor Gerding voted No.***

## WRIGHT PIERCE COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN (MAIN ST. & CONSTITUTIONAL WAY)

Manager Belmore said there may be possible grant funding for the Main Street and Constitutional way complete streets projects as previously reported to Council. He said the project is currently before Congressman Pappas' screening committee. In order to compete with projects from other municipalities it benefits our chances of receiving the grant if we can show the project is shovel ready. Director Smith pointed out the initial funding for the design of these projects was provided entirely from the general fund through the road resurfacing line item and said Council may want to consider funding a contract amendment with a supplemental appropriation utilizing the water and sewer funds. These projects include design for improvements to both water and sewer mains and it seems appropriate that funding should also come from the enterprise funds. This would split the total proposed cost of \$197,000 between the water fund, and sewer fund for a total of \$98,500 being drawn from each.

Councilor Witham stated he is okay with the funding piece, but had thought Council had already taken action to fund the design of the complete streets project. Director Smith replied Witham was correct, however during the design of Cemetery Road, the sidewalk was supposed to be a TAP grant project but was taking out of that and added to the complete streets project, and in addition to the project taking on work on Doelson Street. Councilor Gerding asked what the timeline was in regard to potentially receiving federal funding. Director Smith said the timeline is unsure and it is also unclear whether these funds would be coming from currently passed or proposed legislation. Smith added that we want to be shovel ready regardless as it will fall in line better with the construction season. Gerding asked for clarification that whether or not we receive the grant, we want to be shovel ready anyway. Smith replied in the affirmative. Witham added that when Council voted on this project, it was to get to shovel ready in case this type of funding could be leveraged.

*Councilor Gerding made a motion to support a Resolution amending the complete streets design contract with Wright Pierce in order to prioritize the project and have it ready for the 2022 construction season and fund the amendment with a supplemental appropriation utilizing the water and sewer funds. The motion was seconded by Councilor Dumont and passed 3-0 by roll call vote.*

## MISCELLANEOUS

Councilor Witham mentioned that the flashing red light at Green Street and Indigo Hill is out and asked for a timeline on its repair. Director Bobinsky replied he will get back to the Councilor, though he is aware of the necessary repair and is just working through an expense issue.

There was a robust discussion on the condition of West Alley and the trash and debris being dumped in addition to non-conforming driveways. Manager Belmore stated the City is aware of the issues and is actively working to rectify them. He said we have to follow the law and the process takes time, especially since court dates are being pushed back due to Covid. Belmore added the City Attorney is working with an attorney for the property owner to put up fencing around the dumpster that was installed. Belmore said this block is frequented by our code department who are doing their best to clean up the area within the confines of the law.

ADJOURNMENT

*Councilor Dumont made a Motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gerding and passed 3-0 by roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 4:42 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,

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Jonathan Slaven, City Clerk