

MINUTES OF PUBLIC WORKS & ENVIRONMENT  
COMMITTEE MEETING  
EXECUTIVE CONFERENCE ROOM

January 5, 2017 – 8:30 A.M.

Committee Members Present:

Councilor Dale Sprague, Chair  
Councilor David Witham  
Councilor Denis Messier

Staff Present:

Bob Belmore, City Manager  
Mike Bobinsky, Dir. of PW & Util.  
Shanna Saunders, Dir. of Planning & Devel. Serv.  
Elise B. Brelis, Deputy City Clerk

Others present:

Jason Cunha, Fair Point Turf Engineer  
Maria Letourneau, Eversource Community  
Relations Specialist  
Ian Farley, Eversource Arborist

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*Chairman Sprague called the meeting to order at 8:33am.*

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES

*Councilor Messier, seconded by Councilor Witham, made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2016 meeting. The motion passed, 3-0.*

DISCUSS UTILITY COMPANY WORK

FAIR POINT

Jason Cunha, Turf Engineer was present to represent Fair Point.

Councilor Sprague outlined the ongoing problem in the City of Somersworth of utility poles and replacement poles being erected in the City without permits, old poles not being removed and incomplete work like gravel but no hot-top. He said this practice is unacceptable and asked if the city needs a surety bond to ensure that work is completed. Councilor Witham thinks there is an organizational aspect to this and that there should be a plan in place. He likes the idea of a surety bond so that they have some control. He said it is a mess out there and needs to be cleaned up.

Shanna Saunders arrived at 8:38 am.

Councilor Sprague is a contractor and deals with pole zones; he understands it is difficult to get poles moved but nothing is happening so they end up needing meetings, legislation, surety bonds, etc.

Ian Farley, Eversource arborist, arrived at 8:40 am.

Director Bobinsky stated that if there are utilities still on poles, then they cannot be removed. City Manager Belmore reiterated that even replacement poles need a new license that councilors sign off on.

Jay Cunha said a lot of things happened during the strike; they will try to do the right thing now. He asked for a list of offending poles. ...He is willing to do what he can do. Councilors briefly mentioned taxing the poles. Mr. Cunha expressed willingness to view a couple of poles today and asked for locations. He was given the following: 35 Page St and around 70 Rocky Hill Rd.

### EVERSOURCE

Maria Letourneau, Eversource, Community Relations Specialist, and Ian Farley, arborist, were present to represent Eversource for discussion of “Enhanced Tree Trimming” – ETT in the area of the armory property. Mr. Farley explained that ETT is a one-time clearing project where trees are cut down in the area of the main feeder source for the circuit. He said that statewide, they focus on the “backbone” target area. Eversource protocol is that the contractor meets with the property owner to get permission. With agreement, they remove trees from the area and thereafter, that area will be maintained – (METT; maintenance on enhanced tree trimming.) The one-time “enhanced tree trimming” process is more aggressive than “maintenance” tree trimming, which is done every four years. If a property owner says no, it is recorded as a refusal. Committee members asked additional questions about the armory situation. They discussed wood and stumps which have not been removed. Mr. Farley said they do not have an official stump grinding policy. Mr. Sprague responded, “Yet.” Councilor Witham conceded that Eversource is responsive and that they are moving forward on communication. He would like a press release or something before something like this happens. He observed that this cutting has incensed residents. Mr. Witham believes that decisions in this case were short-sighted.

Ms. Saunders left the meeting at 9:00 am.

Mr. Farley said that while they do not have a replanting program, they could come back in the spring and replant something. Mr. Witham said that the trees in question were mature trees which had been *intentionally* planted. The committee also noted two other locations that they feel are problem areas: the path between Bartlett Street and Maplewood School and near Crockett’s Crossing. Mr. Farley said that they should regroup in the spring; they could bring in a representative from a nursery. The City Manager wants Eversource to *meet* with towns/cities, not just send a letter, in order to flag problems. Mr. Sprague wants to see more commonsense. Ms. Letourneau said, “Lessons learned. What can we do now?” The committee and staff want them to reach out to the city ahead of time for both maintenance and ETT programs. The City Manager wants to see a map of projects. Councilor Witham suggested giving it first to the CM and then have him forward it to Councilors. Ms. Letourneau assured then that they are there to work with (the City.)

Ms. Letourneau and Mr. Farley left the meeting at 9:20 am.

### FUTURE ROAD PROJECTS

The City Manager passed out a handout from Scott Bourcier, PE which offered a preliminary look at upcoming road preservation/resurface/reconstruction projects based upon the pavement condition index, PCI, but not based on a complete streets approach. Five potential total roadway reconstruction and complete street approach projects were also provided. None of these projects took traffic into account as a contributing factor. CM Belmore is looking for clear direction from the committee. After discussion, committee members want to *preserve* conditions wherever possible, they want to put money toward engineering work and be ready for a possible future bond. There are segments of streets that are in bad shape which need to be addressed now. Councilor Witham said that the TAP Grant is a wild card. Councilor Messier thinks they should try to be ready. Councilor Witham thinks connector roads should be especially considered. The committee agreed with the following priorities: Money for engineering, (complete streets,) money to fix very bad areas and money to continue preservation- both mill and overlay. Money for sidewalks on Hamilton Street was also an agreed upon priority.

Mr. Bobinsky briefly spoke about the status of the pump station project.

### MISCELLANEOUS

None.

### ADJOURNMENT

***Councilor Witham, seconded by Councilor Messier, made a motion to adjourn. The motion passed, 3-0, and the meeting adjourned at 9:38 am.***

Respectfully submitted,

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Elise B. Brelis, Deputy City Clerk