



CITY OF BETHEL

Public Works Department

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Public Works Committee Minutes

Regular Scheduled Meeting March 17, 1998

CITY SHOP, CONFERENCE ROOM

7:30 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Interim Chairman Gary Vanasse at 7:45 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Vanasse, M. O'Brien, Murphy and Faulkner

Absent: P. O'Brien

Others present: Clair Grifka, Public Works Director, Wayne Smith, Administrative Assistant

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

M/M O'Brien/Murphy to approve minutes of February 17 meeting as presented. Motion approved- unanimous

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

M/M O'Brien/Murphy to approve agenda as presented. Motion approved-unanimous

V. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

There were no people to be heard.

VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Mr. Vanasse reiterated the need for election of a permanent chair, adding that such election should include a limited term to permit rotation of the chair periodically. He directed discussion of this item, along with election of a permanent chair be added to the April agenda.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Grifka called the members' attention to the report on sewer lagoon aeration from Utilities Maintenance, adding that a further investigation is underway into the issue. Mr. Vanasse noted that, since this issue is an agenda item, questions and further discussion should be reserved for that portion of the meeting.

Mr. Grifka reported addition to the staff of an excellent heavy equipment mechanic. Utilities Maintenance personnel have been performing maintenance work on the sewer lines. They dealt with a break in ASHA housing this past week, and will be undertaking a massive leveling project throughout housing this summer. Also this summer, Road Maintenance will operate a culvert crew, replacing culverts where necessary and installing new ones, as well. Mr. Grifka reported a Utility Rate Analysis will determine the actual costs of providing water and sewer services to Bethel. The new City Engineer, ASCG of Anchorage, will provide considerable assistance with any projects that might be undertaken by the department. Work is tentatively set to begin on upgrading the water treatment plant this summer, although a problem with the freeze-back project may spark a delay. Mr. Grifka reported the diesel fueling facility is fully operational and the attendant soil remediation project is in the planning stages. Many of the department's efforts this summer will focus on in-house improvements, cleaning up, fixing up, etc. Mr. Grifka also reported the waste oil system is almost fully operational.

Mr. Grifka was asked why the seawall pipe is to be moved. He responded that the pipe will be stored at the City Shop for safety and security reasons, adding that the recent snow machine tragedy has inspired a plan to install fencing around all City properties.

Mr. Grifka was asked what is the minimum diameter for driveway culverts. He answered the diameter is to be 24 inches, although there is no standard, minimum length.

He was asked about the Utilities Maintenance Shop, and if the division has the inventory needed to complete the leveling project. Mr. Grifka responded in the affirmative, but added the division will be ordering additional pipe and maintaining a complete inventory. He noted the new shop provides the division's first, central location and has added to the efficient operation of the department.

Regarding the waste oil system, Mr. Grifka was asked what is done with the barrels when they are emptied. He answered that they are crushed and placed in the landfill, adding that any sludge is removed and shipped out as hazardous waste.

Mr. Grifka was asked if the old lift stations will be removed once work is complete on the ASHA pipe-leveling project. He responded that plans for the removal have already been made.

VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Faulkner: Asked the Director if there were any plans to construct a gasoline fueling facility similar to the new diesel facility. Mr. Grifka responded that the Finance Department would be undertaking a cost-effectiveness study to that effect.

Mr. O'Brien: Stated his firm belief the water and sewer ordinances should be amended to require cam locks, not only on new construction, but on all residences. He also pointed out that, per City Council directive, the Public Works Department is fully authorized to utilize community service workers to ride with the solid waste driver for the purpose of picking up trash piled around the dumpsters.

Mr. Murphy: Inquired if community service workers should receive shots and be issued safety equipment to work around solid waste, qualifying the statement by adding shots would probably not be required for workers who rode for a day or two, but expressed his concern that a long-term commitment might call for immunizations. Mr. Grifka stated coveralls, gloves and other, appropriate safety gear are provided all community service workers.

Mr. Vanasse: Expressed his concern that a Bethel resident recently complained that service had not been provided, but no blue tag had been left by the driver. He added his belief this was an isolated incident, rather than a widespread problem. Mr. Grifka noted that the department was experiencing high turnover among utility drivers, adding that it was probably a new driver mistake. Mr. Vanasse also inquired whether the old library would soon be moved completely, noting that one section was due to be moved soon. Mr. Grifka stated he believed the responsible party had been given until some time in May to complete the work. Mr. Faulkner cautioned Mr. Grifka to pass on the news that ADOT will very soon restrict wide and heavy load movement on all state roads in Bethel.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

ITEM A: Aeration of the sewer lagoon

Mr. Grifka reported plans for addition of a laboratory in the new water treatment plant, and plans for Utilities Maintenance Foreman Greg Sargent to receive training in the area of wastewater analysis, which could provide savings to the City on lab fees. Mr. Faulkner cautioned the City to

inquire about effects of in-house water tests on liability.

Mr. Grifka went on to point out Mr. Sargent's recommendation that the City proceed with caution regarding aeration of the sewer lagoon. Mr. Sargent requests he be given this summer season to investigate the real needs for aeration in the lagoon, and the possibility of development of a low-tech answer to any aeration need. Mr. Faulkner asked if Mr. Sargent's investigation would include a check of the lagoon bottom's elevation? Mr. Grifka responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Grifka referred the members to Mr. Sargent's report, which includes a diagram of the equipment which had been in use at Galena, noting the unit was mounted, but both portable and adjustable. He added that this particular item would not be suitable for Bethel, as the equipment services a facility much, much smaller than the City's twenty-five acre lagoon. He added that Mr. Sargent would be looking into something that would better serve Bethel, and that his study would probably be complete by mid-summer.

Mr. Vanasse noted this was not an action item, but that it should appear on the agenda again, as further information becomes available.

ITEM B: Discussion of FY99 Budget

Mr. Grifka reported his work on the FY99 proposal is not yet complete, and is not due to be submitted to the City Manager until March 27. Mr. Vanasse requested a copy of that proposal be mailed to each committee member as soon as it is complete.

Mr. Grifka noted that the preliminary report given the committee by Mr. Smith at last month's meeting was fairly complete, although additional requests will be made for a wrecker to service the light trucks and for a hydroseeder.

Mr. O'Brien noted that OSHA requirements have largely been met, changes to the sales tax ordinance will net additional revenues, and depreciation expenses for the department will be much smaller this year, meaning some additional finance may be available to meet the needs of the department. He went on to say it is crucial for the department to provide solid justifications for its requests.

Mr. Grifka pointed to the greatest capital needs for the department, those being pickup trucks, a rubber-tired backhoe and a track excavator. The latter two items, according to Mr. Grifka, will hopefully be obtained in direct exchange for the EX700.

Mr. Vanasse pointed out he has inquired regarding the legality of such an exchange, and it is reportedly being put to the City Attorney. Mr. O'Brien stated his belief the only question about such an exchange would relate to the City's total ownership of the EX700 in relation to the value it provided to the construction of the sewer lagoon, a grant-funded project.

Mr. Grifka stated he had been directed to move the EX700 to the dock before the end of March to permit its shipment as part of any trade approved by the City Council.

Mr. Faulkner expressed his belief the City would most likely receive only one piece of equipment in exchange for the EX700. He estimated its value at approximately \$180,000 and, after overall shipping costs of \$35,000, there would remain only \$145,000 with which to negotiate for new equipment. Mr. Faulkner expressed his opinion that one, new item would be preferable to two, older items that had seen heavy use.

Mr. Grifka described the summer's projects as including demolition of the old fire station with asbestos abatement. He pointed out there would be some road improvements, as well, but that larger projects would be contracted, as the department lacked personnel to undertake larger works.

Mr. Grifka stated the FY99 proposal would include requests for a new mechanic for Vehicles and Equipment, and a Driver/Operator for Road Maintenance.

Mr. Vanasse reiterated his request that a copy of the department's budget proposal be sent to each committee member, and went on to describe the budget timetable for the committee. According to Mr. Vanasse, the proposal will be submitted by the end of March, addressed by the City Manager, forwarded to the City Council, which should complete its study of the document by the end of April. Budget meetings will be held in May, with the final budget passed the first of June.

X. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

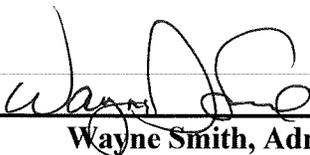
M/M Murphy/O'Brien to adjourn. Motion approved- unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 21 DAY OF April, 1998



Gary Vanasse, Interim Chairman

ATTEST:



Wayne Smith, Administrative Assistant