
City of Bethel, Alaska

Public Works Committee Minutes

May 20, 2015

Regular Meeting

Bethel, Alaska

I. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on May 20, 2015 at 6:30pm in the council chambers of City Hall, Bethel, Alaska. The meeting was called to order by Committee Chair, Frank Neitz, at 6:35pm.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Frank Neitz, Robert Champagne, Jennifer Dobson, Delbert Egoak, Wade Ferdig, Joseph Klejka (arrived at 7:30pm)

Excused: Scott Guinn, Muzaffar Lakhani

Unexcused: Byron Maczynski, Donna Lindsey

Additional Attendees: Clair Grifka of Public Works, Rachele Byrd as Secretary/Recorder, Ann Capela (joined at 7:00pm)

III. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

None.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOVED BY:	Jennifer Dobson	Motion to approve the agenda
SECONDED BY:	Wade Ferdig	
VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote	

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY:	Jennifer Dobson	Motion to approve minutes from April 15, 2015 regular meeting
SECONDED BY:	Robert Champagne	
VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote	

VI. SPECIAL ORDER OF BUSINESS

None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Item A – Water & Sewer Master Plan

Frank Neitz – Has not moved except for Institutional Corridor stuff, and nothing new to talk about.

Item B – Institutional Corridor Location of 4th Well for City Sub WTP

Frank Neitz – The RFP went out for the well portion. There are 2 issues with easements, but they're working on them.

Item C – Sewer Lagoon

Frank Neitz – Leave item on agenda as this is the "City's number one project." The RFP went out last week for repair of truck dump site/platform.

Item D – Donut Hole options for a shorter route to Tundra Ridge

Frank Neitz – City's last recommendation was to write a letter. Nothing has happened.

Item E – Ridgecrest Dr. Rehabilitation Project at the school / Traffic Light System at/near the schools on Ridgecrest

Frank Neitz – Held up because the City spent their share of the money years ago, and we can't find any information about what was done. Another problem is the school isn't stepping up.

Ann Capela – This was not budgeted for. It came out of special funding, and the State is expecting too much from the City. If the school does nothing for the traffic circulation, you'll just have a great road with congestion. It's essential we talk to the school officials and press them on helping out on school grounds.

Joseph Klejka – The school won't respond. We need the City to sit down with them and push them.

Ann Capela – It's in the new budget and the State is ready. But the price for paving is outrageous.

Wade Ferdig – Agrees about cost of paving. Twelve million dollars per mile for something that will last a few years is crazy.

Item F – Landfill Rates

Jennifer Dobson – Can leave landfill information/attachments out of next meeting packet as it's been in the last few. Public Works and the City Clerk are working on changing the rates. Commercial Landfill Use Permits have not been updated since the 80s (\$10/cubic yard). It has also been discussed that the commercial yearly use permits all businesses are required to have (based on Bethel Municipal Code-BMC) hasn't had a mechanism for enforcing or collecting on these permits. The Public Works Director is working with the City Clerk to update and adjust the BMC. New rates should be easy, but the mechanism for enforcing is more difficult because it ties in with Finance.

Frank Neitz – This will be an action on our part when ready to update.

Wade Ferdig – We should include it in the cost of annual business licensing fees.

Frank Neitz – I don't think we can do anything until the Public Works Director comes back and gives us numbers. Then we can give a recommendation.

Item G – Proposed Blue Sky Estates (Hoffman Subdivision)

Frank Neitz – Not sure what the holdup is. Haven't talked to anybody. Will ask Planning Dept.

Ann Capela – The position of the developer is that there will be no impact on the City. My position is that there will be an impact, so we need to come to an agreement.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

Item A – RFP for Truck Dump Site (Lagoon)

Clair Grifka – Should have gone out last week per Bill Arnold (foreman).

Item B – Ridgecrest Road- Cost of project and local match

Frank Neitz – Problems with local match.

Item C – New Soccer Field and Road in Pinky’s Park- approximately 1300 loads of sand and grading; work to be done by Public Works Dept as local match for grant

Frank Neitz – Project would include a road to the community garden. I see major issues with parking and lack of space for any lot there, and the tiny road leading out to it. Talked with Zef and it would take 95% of Public Works resources to do this and it would take all summer. That means nothing else would be able to be done by the department. The field would be up by the bowling alley and new pool, and is specific for this grant. “I think that anything pro-development we gotta push. We’re the Public Works Department- we gotta push it, but we gotta push it in the right direction.” John Sargent orchestrated the grant. Maybe we need to apply for a different grant and knock the 1300 loads of sand we’re expected to contribute into a do-able figure for the City.

Clair Grifka – Public Works currently has 1 dump truck working. We’re working to get more trucks online.

Wade Ferdig – Who asked for the grant? Concerned the City is hoping for a turn-out for soccer rather than knowing there’s a want for it. Is there somewhere else this field can be built that’s already flat and smaller? The City’s obligation is extreme, especially if we don’t know how turn-out will be. May be possible if we had a couple of leagues and people paid a fee. We can’t just throw this much money out there and hope someone uses the soccer field. Keep this in new business until we see a plan.

Jennifer Dobson – Ronda Sargent applied for and received this grant. I didn’t know the City was on the line for this kind of contribution. This amount of sand is insane.

Ann Capela – This isn’t really a soccer field grant. There has been a desire for a natural resource grant and that required a matching grant/funds from the City. It was a desire to have some sort of greenhouse/tunnel built and out of that grew some other projects. The City applied for a grant and promised to have an incline match. The State accepted with 1300 loads of sand. Nobody really did the math and figured out what that meant for the Public Works Dept. Council heard it and approved it without really thinking it through or doing the math. Now we have committed ourselves to a grant which includes 1300 truckloads of sand, which could be day and night for 5 months. We probably can’t do this all in one season and will have to get an extension on the grant.

Item D – Additional Sand and Grading for Community Garden; work to be performed by Public Works Dept

Ann Capela – There is a big desire for a wind tunnel/greenhouse. There are big concerns over the amount of sand Public Works is committed to. After that, then what? You can’t play soccer on sand. Are we planting grass? I haven’t seen a plan.

Jennifer Dobson – I never heard about that part of the grant.

Frank Neitz – Is there anything we can do to get this number down to accomplish the project? Can we contract out the work with someone for help?

Item E – Parks, Boardwalks, and Playgrounds Maintenance

Ann Capela – University of Alaska will now concentrate on the youth side of Parks and Rec and anything having to do with the kids. The City will concentrate on parks, playgrounds, paths, and boardwalks. Staff will be separate now. We need staff to have a presence around Pinky’s Park. They will report to and fall under Public Works Maintenance. This is a better structure that allows us to work on and maintain boardwalks and other parts of the town. The University is more equipped and trained to deal with the children and their programs. They are very excited about this change. There is money in the budget for fixing the boardwalks. Public Works should utilize the shop and its tools at the old Senior

Center, and work with the high school's kids who are in need of community service hours. They can paint, mark boards, or do other tasks to help. There are concerns about the boardwalk between KUC and YKHC. It's not easy since the project doesn't just involve replacing boards. We need to fix it and it needs to be done well. Someone has to sign off that it's safe. I don't think there are any immediate solutions.

Joseph Klejka – We need to put in braces to keep it from going side-to-side.

Wade Ferdig – I think we need to take it down until we decide what to do because I see people on it.

Item F – Spring Clean-Up Green-Up

Ann Capela – The bags are free for the City- we just pay shipping. City staff is asked to pick up curbside bags if they see them. We have budgeted for 6 new neighborhood dumpsters. I want to do something about the bad corner in Kasayulie.

Item G – Water Treatment Plant Operator Staff Certification Requirements; Level II Operator

Ann Capela – It's very important we get those certifications and it's not easy. There needs to be a plan of succession in case people leave. The City is very supportive of this training and aware of the problems we're facing with lack of certification.

Clair Grifka – Everyone is getting certified, and Bill Arnold just received his. The guys have been working every day of the week since March.

Jennifer Dobson – Since Tim Oosterman left we only have one Level-II operator and two Level-II plants. We need to have a plan in place to make sure guys get enough hours and training to move up in levels. It's important because of project funding opportunities.

IX. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Public Works Monthly Report attached.

Joseph Klejka – We need to enforce the problem with restaurants dumping large items and cardboard as noted in the report. Who is in charge? Who can write tickets? If Public Works employees are witnessing this, they should say something. Take pictures, get video, something. Don't cause a confrontation, though.

Response by Ann Capela – The City is looking to hire a code enforcement officer who can respond to calls and write tickets for Municipal Code violations.

Pool water numbers are very high. I have witnessed many times that kids leave the showers on. They just walk away and leave them running.

Response by Wade Ferdig – They're not on a timer? That should be standard.

X. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Delbert Egoak - No comments

Robert Champagne – No comments

Joseph Keljka – New exit at the pool is wonderful, but the stop signs on the one-way street need to be taken down.

Frank Neitz – Will be in to Public Works tomorrow to work on minutes with Rachelle. Add job descriptions and policies to next agenda.

Wade Ferdig – We need to work on job descriptions and policies. Also have concerns over City website and public's inability to get information that should be there.

Ann Capela – Will be meeting with DOWL when Zef is back from leave. Wind Turbine falls under Public Works Dept., which many people don't realize, so add to next agenda. It was installed to generate energy for the pool, but needs very specialized maintenance. An RFP was put out in December or January and nobody was interested in doing the work. The maintenance necessary for keeping the warranty valid is causing a lot of problems. Also, bus shelters fall under Public Works. New ones will be coming this summer in boxes and Public Works will be putting them together and installing them. I have big concerns over the 4th of July parade I very recently found out about. I'm worried about time constraints on Public Works, so we need volunteers to do things like put up barricades, act as security, and clean up after. Talk to groups like BSAR, volunteer firefighters, etc. Clair and crew in the maintenance department have done great work at City Hall cleaning up. The Planning Department may be moving to the Courthouse where the Department of Corrections has vacated.

Clair Grifka – The lagoon is getting really full. Bill Arnold is going to work on thawing it. Bill has asked about timers on the showers at the pool- he thinks this may be causing some of the problems with the lagoon getting so full.

Jennifer Dobson – Left meeting early.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

TIME: 8:30pm

MOVED BY:	Robert Champagne	Motion to adjourn
SECONDED BY:	Delbert Egoak	
VOTE ON MOTION	Motion carried by unanimous vote	

APPROVED THIS 21 DAY OF October, 2015


Frank Neitz, Chair

FOR

10/21/2015
FOR Rachelle Byrd,
Recorder of Minutes

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