



CITY OF BETHEL

P.O. Box 388 Bethel, Alaska 99559
907-543-2297
FAX # 543-4171

Public Works Committee Minutes

Regular Scheduled Meeting December 14, 1999

CITY SHOP, CONFERENCE ROOM

12:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul O'Brien at 12:10 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: P. O'Brien, Murphy, Vanasse, Tarr, Drake

Absent: Faulkner

Others Present: Clair Grifka, Public Works Director

Jerry Drake replacing Member Mike O'Brien

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vanasse/O'Brien to approve agenda with one change regarding Ptarmigan Road. Mr. P. O'Brien mentioned in committee member comments the poor condition of Ptarmigan Road in the November 16, 1999 meeting. Motion approved – unanimous.

IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Drake/Vanasse to approve agenda. Motion approved – unanimous.

V. PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

No one to be heard.

VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

VII. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The Director mentioned to members that the day-to-day operations of public works are good. The new water treatment plant has somewhat shut down for the construction season and will pick up again after Christmas. There has been a decision to turn the plant over to a Programmable Logic Control (PLC) system. It was originally designed for a base relay system. This is the first of 9 more plants in the City of Bethel master plan, which of course will depend on funding. There will be one operator who can monitor each plant from one central location and if problems arise someone will be sent out. Regular day-to-day service will also occur.

The Director mentioned the fact that people are calling in with complaints regarding their driveways being blocked by snow burms. The new grader does a better job in throwing the snow out a little more. Another PSA will be going out stating to the public that Public Works does not clear burms out of driveways.

The Director has been talking with the engineer about the Tundra Ridge Road design. More work will be done there to ensure that we get what we want. There is more communication with this project compared to the last project with the 5 roads which were chip sealed.

VIII. COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Mr. Murphy: No comments.

Mr. Tarr: No comments.

Mr. Vanasse: Welcomed Jerry Drake as the new council representative and is looking forward to him and the new city mayor.

Mr. Drake: Is looking forward to working with the Public Works Committee, which will be a priority for him. He hopes to have the council send more items to the committee and he has many ideas he would like to express himself, such as the solid waste management plan and a new recycling center.

Mr. P. O'Brien: Would like to pursue the idea of turning the Public Works Committee into a Commission in order to possibly be better heard. Would like to make sure that the minutes reflect that this information is included in the packets to be sent out before the next meeting.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None.

X. NEW BUSINESS

ITEM A: BETHEL RECYCLING CENTER

Glen Tarr introduced the Bethel Recycling Center. The Bethel Recycling Center packet was sent out with the agenda packet for members to review. Mr. Tarr is interested in setting up some type of curbside recycling in Bethel. He realizes it may not happen right away but wanted the committee members to have the information for when the time comes. He also wanted to hear what the member comments were on this topic and how it is received with the council.

Drake: Mentioned that he had not heard of this until now so he does not think it was received openly by the council. He does not know the history of this but had asked specifically that this be added to the agenda. Mentioned that the recycling center had to be moved due to the excessive amount of smoke emitted and the air intake of the new courthouse. It was discussed with the council the idea of moving the recycling center to the landfill but others were opposed to this happening. An RFP (Request for Proposal) was sent out, but nothing was done beyond that. This calls for further investigation for a solid waste plan. A solid waste plan should be developed. There are many things that could be done such as requiring, by city ordinance, each commercial user to bundle clean, dry cardboard to be stockpiled into vans and sent south every spring. The Bethel Recycling Center could benefit from this.

O'Brien: Asked what the plan was for the existing Bethel Recycling Center building.

Drake: There is no plan as of yet but there is a long range plan which both the Chief and city manager would like is to make it a public safety building for the police department.

Clair Grifka: The short-term plan is to get it back for the salt/sand pile.

O'Brien: Asked that if a building is built by the landfill, would Brian Glasheen move into it?

Tarr: Thinks that it is more than just education to get people to bring their recyclings all the way to the dump area. Mike had the idea of local drop off points which may work better or curb side recycling but it is very inconvenient to bring everything to the dump.

O'Brien: When Clean-Up Green Up started it changed the community a lot. There was a lot of pride in that and it is not impossible to create that again.

Tarr: That goes back to the long-term planning where we need to look at all the possibilities and choose the best one.

Drake: Support should be lent to Bob and both Bob and Brian should be present to express their ideas. Would like to see it eventually tied into the long range plan to maximize the effort in the building.

Vanasse: Disagrees with the Bethel Recycling Center packet. He does not agree that the study could work because it seems so labor intensive. All the labor is volunteer and if this is going to go to curbside recycling then he would eliminate the garbage pick up. He thinks that curbside recycling may work but does not think that curbside garbage pick up would.

Tarr: The labor is 8 hours a week of four people working, which is 32 man-hours a week. He realizes that it is for a relatively small area.

Vanasse: Does not think that one person could get that done. This does not translate into one employee working 32 hours a week.

Tarr: Asked why would one person need to work 32 hours a week?

Vanasse: Asked if one person would do it all and if you can rely on doing it the same way with the volunteers?

Tarr: Possibly get city employees doing it.

Vanasse: Mentioned that 4 city employees would be doing the work and not volunteers. There is only one city employee emptying dumpsters right now. Vanasse asked if we could always depend on having 4 volunteers?

Tarr: Will look into the volunteer idea.

Vanasse: Thinks that curbside recycling and curbside garbage are two separate things that need to be considered separate with separate regulations. If the curbside recycling continues, Vanasse will take part in it in his own home. Thinks that people need to apply themselves if they want to participate, instead of assuming that people will automatically participate. Vanasse thinks it is very important for the city to work with the recycling center and do what they can, although it is appropriate to have Brian Glasheen and the city manager at the time this discussion takes place.

Drake: Would like to enhance it by adding cardboard recycling. Will try to see if it is feasible.

Vanasse: Recommends that the committee close this item for now and continue it under 'Old Business' on the next agenda and request that this be assigned to the Public Works Committee by the council. If the committee does not get it then just forget about it. Also, request all information relating to this up to this point.

O'Brien: Asked if the committee is agreed in including a combined Recycling Center/Solid Waste Management topic for the next meeting?

Vanasse: Does not think the Bethel Recycling Center and the Solid Waste Management Plan should be dealt with together and should be separate agenda items. Asked if the committee was ready to deal with this in January or is more information needed? Possibly add it to the agenda and an existing plan can be included in the packet.

O'Brien: Add the Recycling Center under Old Business and possibly add Solid Waste Management under New Business to get a tentative start on it.

Drake: Would like to have Bob attend the next meeting and then Brian at another to get the background history.

ITEM B: JANUARY PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

This agenda item was put on by Mr. Drake because it is due next month.

Grifka: This will be combined with the bi-laws because it was mentioned to turn this 7-member committee to a 5-member. Gaye was going to get this information but said it must be in the bi-laws which Grifka could not find anywhere.

Drake: Looked in the city code that establishes committees and commissions and could not find anything. There wasn't anything that prohibited anything under 7 in the council procedures.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Drake/Vanasse to adjourn. Motion approved – unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.