

(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, March 17, 2022 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by the Council President.

Present: Councilwoman Jessica M. Marino
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli
Councilwoman Lammis J. Vargas (appeared at 6:12 p.m.)
Councilman Matthew R. Reilly
Councilman Richard D. Campopiano, Vice-Chair
Council President Christopher G. Paplauskas

Absent: Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair

Also Present: Councilwoman Aniece Germain
Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff
Kenneth Mason, Director of Public Works
John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel
Rosalba Zanni, Acting City Clerk
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilman Reilly, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS* and/ or NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

A. *PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

B. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

- ***Trash and littering in the City and any Ordinances on the books and how is it enforced (Councilwoman Germain).***

Director Mason stated that there are a series of Ordinances starting with Section 8.16 and the enforcement for these are handled by the Police Department. Public Works receives phone calls all the time of people that are dumping large items on the City streets and Public Works goes out and picks those up and deposits those at Resource Recovery.

Councilwoman Germain questioned how we can deter the residents not to do this. Director Mason stated that we do have a Clean City Coordinator that will go out to an individual resident that puts out a couch or table that the resident is not aware that they need to call Waste Management for bulk pickup. This employee writes a dozen letters a week to the property owners stating that they have to coordinate with Waste Management for items to be picked up. Sometimes it may take a week or two to actually get this done and if it does not get done, we have the opportunity to go through Inspections and have them site the house. We can go and clean the property up and put a lien on the property if it is bad.

Director Moretti stated that this issue is a pet peeve of the Mayor's. The Mayor is out there himself as well as Director McAuley. Anytime there is any observed violations, they are after the property owners. Director McAuley has been out with Director Paulino handing out copies of the City Ordinance pertaining to graffiti making people aware of it. The Mayor has directed two Building Maintenance employees to go out and paint over the graffiti. These issues are difficult. It is society, it is our neighbors doing what is the right thing for the City, but every single day there is one person in the City that is complaining about seeing something in the City that needs to be fixed whether it be a private residence or business or City property, the Mayor is there with best resources that we have. We respond to every single report, but other than hiring more individuals, in terms of the attentiveness of Mayor Hopkins, he does not know what else we can do.

Council President Paplauskas asked that this item be continued to next month's meeting for further update.

- ***Village Ave. and Eden Park sign update – have signs been installed (Councilwoman Germain).***

Director Mason stated that the Eden Park signs for the one-way around Eden Park School was completed yesterday and the Village Ave. "no parking" signs were also completed yesterday, but do need to be adjusted.

- ***Status of Debris Cleanup at Yardworks (Councilwoman Marino).***

Councilwoman Marino indicated that she received e-mails back in January and also received them recently inquiring as to the status of the cleanup at this location.

Director Moretti stated that that issue is ongoing. He was with the Mayor, Steven Paiva and Director Rodio and went down to Yardworks to observe that debris and they did not see much at the location because they were asked to remove themselves from the property and they had to comply, but they went to another advantage point and they did see some debris and Inspections was asked to look into that and get back to the Administration. It has not been satisfied to what we believe can be done and the Administration is not happy with it and it is back to Inspections to take a look.

Councilwoman Marino asked that this item be placed on next month's agenda for further status update.

- ***Edgewood Playground (Bench/Toys/Playground conditions) Commercial Street Playground Conditions & Recent littering. (Councilwoman Vargas).***

Councilwoman Vargas stated that as far as the Commercial St. Playground, she received a few phone calls and text messages from residents regarding nails sticking out of pieces of wood where one of the toys is on and she has witnessed that herself and also there is cracked sidewalk or path walk leading to all the toys and a trash can that has been overflowing as well. Even though she understands the City has no control over it, there are a lot of people dumping old toys at Edgewood Playground and Commercial St. Playground as well. Maybe the City can look into this for the safety of the kids using these playgrounds. This is also a liability on the City. As far as the Edgewood Playground, there is a toy similar to a tube slide that is broken and the floor or ground is worn down with holes. She has brought this to the attention of the Public Works and Parks and Recreation Director back in October or November. There is also a bench, that she was told was being replaced, which has a piece of wood broken. Director Tessaglia is also aware of this.

Director Moretti stated that Director Tessaglia gave him an update today. Relative to the Commercial St. Playground, as to the litter issue, Director Tessaglia states that it is under constant maintenance and Parks and Recreation picks up the trash three or four times a week from that facility and will continue to maintain it. He also did state that the Commercial St. Playground will be receiving wood mulch fibers for the surface. He estimates that to be done within a few weeks. Director Moretti stated that he will share with Director Tessaglia the safety issue and will be out there tomorrow.

Councilwoman Vargas asked if an additional trash barrel can be added to these playgrounds if the trash is overflowing.

Director Moretti stated that as far as the bench at Edgewood Playground, Building Maintenance was made aware of it back in December and it will be repaired.

Council President Paplauskas stated that on behalf of the City Council, he thanked Director Mason for all his years of service to the City and he will be missed and wished him well in his retirement.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Acting City Clerk