

(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, April 13, 2023 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:10 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilman John P. Donegan
Councilman Matthew R. Reilly (appeared at 6:13 p.m.)
Councilman Robert J. Ferri
Councilwoman Aniece Germain, Vice-Chair
Council Vice-President Lammis J. Vargas, Chair
Council President Jessica M. Marino

Absent: Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli

Also Present: Councilman Richard D. Campopiano
Councilman Christopher G. Paplauskas
Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff
John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel
David DiMaio, City Council Budget Analyst
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the March 16, 2023 meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

Councilwoman Germain:

- *Status and update on the Budlong Pool Project. (Cont. from 1/23/2023 City Council and 2/16/2023 & 3/16/2023 Committees)*

Councilwoman Germain stated that she would like to have the truth of what is going on at the pool. She would like to hear from Federal Hill Group, if they are present this evening, from former Parks and Recreation Director Liberatore. She requested Administration to contact Federal Hill Group to attend. She sees former Director Liberatore is present and asked that he be allowed to answer some questions she has.

Chair asked if there are any objections.

Councilman Reilly stated that this has been discussed at every meeting for over a year. He does not understand why, since last week the Administration came before us with funds for architectural drawing so they could move forward and it was continued.

Solicitor stated that having Mr. Liberatore speak is totally within the chair's discretion. It is a docketed item and public hearing is allowed.

Anthony Liberatore, 18 Bank St., appeared to speak.

Councilwoman Germain thanked Mr. Liberatore for attending. She asked how long he was Director of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Liberatore stated, from 2007-2020 his last day of work was 1/4/2021. Councilwoman Germain asked Mr. Liberatore if he shared files with his successor regarding the pool. Mr. Liberatore stated that there was never a transition done of his department by the Administration. Councilwoman Germain asked what the capacity of the Budlong Pool is. Mr. Liberatore stated 300 people.

Solicitor stated that this matter is advertised for a status and update. This proceeding is taking on public hearing and there is a process that needs to be followed. Witnesses need to be sworn, subpoenas go out and so forth, but we are turning what was advertised as a status update into a full blown inquiry after the circumstances leading up to the Budong Pool issue. In his legal opinion, he does not believe that this is proper forum procedurally. If there is going to be an inquiry, it should be advertised as such, witnesses, if they are going to speak, need to be sworn, but he does not think it is appropriate tonight, not in the format that this issue has been advertised for tonight. If someone wants to give comments, that is fine, but this is a question and answer session, a hearing, so he would have to put his foot down and say that this is not proper procedure.

Councilwoman Germain stated that last week there was an Ordinance before the Council for \$350,000 to engage an engineer. That was something we could not support even though she has been advocating for the pool. Last April, a report was submitted to the Council. In the report there were three options and all of those cost a certain amount of money. In the report there was no place where it said the pool could not be fixed. Based on the budgetary situation it would be wise to use an option less expensive and open the pool in a timely fashion, but the Mayor presented a proposal for \$7 million. Where the \$7 million would come from, we do not know. She believes that we can add those features to the pool, we can repair the pool, repair the bath house, add a picnic area, add a splash pad if we have the money, without building a new pool. She asked that this item be continued to the May meeting and have notice properly drafted and advertised to have Mr. Rodio, Mr. Liberatore and Federal Hill Group attend the next meeting.

Councilman Reilly stated to Councilwoman Germain that the fact that you are stating that you are skeptical of a report and that is BS coming from the Mayor's Office with no basis whatsoever is absolutely out of line. The Ordinance last week was not \$350,000, it was up to \$350,000. To fix the pool, the Mayor gave us three proposals. To fix the pool and the bath house in its current form, it will be approximately \$2.7 million or \$2.5 million, then to build a brand new one only would be approximately \$3.5 million, so for \$800,000 more we get a brand new thing rather than patching it up. The building is not ADA compliant at all and has structural problems. The pool has a liner that has to be filled far more than what a new thing would cost. Three hundred people are not there on a daily basis.

Councilwoman Germain asked that this be continued.

Chair asked Clerk to add this item to the May Public Works meeting agenda and Councilwoman Germain will work with the Clerk's Office or Solicitor's Office to make sure that it is being advertised and going through the proper channels to make sure we do not derail from the topic of what she would like accomplished at that meeting and go through the proper process.

***Request from Rhode Island Energy for pole location at Rose St.
(Cont. 2/16/2023 & 3/16/2023)***

Chair indicated that Rhode Island Energy has withdrawn this petition and no action is needed.

Request from Rhode Island Energy for pole location at Cadillac Ave. (Cont. 2/16/2023 & 3/16/2023)

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to approve this request. Motion failed on a tie vote of 3-3. The following being recorded as voting "aye": Council Vice-President Vargas, Councilwoman Germain and Councilman Ferri -3. The following being recorded as voting "nay": Councilmen Donegan, Reilly and Council President Marino -3.

2-23-03 *Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 15 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Buildings and Construction" (Poles Relocation). Sponsored by Councilman Donegan. (Cont. as amended 3/16/2023).*

Councilwoman Germain motioned to recommend approval of this Ordinance. Councilman Donegan seconded the motion for discussion:

Under Discussion:

Councilman Donegan stated that there is a little work that needs to be done on this and asked for a continuance.

Motion and second to approve were withdrawn.

On motion by Council President Marino, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to continue this Ordinance. Motion passed unanimously.

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

None.

A. *PUBLIC HEARINGS

B. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Council Vice-President Vargas:

- ***Waste Management Trash Pick Up on Park Avenue - Ward 1 *Sweeping Schedule *Pavement of streets in Ward 1.***

Director Moretti stated that the Clean City Coordinator is speaking with Waste Management and it is Waste Management to speak to their drivers on how they can schedule their routes.

Director Moretti addressed the item of Street Sweeping Schedule and stated that last year, it was East to West and this year it will be West to East and run from April 1st to July 31st, the latest.

Director Moretti addressed the item of Street Paving and stated that we do not have a list of streets to be paved yet.

Chair asked that once the list is compiled, it be shared with the Council. Director Moretti stated, absolutely.

Request from Narragansett Electric for pole location at Gansett Ave.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed on a vote of 5-1. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilmen Donegan, Ferri, Councilwoman Germain, Council Vice-President Vargas and Council President Marino -5. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Councilman Reilly -1.

Request from Narragansett Electric for pole location at Hosey Dr.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed on a vote of 5-1. The following being recorded as voting “aye”: Councilmen Donegan, Ferri, Councilwoman Germain, Council Vice-President Vargas and Council President Marino -5. The following being recorded as voting “nay”: Councilman Reilly -1.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees