

(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, October 14, 2021 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, RI.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilwoman Jessica M. Marino
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli
Councilman Matthew R. Reilly (appeared at 6:20 p.m.)
Councilwoman Lammis J. Vargas
Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair
Council President Christopher G. Paplauskas

Also Present: Councilman John P. Donegan
Councilwoman Aniece Germain
Paul McAuley, Deputy Chief of Staff
Paula Smith, Director of Constituent Affairs
Kenneth Mason, Director of Public Works
John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Tracy Shepherd, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

7-21-08 *Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 12 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places" (Street Paving). Sponsored by Councilman Donegan and Councilwoman Marino. Continued from 9/15/2021*

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Renzulli, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Director Mason stated that, personally, he is not a big fan of this Ordinance, but asked that the Committee change the language in line #27 from "corresponding budget fiscal year" to "corresponding calendar year" because we do not make lists up by fiscal year. The list prepared during the winter typically contains a lot more roads than we are actually going to pave during the next year and roads get taken off, they get added and he would be very hesitant to publish a list because this list most likely will change.

Councilwoman Marino stated that she does not have a problem making the change to the Ordinance as stated by Director Mason. She understands what Director Mason stated as to providing this list, but this provides for a lot of transparency. Other portion of this Ordinance, at the end of the time period, there will be a report as to which streets were paved.

Councilman Donegan shared sentiments of Councilwoman Marino and stated that maybe there should be a conversation held a few weeks or months before the list goes out to get a better idea of which streets are going to be done. He thinks that having this on the books would add some clarity for the public and for the City Council to know what the money is going to be used for that is coming before us in the budget and what is actually getting done.

Councilwoman Germain echoed the sentiments of Councilman Donegan and Councilwoman Marino and stated that she has constituents telling her their streets have not been paved in thirty years and she does not have the answers so we need to have something enacted showing the rationale behind why their street has not been paved.

Council President Paplauskas asked how often the list changes due to utility work or other reasons. Director Mason stated that he started working on next year's paving list already and we have all the roads rated from 0 to 100 and typically, he does not want to pave anything rated over 60. He tries to do neighborhoods at a time. He does not like to do runoff streets all over the place and he makes sure we do every Ward. Council President Paplauskas asked Director Mason if any flexibility is taken away from him if this Ordinance passes. Director Mason stated, no, it will not affect them.

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to amend this Ordinance as follows: line #28, delete "budget fiscal" and add "calendar", line #30, delete "fiscal" and add "calendar", and line #31, delete "fiscal" and add "calendar". Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance as amended. Motion passed unanimously.

7-21-16 *Ordinance in amendment of Chapter 8.12 of the Code of the City of Cranston, 2005, entitled "Health and Safety – Garbage Collection and Disposal". Sponsored by Councilwoman Vargas. Continued from 9/15/2021.*

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

On motion by Councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to accept substituted version of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilwoman Vargas presented amended draft of this Ordinance from what was previously presented. She stated that the purpose of this Ordinance is to make sure that where there is private residential establishments five units or more that their dumpster is actually picked up on time and not overflowing.

Director Mason stated that he believes there is State Law that requires commercial facilities to recycle. He does not believe anyone has any enforcement capabilities. He has asked DEM before and they do not have any enforcement police going around and checking businesses and he does not believe we have it in our Ordinances either.

Director Mason stated that line #64 of the Ordinance states hours of 7 am to 5 pm and our City Code Section 8.12.020 of our City Code states 10 pm and not 5 pm and has fines of \$200 and not \$100. He is questioning the 5 pm and not the 7 am.

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, it was voted to amend line #64 from 5 pm to 10 pm. Motion passed unanimously.

On motion by Councilwoman Vargas, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, it was voted to amend line #65 from \$100 to \$200. Motion passed unanimously.

Roll call was taken on motion to recommend approval of this Ordinance as amended and motion passed unanimously.

- ***Status of leak/repairs to Kinder Morgan/National Grid main gas line on easement off of Natick Ave. (west area of 699-741 Natick Ave.).*** Councilwoman Marino. **Continued from 9/15/2021.**

Director Mason stated that there was a gas leak and that was fixed the end of August. They ended up replacing a section of the pipe and that is why it took so long.

- ***Update on Park Ave. Bridge.*** Councilwoman Vargas. **Continued from 9/15/2021.**

Councilwoman Vargas asked if there is anything that the Council or the City can do as a City to expedite this work. **Director Mason** stated that he spoke to the project manager for Aetna Bridge today and they made some progress, but from September 1st to today, they have only been able to work on the bridge twelve days and they have averaged 2.1 hours per day. That is the only time that they have been allotted by Amtrak to get into the bridge and do the work. Their best guess for opening the bridge would be in the Spring and the project would be completed 100% later in the Summer.

- ***Meshanticut State Park and Pond (invasive lotus).*** (Council President Paplauskas) **Continued from 9/15/2021**

Council President Paplauskas stated that the lotus was sprayed again a few days ago with chemical treatment. Hopefully, by Spring, we will see an improvement. He asked that this be taken off the agenda until more updates come up.

- ***Flooding on Cranston St.*** (Council Vice-President Ferri). **Continued from 9/15/2021.**
- ***Flooding on Wilbur Ave.*** (Council Vice-President Ferri). **Continued from 9/15/2021.**

Council Vice-President Ferri asked if there is a long-term plan with the State to stop the flowing on Wilbur and Oaklawn and also on Cranston St. Director Mason stated that flooding on Cranston St. is an issue that the City partially rectified. The pipes have been cleaned out and there is another issue further down the line and we do have plans to look into that. As to the Wilbur Ave. flooding, we are in the process of searching for Grant money to try to address that problem. His whole proposal would be to take the whole railroad bridge down and put an arch bridge over it and raise Wilbur Ave. where it bellies underneath it and get rid of the flooding that way. We are looking at some possible Grant money to look into this.

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

A. *PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

B. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Request from National Grid for pole location at Lincoln Ave.

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Request from National Grid for pole location at Meadow Lark Dr.

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

RIDOT – Surplus State Land Offer: Tax Assessor Plat 9:5-195, 5-196: 0 and 125 Norfolk St.

Director Mason stated that this property used to be a group home behind Burger King run by the State and they have a purchase and sales agreement to sell that building for \$300,000. He does not see any need or use for that home and does not recommend exercising that option.

On motion by Council President Paplauskas, seconded by Councilwoman Vargas, it was voted to remove this item from the agenda. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Acting City Clerk