

(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, August 17, 2023 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

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

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilman John P. Donegan
Councilman Richard G. Campopiano
Councilman Robert J. Ferri
Council Vice-President Lammis J. Vargas, Chair
Council President Jessica M. Marino

Absent: Councilwoman Aniece Germain, Vice-Chair
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli

Also Present: Councilman Christopher G. Paplauskas
Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff
John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Justin Mateus, Chief Engineer
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Campopiano, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the July 13, 2023 meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

V. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

VII. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Petition of Narragansett Electric and Verizon New England for installation of new pole on Wilbur Ave.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Campopiano, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition of Narragansett Electric and Verizon New England for installation of new pole on Harmony St.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Campopiano, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Petition of Narragansett Electric and Verizon New England for installation of new pole and new conduit on Macklin St.

On motion by Councilman Ferri, seconded by Councilman Donegan, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Councilman Ferri:

- *Backlog on Tree Trimming and Removal. What are we doing to improve the situation?*

Mr. Mateus stated that the backlog of tree maintenance program has always existed. What is being done to combat that is the City is prioritizing the requests based on public safety and based on funding.

Councilman Ferri asked what is being done to correct that situation. Mr. Mateus stated, additional funding.

Director Moretti stated that additional funding would be many many hundreds of thousands of dollars to resolve every issue that people would like to have done.

Councilman Ferri stated that being a problem forever is not acceptable. We have to come up with a way to satisfy people. Director Moretti stated that the City does not do pruning or decorative type things, basically health and safety, otherwise, the answer is funding.

- *Update on Wilbur Ave. flooding? Are there any meetings planned to discuss this? If so, what are the details?*

Mr. Mateus stated that the City, the Mayor and Administration met with Director Alviti of R.I.D.O.T. approximately two weeks ago and working on potential solutions.

Councilman Ferri asked that the Council be updated quarterly.

Council Vice-President Vargas:

- *Assessment of all City of Cranston Parks & Recreation - is there an ongoing priority list and who's keeping up with its maintenance.*

Director Moretti stated there is a list of needs for each recreational facility conditions and the Parks and Recreation Director has those prioritized on how they should be addressed and it is a constant thing. There is a priority list that he maintains and who does it and there is an inhouse crew who responds to the maintenance.

Council Vice-President Vargas stated that her concern is requesting that Parks and Recreation list or an assessment if possible on our parks. She would love a list of maintenance of the facilities and what they score. A similar list was shared with, she believes the Public Works Committee, in her previous term. The reason for this request is Edgewood Elementary School and Chester Barrows School Playgrounds. Chester Barrows is having a welcome back open house within the next few weeks and it does not look good. It does not look welcoming. She addressed the issues with Director Tessaglia several times and has not heard back from him. Edgewood Elementary School Playground is in total disrepair and in bad conditions. The basketball court at the Commercial St. Playground is cracked and the hoops are in the worst conditions. This is not safe. Sometimes trash barrel is overflowing as well. She is not happy with the way our Parks are being maintained. She requested a list of assessment of our Parks for the next Public Works Committee meeting.

- *Conditions, maintenance and upgrades of Commercial Street Park/Playground, Edgewood Elementary School Playground and Chester Barrow School Playground*

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

- *Bigbelly Smart Waste System (solar powered – improves trash overflow)*

Chair asked that this item be removed from the agenda for now.

- *Schedule of Pawtuxet Village/Stillhouse Cove trash can pickup*

Mr. Mateus stated that he checked with the Highway Department and they are there every day, five days a week.

Chair asked that this item be continued to the City Council meeting and asked that this be double checked because she has some other information as well.

- *Drainage process in the City*

Chair asked that this item be removed from the agenda since this item was already answered.

Council President Marino:

- *Fire Department Stations – status of necessary repairs and maintenance*

Director Moretti stated that the Mayor met with the Fire Chief and did a walk through with the Safety Officer of the UND and observed the issues which were pointed out. A check of the air quality was done and air quality came back below any concerns. In terms of the painting, there are some lead paint issues and in speaking with RI Health Department, there is no immediate concern at the moment. We are going out for RFP for some type of bidding process with scoping out the work. There is a possibility of using ARPA funds.

Council President Marino asked if there are any repairs that were done in-house through Building Maintenance. Director Moretti stated that this will be put out to the outside contractor. The City Laborers have a concern for doing the work. Council President Marino asked what the timeline is for RFP and for the repairs. Director Moretti stated that the scope of work is being formulated. He would say within a month.

Councilwoman Renzulli:

- ***RI Ready Municipal Road Fund Program***

Mr. Mateus stated that this is a great program D.O.T. is implementing and Cranston will be applying and utilizing the Grant Funding.

Council Vice-President Vargas asked when the deadline to apply is. Mr. Mateus stated middle of October. Council Vice-President Vargas asked if we are working with the Grant Writer on this. Mr. Mateus stated, no. This is a relatively simple Grant. It is only a one-step Grant so he will probably be taking care of it himself. If he needs assistance, he will reach out to her.

- ***Basketball Hoop at Sivo Park and other Cranston Parks”.***

Council Vice-President Vargas stated that she was informed that a parent purchased and installed the hoop.

Director Moretti stated that he is not aware of this. He also stated that during the Fung Administration, the hoops were taken down. One reason was complaints of noise from neighbors.

Councilman Paplauskas stated that when he was first elected to the City Council, the hoops were taken down because the majority of the neighbors complained of noise. Maybe another consensus of the neighbors should be taken.

Chair asked that this item be left of the agenda.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees