

(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 12, 2023 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, Cranston, Rhode Island.

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 P.M. by the Chair.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Councilman John P. Donegan
Councilman Richard G. Campopiano
Councilman Robert J. Ferri
Councilman Daniel R. Wall
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli (appeared at 6:25 p.m.)
Councilwoman Aniece Germain, Vice-Chair
Council Vice-President Lammis J. Vargas, Chair
Council President Jessica M. Marino

Also Present: Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff
Thomas Zidelis, Director of Finance
Justin Mateus, Acting Public Works Director
Raymond Tessaglia, Director of Park and Recreation
Stephen Angell, City Council Legal Counsel
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **Approval of minutes of the September 14 2023 Regular meeting**

On motion by Councilwoman Germain, seconded by Councilman Ferri, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the September 14, 2023 meeting and they stand approved as recorded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

8-23-01 *Ordinance in Amendment of Title 10, Chapter 12 of the City of Cranston Code of Ordinances, 2005, Entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" - Dyer Avenue Pedestrian Activated Signal.* Sponsored by Councilman Donegan. (Cont. from 9/14/2023).

On motion by councilman Donegan, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to recommend approval of this Ordinance.

Under Discussion:

Councilman Donegan stated that this Ordinance would create a pedestrian activated crosswalk on Dyer Ave. Where this proposal would be, there is an existing crosswalk. It is at a school crosswalk and it is a very large housing complex with a lot of both young and elderly residents. This would create a protective place for people on Dyer Ave. to cross one side of the street to the other. This would make crossing Dyer Ave. safer for those that need it and he urged passage.

Director Mateus stated that in the Traffic Engineer's report, it recommends using a different traffic calming technique in this area. It is a rectangular rapid flash beacon. The reason for recommending this other option is it is just as effective and substantially cheaper.

Councilman Donegan stated that based on the report, it is approximately a \$60,000 difference. He asked if that is accurate. Director Mateus stated, yes. Councilman Donegan asked if this difference is a one-time expense. Director Mateus stated, yes. Councilman Donegan stated that the stop light would be a better option. He would prefer to move forward with the stop light.

Chair asked if there is any data available as to the number of traffic accidents there. Director Moretti stated that the Police did a traffic study a few months ago and did not note any unusual speeding. He noted that there is approximately \$87,000 in the Neighborhood Bond Funds remaining for various traffic safety consideration, so this would probably exhaust that fund until next time we bond.

Councilman Paplauskas stated that he thinks that the less expensive option the Administration is proposing is newer technology and he sees that more when driving and the strobe lights are brighter.

Councilman Donegan asked, if we were to go with the other option, could we have signage before the crosswalk stating "slow for pedestrian crossing"? Director Mateus stated, yes. Councilman Donegan stated that that would satisfy the concern to place warning signs before the crosswalk. He asked if the signal, as proposed, would require a warrant analysis. Director Mateus stated that he has not done an analysis, but his engineering judgment is that it is not going to pass that warrant analysis. This is another reason why he would choose the rapid reflecting beacons. Councilman Donegan stated that that is a fair compromise made by the Administration to move forward to get this done.

Councilman Donegan asked if the additional signage would be required by Ordinance. Attorney Angell stated, no, not for signage like that because you are not controlling traffic with it, it is a warning. If this section of the Code is not being amended anymore, then this Ordinance cannot be passed this evening. A traffic control device needs to be addressed in the Code of Ordinances.

Director Mateus stated that the Ordinance that has been drafted is under a section relating to the traffic signals, not the rapid reflecting beacons, but he believes there is a separate Ordinance where the rapid reflecting beacons are specifically called.

Attorney Angell stated that his recommendation would be, you can't amend this Ordinance because we are not amending this section. His recommendation would be to withdraw this Ordinance and resubmit under the appropriate Code section.

Councilman Donegan withdrew this Ordinance.

Councilwoman Germain: (Cont. from 9/14/2023).

- *Discussion on the Sewer infrastructure bond? What is the amount available?*

Director Mateus stated that the Sewer Infrastructure Bond has -0- in it. The last Bond that was taken out was in 2014 and that was for upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. All that money has been expended. The City has a separate system for sewer storm water so the sewer would have no impact on it.

Councilwoman Germain stated that she was told by residents that Richard St. and Clarence St., there is a problem with the sewer line and that is why a lot of time we have problems in that area. Director Mateus stated that they are separate sewer and storm water and have separate pipes under the ground, so there is no impact on the sewer infrastructure when it rains.

- *Discussion on Streets Flooding issues: Richard St, Clarence St, Arthur St Greenwood St, Garden St, Magnolia St, and Budlong Manor areas. Do we continue to wait and see or do something? What should we do?*

Director Mateus stated that all these locations are all part of the same watershed they all discharge to the same point and that is Fenner Pond. The fixes the engineers are looking at fixing are two year storms. That is an inch over several hours. This year, we have gotten seventy year storms, fifty year storms, thirty year storms. The design to fix something like that is extremely expensive. The expense to fix a two-year storm is still millions of dollars, so ultimately, this would have to be vetted in the Capital Improvement.

Council Vice-President Vargas: (Cont. from 9/14/2023).

- *Bike Lane Delineators flexible post in Narragansett Blvd.*

Chair stated that she has done research and reached out to different municipalities in the area. She asked if for the next meeting or through email, Director Mateus can provide a cost analysis of how many posts we would actually need on Narragansett Blvd. in order to move forward. Director Mateus stated that he did find a resource that gave dollar amounts per lane mile. The distance from Montgomery Ave. to Sefton Ave. is two miles, one either way and cost estimate on that was approximately \$25,000 per mile and it is two miles, so it would cost \$50,000.

Chair stated that the bike lane on Montgomery Ave. does not run all the way to Sefton. Director Mateus stated that he will take another look at it.

Chair asked that this item be continued.

- ***RIDOT's Municipal Road & Bridge Program Opportunities***

Chair asked if any of the applications the city has put in for are for sidewalks. Director Mateus stated that as of right now, there has not been any for sidewalks, they are just for road paving. Chair asked if the City has submitted all applications for everything at once that we want to do out of that 33% match, since the deadline is this weekend director Mateus stated that he has completed approximately 75% of it and he will finish up the last 25 tomorrow.

Chair asked that this item be continued.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kimberly Bedrosian, 45 Mount View Dr., appeared to speak and stated that she puts her full trust in Councilman Dan Wall.

VI. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

Petition of Narragansett Electric and Verizon New England Inc. for relocation of a pole on Cranston St.

On motion by Councilwoman Renzulli, seconded by Councilwoman Germain, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Vice-President Vargas:

- ***Update on the CDBG funding***

Chair stated that this item has already been discussed.

- ***City playground assessment and cost analysis***

Chair asked if there is \$150,000 in the Capital Budget that has to do with possibly allocating that towards the playgrounds. Director Zidelis stated that there is \$110,000. It was in the approved FY17-18 approved Capital Plan. He also stated that just from the plan from the document, he can tell it was approved, from the pictures he has seen that were shown, to him, he finds it highly unlikely that that park was improved five years ago, so he is going to make an assumption that it was not spent yet. Chair stated that she appreciates that and if there was any penny that was spent, particularly on playground or that funding that was allocated for that it was spent on something else, she would like to know what it was spent on. Director Zidelis stated that he can confirm that to her by email. Director Moretti confirmed that it has not been used, but Director Zidelis will reconfirm that. The Administration is directing Purchasing to work with the Recreation Director to begin work to get that playground up and running.

Director Moretti stated that he believes the Director has prepared something. He asked if the Committee would like to discuss that or continue it. Chair stated that she is looking for the cost to do an assessment of all our school playgrounds, school sites first as a priority.

Director Tessaglia stated that in the list he has made, there are five or six playgrounds prioritized. The Administration asked him to prioritize them and, obviously, Edgewood being the top one. He has a printout he can share with the Council.

- ***Grant information request for Playgrounds***

Director Tessaglia stated that they recently cleaned Smith St. out and there are plans to replace that playground. He has old site plans he can at least start with them and then update them because he is sure prices have gone up.

Councilwoman Renzulli stated that she understands Edgewood Highlands is a priority, but she asked if there is going to be a plan for a comprehensive Citywide assessment. Director Tessaglia stated that they have been doing that since the last Council meeting. There is nothing in the system right now that has a checking system other than his staff going out there. He has formulated six or seven check lists of various playgrounds and gave them to two of his staff going around and they have been trying to figure out which ones fit which ones are best and then they are trying to compile all these and come up with a form that will be used universal.

Director Moretti stated that the Administration was provided with that report from 2022, the Mayor and himself were not. He was told by the Director that it was dropped off in the Recreation Department, but it did not make its way to the Mayor or himself. As to the CDBG Funds, after it is approved by the Feds, the Mayor is looking to reallocate funds from CDBG into Smith.

- ***Cost of Delineators flex pole for Narragansett Blvd. Would like Administration to research the cost on what it takes to add and how many would be needed.***

Chair stated that this item was discussed earlier in the meeting.

- ***Bike rack in Pawtuxet Village***

Chair asked Director Mateu for a cost analysis and that can be provided by email. Director Mateus stated he can certainly work with Council Vice-President Vargas on that. He also stated that he she has locations in mind, he would be happy to take a look at them and give his opinion and go from there.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosalba Zanni
Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees