

SUMMARY OF MINUTES

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

5:50 P.M., TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2009

COMMITTEE ROOM

ROOM 239, CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: *Council Member Joycelyn V. Johnson, Chair*
Council Member Evelyn A. Terry, Vice Chair
Council Member Dan Besse
Council Member Robert C. Clark (out at 6:26 p.m.)

Chair Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:50 p.m. and stated that the General Agenda tonight had several street renaming requests and, without objection, the public hearings on those items would be combined as one public hearing for all of them at once. She also indicated that Item G-7 was reviewed by Finance Committee on Monday, and tonight's presentation would be a more abbreviated summary of the report.

Mr. Gregory M. Turner, Assistant City Manager/Public Works, explained that the report is for information and to solicit input from the Committee. He noted that the item is going to be reviewed again by Finance and Public Works Committees next month, and would ultimately be scheduled for presentation to the full Council at a future date.

Chair Johnson indicated that the Committee would now consider the Consent Agenda. No items were pulled for discussion.

Council Member Clark made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Besse and unanimously carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

- C-1. PETITION FOR THE ANNEXATION OF 115.09 ACRES LOCATED OFF OF MEADOWLARK DRIVE (WEST WARD) -*Petition of Brookberry Farm, LLC, Jerry T. Carter, Patricia S. Carter, John A. Evans, and Adele K. Evans. Public Hearing: March 23, 2009.*

- C-2. CONSIDERATION OF ITEMS RELATING TO THE ACQUISITION/SALE OF PROPERTY:
- a. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING ACCEPTANCE OF A DONATION OF EASEMENTS FROM TETRA INVESTMENT GROUP 22, LLC AND ACCEPTANCE OF EASEMENTS AND FEE SIMPLE RIGHT-OF-WAY FROM KEITH CHAPMAN.
 - b. RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ABANDONMENT OF UNNEEDED EASEMENTS TO TETRA INVESTMENT GROUP 22, LLC; HELEN F. LONG; AND PERCY E. SYNDER, JR.
- C-3. CITY/COUNTY UTILITY COMMISSION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.
- C-4. PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE SUMMARY OF MINUTES - *January 13, 2009.*

GENERAL AGENDA

- G-1. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF "BETHABARA ROAD" TO "BETHABARA HAVEN DRIVE".
- G-2. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF "BOWEN BOULEVARD" TO "JIM CONRAD LANE".
- G-3. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF "FAIRECREST DRIVE" TO "FAIRCREST DRIVE".
- G-4. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF "FALCON POINT DRIVE" TO "SENTRY POINTE LANE".
- G-5. PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED RENAMING OF "WHITAKER ROAD" TO "WHITAKER RIDGE DRIVE".

Chair Johnson stated that this was now a public hearing on Items G-1 through G-5, and asked if anyone wished to be heard. Seeing no one, she declared the public hearing closed.

Council Member Clark stated that he recalled having approved a name change to a segment of Whitaker Road in the past, and expressed concern about approving the item without further research.

Mr. Paul Norby, City/County Planning Director, stated that staff could research the item further, noting that the change may have occurred during the rezoning case of the bank a couple of years earlier.

Council Member Clark requested that Item G-5 be held for further research. He made a motion to approve Items G-1 through G-4.

The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Terry and unanimously carried.

G-6. RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR PIEDMONT TRIAD SEAMLESS MOBILITY STUDY. *[Item continued by the Public Works Committee in January.]*

Mr. Turner explained that this item was continued from last month pending a change to the language and the resolution was changed to indicate City Council's receipt of the report, however, its approval of the resolution would not assume its approval of all of the recommendations contained within the report.

Council Member Clark made a motion to approve the item. The motion was duly seconded by Council Member Besse and unanimously carried.

G-7. PRESENTATION OF PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE UTILITY COMMISSION REVIEW COMMITTEE.

Mr. William Rose, Chairman, Utility Commission Review Committee, gave a brief overview of the Utility Commission and how the Review Committee was formed. He explained what type of review was done and noted that the Deputy Manager of Forsyth County had attended many of the Review Committee's meetings, and the Review Committee received much expert advice from the University of North Carolina, School of Government. He stated that he would address individual concerns of the Committee Members tonight.

Council Member Clark noted that although the City's landfill fee is fairly competitive, recently, more dumping is occurring outside of Forsyth County. He inquired if other cities are experiencing a similar issue and how those municipalities are dealing with the problem.

Mr. David Saunders, Director of City/County Utilities, explained that although the fee is competitive with other municipalities, private facilities are not represented in the study and they can negotiate their rates on an individual basis, depending upon volume.

In response to Council Member Clark's question, Mr. Rose stated that there has been an 80% decline in the number of publicly held landfills in the U.S. over the past 25 years. He noted that in the past 12 years, there has been a 20% decline in the tonnage served by the Hanes Mill Road Landfill.

Council Member Clark noted that the recycling costs per household are competitive, but not as much is collected as other municipalities. He inquired if the Review Committee had any suggestions on increasing participation in the program.

Mr. Rose explained that the Review Committee is asking that City Council consider a target marketing plan to increase participation. The City currently has a 48% set-out rate, comparable to rates in Raleigh, Durham and Charlotte. He noted that some efforts to pursue could be the use of larger bins and marketing campaigns.

Council Member Clark inquired as to why the City's water and sewer hookup rates are much lower, however, its assessment rates are much higher than other municipalities.

Mr. Rose explained that the Utility Commission charges based on historical actual costs, but most other municipalities charge little to nothing for assessments.

Council Member Clark asked if an analysis had ever been performed to determine the effectiveness of the water and sewer rates and expressed concern over subsidizing the costs.

Mr. Rose indicated that of the newly annexed areas, approximately 18,000 households have not hooked up to City/County sewer service. He stated that if there were some type of incentive available to get those households hooked up, the amount generated would represent approximately 20% of the revenue from water and sewer fees.

Council Member Clark stated that specific program suggestions from the Review Committee would be helpful. He noted that obtaining the legacy homes currently on septic tank systems would result in a great increase in revenue from sewer service.

Council Member Besse noted that Hickory and Asheville have greater set-out rates, however, their fees are lower than Winston-Salem. He inquired if an analysis had been conducted of the differences in their plans and the City's plan.

Mr. Rose indicated that there was some question as how those cities had developed their costs and the Review Committee can pursue the question with them further.

In response to Council Member Clark's concern, Mr. Saunders explained that Greensboro conducts single-stream collection via rollout carts that combine all commodities, which are later sorted.

Mr. Rose noted also that it is unknown whether or not the contract is based on the net revenue where the disposal service keeps the proceeds from the commodities, or if the costs have to be reimbursed to the community.

Council Member Besse asked about how many municipalities operating their own landfills are doing so directly under the municipality and how many have dual-jurisdiction authority. He noted that the City may be unique in that the revenue generated by the Utility Commission is separated from the City's General Fund, and that other municipalities may be operating with revenues going into their General Fund balances.

Mr. Turner indicated that staff would investigate that issue and get an answer to the City Council.

Mr. Rose briefly summarized the Review Committee's recommendations for funding the City's solid waste disposal facilities and programs including: issuance of Special Obligation bonds to finance Capital Improvements to facilities; phasing out transfer from the Solid Waste Fund to the General Fund for recycling; eliminating the discount tipping fee charged at Hanes Mill Road Landfill and increasing the tipping fee at Old Salisbury Road Construction and Demolition Landfill; implementation of flow control regulation; and funding of the recycling program through a new fee, property taxes, and savings from implementing mandatory curbside garbage collection.

Council Member Besse noted that if the City has to turn to flow control regulation to assist with funding, it could no longer be economically viable to operate a municipal landfill as an enterprise fund. He pointed out that if this is the case, the principle economic motivator for the City becomes extending the life of the landfill.

Mr. Rose noted that the City may want to consider establishing a waste to energy regional authority involving a joint effort with other counties and/or municipalities to consider an incinerator approach to burning waste for energy.

Council Member Besse indicated that there would be issues with that type of plan such as permitting and ozone effects.

Council Member Terry noted that many other municipalities are beginning to consider reusing solid waste for energy capturing efforts. She commended the Review Committee for its efforts in putting together the report.

(Council Member Clark exited the meeting a 6:26 p.m.)

Responding to Chair Johnson's inquiry, Mr. Rose explained that the Review Committee also investigated the Utility Commission's operations with regards to the *Legacy* plan and utilizing the City Attorney's office.

Chair Johnson noted that the report is very extensive and she encouraged Committee Members to read it thoroughly and address any questions with staff.

Mr. Turner explained that Finance Committee had reviewed all of the financial issues involved with the report, and staff will respond to Council Members' input the next time the item is discussed.

ADDITIONAL ITEM

Chair Johnson stated that traffic calming efforts are still in place for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Corridor near Winston-Salem State University, and hopes are for projects to be in place by August.

Mr. Turner explained that the design has been revised with a fence and median, and sent to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, as well as key members of the North Carolina Legislative Delegation in hopes of gaining their support. He also noted that although funding may become available through the proposed Economic Stimulus Package, there is local funding available as well.

ADJOURNMENT: 6:32 p.m.