

**PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES**

*September 9, 2013  
6:30 p.m.*

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Dave Soeldner  
Jim Brey  
Jason Sladky  
Scott McMeans (arrived 6:32 p.m.)  
Jill Hennessey

**STAFF PRESENT**

Dan Koski  
Greg Minikel  
Sonja Birr

**OTHERS**

Chris Thomas, 621 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St  
David Henderson, AECOM  
Don Kohlbeck, 428 Maple Leaf  
Charlie Matthews, HTR

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

**Announcement that meeting is being taped and audio tape will be available to the public on City's website**

D. Soeldner made an announcement that the meeting is being recorded and will be posted to the City website.

**Discussion and possible approval of minutes of previous Public Infrastructure Committee meeting (August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013)**

J. Brey made a motion to approve the minutes from the August 12<sup>th</sup> meeting. J. Sladky seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously, no further discussion.

**Discussion and possible action regarding Chris Thomas seeking permission to allow his dog to flush geese out of Stormwater ponds so he can hunt them**

D. Soeldner introduced Dr. Chris Thomas to the Committee. Dr. Thomas previously sent a letter requesting permission to harass the geese out of the stormwater ponds and into the lakeshore or country area where they could be hunted.

D. Koski informed the Committee that Dr. Thomas has a permit from the Police Chief that allows him to hunt. G. Minikel said that all of our ponds are signed No Trespassing and we do not want them used for a recreational activities due to sediments in the pond and general safety issues.

J. Brey said that he really isn't in favor of allowing this technique at the ponds and said they are signed No Trespassing for a reason.

J. Hennessey questioned the process for hunting and J. Sladky explained that they will chase them out by harassing them out of the ponds. J. Hennessey said that she is neutral on this issue and will stand behind whatever the Committee decides.

Dr. Chris Thomas said that later in the season and on weekends, he will use trained dogs with remote collars and harass the birds to where they can be hunted. He would like to fire a 22 blank powder charger to really scare the birds, but if this is not allowed he would like to put together a crew of others with trained dogs to work the area around the pond to allow them to work from all angles to really scare the birds out of the area.

J. Sladky said that we have allowed trapper Dan to trap at the ponds and asked if there is an issue with birds going in and out of the ponds and causing erosion issues or another valuable reason to chase them out. D. Soeldner agreed they wouldn't have a problem with this if there was a public health issue or other valuable reason to chase the birds out of the ponds.

S. McMeans said that he doesn't have a problem with moving birds out as they are highly populated. He asked if there were any DNR rules that wouldn't allow dogs to move the birds out.

J. Hennessey made a motion to allow for one year and revisit next year subject to Dr. Chris Thomas signing a waiver of liability and meeting with the Police Chief to discuss his approach and devices that may or may not be used. J. Sladky seconded the motion.

G. Minikel said that there have been issues with the geese eating the newly planted seed and native plantings at several ponds. He could also check with NEWSC to see if there have been any issues or suggestions in the past.

The Attorney's office can draft a waiver of liability to be signed. Dr. Chris Thomas will contact the Engineering Dept. for maps and any other documentation that will be required. G. Minikel will supply a map of City/private ponds in the area.

Motion carried unanimously, no further discussion.

#### **Discussion and possible action on weed ordinance**

A Petition was submitted from Hidden Hollow condos allowing for parcels to grow beyond the City's Weed Ordinance requirements. They would like to use these parcels as a wind barrier.

D. Koski informed the Committee of an Ordinance that was created in New Richmond that allowed for property owners to grow natural lawns. This required agreement from abutting property owners with detailed guidelines which often turned people away from having them. The City received a petition from the Hidden Hollow Condos requesting permission for a "natural lawn" to serve as a wind barrier.

The Committee discussed possible implications from not cutting. They said that we need to be able to enforce the weed ordinance throughout the City and is concerned that if we allow exemption for certain parcels, we will be setting precedence for others.

The abutting property owners will need to be in agreement. The Committee will take no action as it is too late in the year, we will re-visit the weed ordinance in 2014.

**Discussion and possible action on permission to use City right-of-way for personal property/items from property abutting 4228 Springhill Drive**

D. Koski explained that the property owners at 4228 Springhill Drive have been in contact with the city regarding the complaint received and said that when they purchased the property they were told the right-of-way area was part of their property. The City received a complaint about having the property owners clean up things they had put in the city right-of-way.

The Committee decided to wait until the property owners are present to discuss any further.

**Discussion and possible action regarding tax delinquent parcels that contain storm ponds**

D. Soeldner reported that we have received correspondence from the County asking the City if they would be interested in purchasing the tax delinquent parcels with stormwater ponds for \$1.

G. Minikel said that we still need to move forward with the discussions of the City taking over and maintaining the developer ponds. These conversations stopped after the former City Engineer and stormwater aide left the City. He would like direction from the Committee on what to tell the County.

J. Sladky wanted to know who would be responsible for the back taxes and if this comes along with the parcel. The Committee is not in favor of taking these ponds over.

J. Brey thought there might be some future merit for taking over some of these ponds.

**Discussion and possible action regarding the well sampling program at the Newton Gravel Pit**

D. Koski reported that the new DNR representative is requesting further testing in the Gravel pit area.

D. Soeldner requested only most recent discussions be held at this time. Most everyone is aware of the gravel pit issue and only new information should be presented at this meeting.

D. Koski said that he previously sent an e-mail that covered any new issues. D. Soeldner requested Engineering to keep Committee informed of measures taken and any new issues that arise.

D. Koski wanted the Committee's approval for additional sampling that is required. Hopefully, this will eliminate any future sampling.

G. Minikel said that the trees weren't removed by the staff and now we need to hire someone to remove these trees to allow for the design and specs. D. Koski said they estimated \$40,000 of additional work that is required by the DNR.

D. Koski is looking for Committee approval. S. McMeans suggested talking with Steve C. in Finance for direction on how to fund this project. He also pointed out both quotes received read "estimate" on them and requested a firmed up amount.

G. Minikel said that this would need to be a contract Class 1 notification and would need a more definitive amount, or to include the language "not to exceed."

J. Brey made a motion to proceed forward and firm up the contract with a definitive rate. S. McMeans seconded the motion.

Motion unanimously approved, no further discussion.

**Discussion and possible action regarding the proposed stormwater pond at Dufek and West Drive**

G. Minikel explained that we will no longer qualify for another extension.

D. Koski said there is potential for the TIF funds to be used, but we need to check the legality of it.

S. McMeans asked if we could break apart into a longer period of time. G. Minikel said we asked the consultant to look into building only one of the ponds; however, the amounts are still high.

D. Koski said the grant money will not be allowed to be pushed forward as we were already allowed an extension.

J. Sladky was concerned that the DNR moves forward on the TSS reductions again, and he thought it might be beneficial to do now.

D. Koski said that the intent was to be used as a regional pond so each site wouldn't be required to build their own.

**Discussion and possible action regarding the Carferry/fishermen lot update**

D. Soeldner said that we received a letter from the Carferry and they don't want to take any action at this time and would be willing to review again next year.

J. Sladky suggested putting up a sign for no overnight parking.

J. Sladky made a motion to install a "No Overnight Parking" sign in the fishermen's lot and grant the request of street sweeping exemption. J. Hennessey seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously, no further discussion.

D. Soeldner requested for Dan to take care of installation of sign and to contact the carferry to let them know of the action.

**Discussion and possible action regarding filling the Department of Public Infrastructure Administrative Assistant position**

D. Koski informed the Committee that there is an internal candidate interested and will post internally for this position. This will leave an opening for 2 part-time positions that will also need to be filled as 2 separate positions.

J. Brey made a motion to approve the position of Department of Public Infrastructure Administrative Assistant. J. Hennessey seconded the motion.

Motion carried unanimously, no further discussion.

**Discussion and possible action on Department of Public Infrastructure fines and fees pertaining to 1512 Washington Street**

D. Soeldner said there is no action required, only future recommendations are requested.

J. Hennessey expressed her concern that the amount is quite higher than previously discussed. J. Brey said that the amount was only DPW charges and this includes fire department charges as well.

J. Brey said he remains hopeful with the preliminary negotiations.

J. Sladky said he feels we are trying to punish instead of finding solutions for this issue.

D. Soeldner said the only action that could come out of this Committee would be the DPW charges. J. Brey said that we charge for local events and we should be careful with how we handle now, as future events services fees are charged.

J. Hennessey said she would like to be kept informed on the true amounts and of all fees pertaining to this parcel.

The Committee had no further discussion on this issue.

*J. Hennessey made a motion to adjourn and J. Sladky seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, cursive 'D' followed by a comma and the letters 'P.E.'.

Dan Koski, P.E.  
Director of Public Infrastructure