



CITY COUNCIL

Public Works Committee

Tuesday, January 20, 2009
Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: D. Sterner; S. Fuhs

Others Attending: L. Kelleher; C. Younger, M. Vind, R. Hottenstein, C. Jones

East Ends Contract

Mr. Hottenstein requested Council input on the negotiation options on the East Ends contract. He noted the opportunity to either consider preparing an RFP seeking a new use for the building or to modify the existing agreement with East Ends.

Mr. Fuhs and Mr. Sterner noted that that East Ends has used the building since 1937 and that they have been good tenants. Mr. Fuhs suggested reviewing their membership requirements to make sure they are not discriminatory. Mr. Sterner inquired about their membership numbers. Mr. Younger stated that membership has been declining.

Mr. Hottenstein again suggested putting an RFP out to find the highest and best use for the property, noting that developers would find the property desirable due to its water front exposure and park-like surroundings.

Ms. Kelleher suggested negotiating with East Ends before considering a new tenant, as East Ends has been located in the building since 1937. She suggested a substantial rent increase, noting that the rent has not been raised since 1996 to \$500 per month. She added that in 2002 their requirement to pay property taxes was removed as the City agreed to make the property exempt from property taxes. She also suggested requiring improvements to the facility.

Mr. Fuhs inquired about the condition of the building and its mechanicals. He also inquired when the last property maintenance inspection occurred. Mr. Hottenstein stated that he would check with Codes and report back.

Teleminder

Ms. Kelleher stated that Teleminder is a robo-call system that was purchased by the Police Department when Chuck Broad was Chief. She explained that several people were trained but the system was never used. Years later when they tried to use the system a glitch was discovered. The Teleminder company would like to make the repair via remote access but IT is concerned that our system could be breached.

Mr. Sterner stated that this system could be used to inform residents about changes in programs such as street sweeping. Ms. Kelleher stated that the system could be used to promote public hearings, etc.

Mr. Hottenstein stated that this is on the Police Departments "To Do" list but is not a priority. He stated that the Police Department believes that the system can only be used to announce emergency information. Ms. Kelleher stated that Ms. Butler determined that the City could use it to make public service announcements on a limited basis.

CIP

Mr. Hottenstein distributed copies of the CIP projects planned for 2009:

• Baer Park Renovation	\$ 50,000
• Firing Range Classroom Addition	252,000
• Front End Loader	175,000
• Street Sweeper	300,000
• Bridge Repairs	450,000
• Bandshell	80,000
• City Park Rehabilitation	1,500,000
• City Hall Security Improvements	<u>75,000</u>
• TOTAL	\$2,882,000

Mr. Hottenstein explained that some projects originally planned for 2009 were either eliminated or moved to future years.

Ms. Kelleher noted the absence of the improvements to Council Chambers and the Penn Room, budgeted at \$250,000 were approved when Council enacted the 2009 CIP. She stated that she has been working to obtain estimates for web casting, which should cost approximately \$50,000. Mr. Hottenstein stated that the project was moved into 2010. Ms. Kelleher stated that after discussing this issue with Council they decided to keep the project in the 2009 CIP. Mr. Hottenstein agreed to move the project back into the 2009 calendar year. Ms. Kelleher noted the need to request an amendment to the CIP if changes are desired.

Mr. Fuhs inquired if capital projects are broken out on a quarterly schedule. Mr. Hottenstein stated that projects are broken out in the departmental work plans.

Mr. Sterner inquired about the money allocated for Bridge repairs. Mr. Jones stated that these repairs are focused on small bridges like the small bridges in Angelica Park and on Upland Street.

Mr. Sterner inquired about the purchase of a street sweeper and front end loader. Mr. Jones stated that these are replacement items.

Ms. Kelleher questioned if the allocation for the fire training classroom was for the existing facility at the airport or the new one at Fritz Island. Mr. Hottenstein stated that the funds will create a new facility at Fritz Island. Ms. Kelleher stated before construction can begin the zoning ordinance must be amended to allow this use. She noted that the Council staff has been waiting for Ms. Mayfield to complete this amendment for almost a year. Mr. Jones explained that the delay was caused by the need for a survey of the area to be completed by those designing the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The survey has just been completed and the zoning amendment can now move forward.

Mr. Sterner questioned the Bandshell project. Mr. Hottenstein stated that the RFP was opened today, with 25 companies responding. Construction is slated to begin at the end of February but a recommendation for an award of contract will probably not come before Council until March. He stated that this project will handle mostly cosmetic improvements as last year the majority of the structural issues like leak repairs and the electrical upgrades were completed.

Ms. Kelleher inquired if the security improvements in the CIP are those recommended by Chief Heim and include the Council Office. She noted Chief Heim's statement that the Council Office has the highest security risks in the building. Mr. Hottenstein stated that the improvements were recommended by Chief Heim and include the Council Office.

Mr. Sterner asked Mr. Jones how often the street sweeping schedule is changed or disrupted. Mr. Jones stated the sweeping program has not been disrupted often. He stated that disruptions are often caused by sweeper equipment breakdowns, personnel shortages, etc.

Bernhart's Park and Dam

Mr. Jones stated that the department will be obtaining proposals to open the valves soon. Discussions continue with the State and the valve opening is planned for early spring.

Ms. Kelleher stated that Kai Doa from the EPA sent Ms. Hoag an e-mail in late December announcing the EPA's plan to perform more soil testing in the Park. However, when Ms. Hill from Blank Rome followed up with the EPA's legal counsel, they knew nothing of the plan to perform additional soil testing.

Ms. Kelleher stated that the City has still not received the report generated after the fall walk around by the ATSDR and the PaDOH.

Storm Water Utility Fees

Mr. Jones stated that the field of consultants has been narrowed to two. The department is waiting for a response to additional questions that were raised. A recommendation to Council is expected in either February or March.

Mr. Jones stated that although Reading is the first Pennsylvania city to move in this direction, several smaller municipalities have undertaken this project due to new storm water requirements by the PaDEP.

Mr. Fuhs noted the hit businesses like car dealerships will take when this is started. Mr. Jones explained that residential properties will pay less and properties with large areas of impervious surface will pay more. He stated that these funds will be directed at the storm water program and include things like street sweeping, catch basin cleaning and repair, etc.

Mr. Jones noted that the consultant selected will assist with the educational process, which will include meetings with the business community.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Fuhs inquired about the savings realized through the Honeywell project. Mr. Hottenstein stated that improvements to the lighting systems have been completed and upgrades to the phone system will start soon. He noted the problems regulating the heat and air conditioning in the City Hall building. He added that savings reconciliation will be prepared in 12 months.

The Public Works Committee adjourned at approximately 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk

Follow-up Issues:

- Update East Ends Lease Negotiation
- Amendment to CIP reflecting the changes proposed by the Administration
- Update and audit for capital projects
- Report from PaDOH and ATSDR re: tour of Bernharts Park
- Update of draining of Bernhart's Lake
- Storm Water Utility Fee Update