



PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MINUTES

4:00 PM March 06, 2024

City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Members Present: Councilors Gary Bode, Gary Vis

Members Absent: Brent Lenssen, with notice

Staff Present: Mayor Scott Korthuis, City Administrator John Williams, Public Works Director Jon Hutchings, Programs Manager Mark Sandal, Plants Lead Alysha Gravunder, and Office Manager Heather Sytsma

Public Present: Bob Weeks, Dean Francis, David Vos

ACTION ITEMS

1. Review Minutes from February 7, 2024

Action

The minutes from February 7, 2024, were recognized and accepted by the Committee.

INFORMATION ITEMS

2. Transportation Benefit District Annual Report

Hutchings presented the Transportation Benefit District (TBD) annual report. He explained that a 10-year extension to the voter-approved sales tax was approved in 2022. Hutchings noted that 2023 revenue came in substantially higher than last year's projections, and expenses were under budget due to project delays. He pointed out the 2023 TBD Planned and Actual Expenses table, noting that TBD dollars are being used to leverage extensive outside money and going to street improvements that otherwise might not occur.

Bode asked whether the City received FEMA money for the Duffner Ditch culvert collapse. Sandal explained that the City received money from Federal Highways and not FEMA. The City's share for this project is 13.5% until Federal funds are expended, after which project costs will be entirely the City's expense.

3. Six Year Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) 2025-2030

Hutchings presented the current 2024-2029 Six Year Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) for review. Next steps are to review revisions in April, approve and set a Public Hearing in May, and to present to City Council in June. He cautioned the Committee that the next two years are fully obligated with funding for projects and there is little room to add anything.

Hutchings stated that modifications to the intersection of Birch Bay Lynden Road and Berthusen Road will be constructed by the City with potential participation from Whatcom County.

Vis asked if 6th Street reconstruction can be moved up on the priority list.

4. WWTP Expansion Update

Hutchings introduced Alysha Gravunder, Plants Interim Lead. They discussed the background of the Plants expansion project, what to expect going forward with regards to construction and the decisions involving City Council.

Hutchings explained that the premise of the project is multi-faceted and includes the following: renovating old equipment; retrofitting processes at the plant from extended oxidation to an MLE (Modified Ludzack-Ettinger), a process which has been developed for the combined removal of BOD (biochemical oxygen demand), ammonia, and nitrate/nitrite; replacing aged infrastructure; reducing energy costs; increasing capacity; adding nutrient removal (which is a future requirement); and ultimately creating a more reliable operation than exists now. The project is phased in a way to best match design and construction resources. Some components can be managed in-house under traditional design/bid/built (maintenance building), and others will be managed in consort with an outside agency (Department of Enterprise Services Energy Services Contract and Trane) using the design-build model.

To advance to the largest portion of this expansion project, the current maintenance facilities/sheds on the project site need to be torn down. Constructing the new maintenance building is the first step to free up space needed for Wastewater Treatment Plant expansion. Hutchings added that the final design meeting for the maintenance building was held today. This project is scheduled to be out to bid in April and breaking ground in September with a completion date projected for Spring 2025. The current estimated total cost is \$4.6 Million for an approximately 60-foot by 125-foot building (7,500 square feet). This project is being funded by a \$5.3 Million Public Works Trust Fund loan.

Gravunder spoke to the capacity at the Wastewater Treatment Plant. The plant has been hitting close to 85% capacity for flow. Per Ecology guidelines, when plants reach this level in either flow, TSS, and/or BOD, they are required to start planning for upcoming growth. She explained that, due to the increase in Lynden's population, increased flow from Darigold (different product, too), and more wet industry in the west part of town, the wastewater treatment plant needs to be upgraded for more capacity. Some equipment has been upgraded in the past, including the addition of UV Treatment. However, capacity, technology and major equipment needs to be upgraded. If expansions/upgrades aren't made, the plant will reach the point of violations due to exceedance and not meeting new permit limits.

Bode asked about residual medications that end up in waterways and if there are any processes that will try to extract that. Gravunder stated that testing for medication residuals exists, but it is expensive and not researched much due to this expense.

Hutchings noted some expected 2024 milestones including a Council tour of the Wastewater Treatment Plant in early April, a mid-April Ecology certification of the project that is necessary for the State Revolving Fund (SRF) loan. Hutchings explained that

using the SRF funding allows the City to borrow for large capital investments so that the burden of repayment is on future users such as West Lynden industrial plus new residential users who will be the project's main beneficiaries. The SRF helps local governments respond to growth pressures.

Hutchings explained a key element of the project is the long lead time of 18 to 20 months on electronic equipment. To address this, these items will be ordered soon.

Bode asked whether the City has a choice of upgrading. Hutchings responded that, with the plant at 85% capacity, there is only a choice of when, not if, upgrades will happen. At this point there is a cohesive team from the City, the State, and from the consultant teams who have been working on the project for many months. To disrupt the momentum and delay the project would be at significant cost of time and money if the project has to re-start in the future. The design-build process will have a guaranteed maximum price, which will be an intimidating number, but will give the maximum financial outlay. Additionally, the design-build must ensure the plant will continue to operate during the entire period of construction, which involves many challenges. Bode expressed support for the project and desire to avoid further inflation-driven project cost increases.

5. Projects Update

The Committee briefly reviewed current projects and received progress information.

- Jim Kaemingk Trail Extension – Ribbon cutting to be scheduled upon completion of Phase 3. Phase 3 will be out to bid in March with bid award scheduled for mid-April.
- Guide Sewer Extension – Boring complete, minor sewer items to complete, restoration ongoing.
- Cedar Drive Sewer and Overlay – 90% plans in for review. Working on temporary construction easements and permits. Project will be out to bid late March with bid award scheduled for mid-April.
- Waterline Upgrade – Meadow Lane – Pacific Surveying and Engineering work expanded to design south of Meadow Lane on Guide Meridian. No cost amendment.
- Hannegan / 1st Street – Design starting. The goal is to complete this project before the fair. Project will be out to bid mid-April with bid opening scheduled for early May. The project needs to be coordinated with Whatcom County's Hampton Road overlay project.
- Judson/9th – Finalizing Ecology contract for funds. This project is scheduled to go out to bid this spring.
- Pine Street Bridge – Design is ongoing.
- High School Parking Lot – Design is ongoing. This project is scheduled to go out to bid this spring.

Korthuis noted that the intersection of Vinup and Bradley Roads was allocated \$1.6M in the Federal budget. It was noted that the prospective intersection improvement project is separate and apart from the street improvement that is starting this summer.

NEW BUSINESS:

6. Airport Safety Concern

Bob Weeks, who lives on the airport and was previously the Airport Board Chairman, expressed concern regarding an accessory building not intended for aviation use being constructed adjacent to the taxiway. He said they've been granted access to the airport, but he said the access should be for aviation purposes only per Lynden Municipal Code. Sytsma stated he hasn't been granted aviation access but has a continuous NOTAM (Notice to Airmen) through March to use the airport taxiway for delivery trucks to access the building site. Weeks explained that multiple construction and other vehicles have been in this area, and he is also accessing his property via Benson Road though there is no access to the airport constructed from Benson Road. Williams said he would contact the Community Development Director to clarify the construction and use of the airport.

7. Cedar Drive Updates

David Vos asked for an update on Cedar Drive. Sandal stated this is scheduled to be out to bid March 20th, and to City Council for bid award in April.

8. Pepin Creek Area Update

Dean Francis asked for an update on the Pepin Creek area. Bode stated that the new Parkway plan passed at City Council on March 4. Vis advised Francis to continue communication with Community Development staff as road alignment advances.

9. Lead Service Line Inventory

Gravunder informed the Public Works Committee of a requirement by the United States Environmental Protection Agency to take inventory of water service lines to determine the existence of lead and report to Washington State Department of Health by October 2024. Hutchings explained that, essentially, Sytsma, Gravunder, and Utility Technician Matt Miller have been working on a list of properties with unknown water line materials. 20% of the unknowns are required to be tested for the existence of lead pipes. The City crew is starting to check addresses with unknown pipes next week by digging down to the waterline on each side of the water meter. This will reduce the number of unknowns on the list. Additionally, approximately 300 homes will be sent surveys asking about the type of waterline in their home to hopefully reduce the number of unknowns.

10. Fluoride Public Hearing Notifications Update

Williams stated that approximately 10 percent of the 6,012 notices of public hearing have been returned undeliverable. They were specifically sent to the address receiving water, so not the billing address, next two utility bills will have same information.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm.

NEXT MEETING: April 3, 2024