

City of Harrington
MINUTES
City Council Workshop
March 19, 2014

A workshop with the Harrington City Council was held at Harrington City Hall, 106 Dorman Street, on March 19, 2014 and was attended by the following: Vice Mayor Cheryl Lahman; Council Member Duane E. Bivans; Council Member Fonda Coleman; Council Member Kenneth Stubbs; William Pepper, City Solicitor; Teresa Tieman, City Manager; Dean Gary, Accountant; and Kelly Blanchies, Clerk of Council.

Also present: Rhiannon Bush, City Clerk; Tom Wilkes, City Engineer, Remington, Vernick, and Beach; Allan Wagamon, Wagamon Technology; Allan Frazier, Wagamon Technology; Marie Cunningham; and Barbara Bullock.

Mayor Anthony R. Moyer; Council Member Amy Minner; and Council Member Charles W. Porter were absent.

Public Comments

Barbara Bullock stated that it is extreme to have the Public Works staff responding to so many calls. It would be good to have three or four courtesy calls a year. Vice Mayor Lahman stated that is what the City intends to do.

Vice Mayor Lahman called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m.

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

Impact fee study

The City Engineer stated that the purpose of the impact fee study is to calculate a fair and equitable impact fees for users of the City's water and wastewater systems. Delaware state law allows municipalities to develop their own impact fees to pay for new growth and development projects. An impact fee is money paid as a condition of development approval to pay for a proportionate share of the cost of system improvements needed to serve new growth and development as incurred by the City. Impact fees are calculated based on the cost of new services and the cost of maintenance and upgrades of existing services. Capital costs (money spent) and principal and interest on any loans used to fund improvements are allowed to be included in costs. Grant funding and unpaid debt cannot be included in cost calculations. The total trended cost to the City for useful water assets from 1993 through October 2013 is one million seven hundred seven thousand two hundred forty-one dollars and forty cents (\$1,707,241.40). One hundred thirty-three million three hundred nineteen

thousand total gallons were pumped in FY 2013. The total trended cost to the City for useful wastewater assets from 1993 through October 2013 is five million sixty-seven thousand nine hundred fifty-nine dollars and eight cents (\$5,067,959.08). One hundred eighty three million four hundred eighty-six thousand gallons was treated in FY 2013. The calculated impact fee for water is one thousand fifty-one dollars and sixty-seven cents (\$1,051.67) and wastewater is two thousand two hundred sixty-eight dollars and thirty-three cents (\$2,268.33).

Council Member Stubbs asked if the total wastewater gallons includes inflow and infiltration (I & I). The City Engineer stated that the reading was taken from the pump station, so it does include I & I.

Vice Mayor Lahman stated that the current charge of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) for each impact fee is fairly close. The City Engineer stated that previously there has not been any real basis for justifying the amount of the fee.

The City Manager stated that there was a misconception that when the City connected to the County, all these fees would go away. The City still has debt service that must be paid. There are some water projects in the works, and once they are scheduled, they can be added to the fee.

The City Manager stated that Delaware allows for impact fees but does not address how to calculate those fees. The formula that the City Engineer used is the same as the one Pennsylvania uses, so it can be supported and defended.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked how frequently this fee will be looked at. The City Manager replied probably every other year.

The City Engineer stated that it is difficult to include future projects in the calculation, because the cost and funding is uncertain.

Council Member Stubbs asked the City Manager to explain the history of this project to the audience. The City Manager stated that in 2009 the City breached the lagoons at the sewer treatment plant. DNREC issued a fine and ordered the City to solve the capacity issue. The City had been looking at alternatives, and it was determined that the most cost effective solution was to connect to Kent County's treatment facility in Frederica. I & I continues to be a problem in the City. City Council decided to install new water meters, and DNREC allowed those costs to cover a portion of the fine. There is now four quarters worth of data from the water meters that was used to conduct a rate study. The costs of proper treatment would have gone up even if the City decided to increase capacity at our own treatment facility.

Council Member Stubbs stated that 2010 was a very wet year and many municipalities had problems. The City was lead to believe for about five years that spray irrigation would solve the capacity issues.

2014 Street Program bid review

The City Engineer stated that it is the same program as last year. It is being funded partially through Community Transportation Funds. Dixon, Mechanic, and Wolcott Streets will be paved. The bid was advertised earlier in the month. Three contractors responded, and Zack Excavating was the low bidder. The scope of the project is milling and overlay. The handicap ramps at the intersections have to be upgraded. The City Engineer stated that he recommends the award of the base bid to Zack Excavating in the amount of one hundred twenty-three thousand nine hundred forty-three dollars and ninety cents (\$123,943.90).

Vice Mayor Lahman asked about the funding for this project. The City Manager stated that Community Transportation Funds are available from State representatives. Representative Bob Outten has agreed to pay for Dixon Street, and Senator Simpson has agreed to pay for Mechanic Street. Wolcott Street will be paid for with Municipal Street Aid money.

Microsoft Exchange Server

The City Manager stated that the current server is ten years old. Recently there have been issues with email. The new server will allow an employee to work from home, and remote locations (Library, Parks and Recreation, and Public Works) will be able to view the Edmunds financial software.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if the funding is from the Capital Improvement Budget. The City Manager replied yes, there is money available.

The City Manager asked what the typical life of a server is. Allan Wagamon stated that it really depends on what it is used for; usually it is five to six years. After that software applications begin have difficulty running.

Council Member Bivans asked about a warranty. Mr. Wagamon replied that the server is covered by a three year service and parts warranty by IBM. The City also has a maintenance contract with Wagamon Technologies.

Council Member Stubbs stated that it is frustrating working without the right tools. The City Manager stated that this replacement has been put off as long as possible.

Ordinance to replace Chapter 212, Floodplain Regulations

The City Manager stated that this ordinance is based on a template provided by the State. It matches what is in the Kent County ordinance.

Vice Mayor Lahman asked if it is a mandate. The City Manager stated that it has to comply with FEMA requirements or people in the City cannot get flood insurance.

The City Manager stated that a floodplain ordinance was presented to the City Council previously. Staff had attended many meetings, and DNREC emphasized that changes were coming and that a new ordinance would have to be adopted prior to the effective date of the new maps. The Clerk of Council stated that the ordinance must be adopted and approved by FEMA by July 7, 2014.

Council Member Stubbs stated that when we work with a standard ordinance, it saves money. The City Manager stated that it did, because the City Engineer did not have to write one.

Public Comments

Marie Cunningham asked what streets are included in the street program. The City Manager replied the streets are Dixon, Mechanic, and Wolcott.

Ms. Cunningham asked why the Pennsylvania model was used to calculate the impact fees. The City Manager replied that Delaware does not have a formula; the City Engineer is familiar with the Pennsylvania model, and it has held up under scrutiny. The City Engineer stated that the Pennsylvania law is more descriptive while the Delaware law on impact fees is vague.

There being no further business, the City Council Workshop adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelly Blanchies
Clerk of Council