

Public Works and Buildings Committee

January 18, 2018

Council Chambers

MEMBERS PRESENT

Councilor Ralph Torr – Chairman

Councilor Ray Varney

Councilor Sandy Keans

Councilor Geoff Hamann

MEMBERS ABSENT

Councilor David Walker

OTHERS PRESENT

Councilor James Gray

Daniel Fitzpatrick, City Manager

Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager

Peter C. Nourse PE, Director of City Service

Dan Camara, GIS Coordinator

MINUTES

Chairman Torr called the Public Works and Buildings Committee to order at 7:00 PM.

1. **Approve minutes from the December 21, 2017 Public Works & Buildings Meeting.**
Chairman Torr requested comments or a recommendation on last month's meeting.
Councilor Varney made a motion to accept minutes as presented for the December 21, 2017 Public Works Committee meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilor Hamann. The Motion passed unanimously.
2. **Public Input -**
There was no one present for public input.
3. **Round Pond/Watershed Land Acquisitions** – Mr. Nourse stated that they started looking into this 5 years ago. The City began by investing in a feasibility study to augment the Round Pond Reservoir by increasing the capacity. He stated that we have completed an environmental impact study which was coordinated with several agencies. Mr. Nourse displayed Round Pond on the monitor. He stated that the west side of the pond is in Barrington and the east portion is in Rochester. Mr. Nourse stated that the study has showed that there are no significant environmental impacts in raising the level up 8 feet. He stated that this would almost triple the volume of water available and add another 1 1/2 million gallons per day to the water system which would support the drinking water demands for the City of Rochester for the foreseeable future. Mr. Nourse stated that staff will be meeting with the Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) on January 30, 2018 discuss the project. Mr. Nourse stated that there are several permits that will be needed. He cited Shore Land Permit, Dredge and Fill Permit and a Dam Permit. Mr. Nourse stated the City Council has invested in this project in the

past CIP budgets and will likely be doing so in upcoming budgets. Mr. Nourse stated that a portion of the 24" ductile iron transmission pipeline running from Round Pond to the Rochester Reservoir was replaced last year with a 30" polyethylene pipe. He stated that it was replaced as it was very old and leaking. Mr. Nourse stated that staff is going to be working to replace the old ductile pipe from the Rochester Reservoir to the Berry's River Dam. He stated that this pipe is also an old ductile iron pipe with similar problems. Mr. Nourse went on to say that the goal at this time is to start construction for the augmentation of Round Pond in 2021. He stated it will require a couple of dams. He stated the shoreline topography is fairly steep and the City will have to bring it up about 8 ft. Mr. Nourse stated it is believed that Rochester has flowage rights in the town of Barrington and that the City Attorney is looking into it.

Berry River Watershed / Farmington Properties - Mr. Nourse stated that he would also like to discuss the Berry River Watershed. He stated that there are about 8,000 acres in Barrington, Farmington, Rochester and Strafford. He stated that the water comes down from Blue Job down to Whaleback Pond to Tufts Pond. Mr. Nourse stated that 60 percent of watershed lands in New Hampshire are unprotected and as a department our staff is interested in protecting source water lands because Water Treatment actually begins at the source. He stated that the City of Rochester owns 4 land parcels in the Town of Farmington, which are associated with our watershed. He stated they include Tufts Pond and Whaleback Pond. Mr. Nourse said that these ponds take water from the watershed and send it to Rochester Reservoir and Round Pond Reservoir. Mr. Nourse displayed the current tax bill from Farmington on the monitor. He stated that previous to this tax year the property was taxed a total of \$250 and now is taxed approximately \$30,000. He stated that the Town of Farmington has changed the status of the property from "current use" to fair market value; which is a legitimate legal move through an existing statute, but now these properties are taxed the same as other buildable properties, which they are not. Mr. Nourse stated that although these are water front properties, they are in a protected watershed and they cannot be built on. Mr. Cox stated that there was a determination that it is not legal to have municipally owned properties in "current use". He stated that City Representatives approached the Town of Farmington to explore the use of a pilot program for taxes on the watershed and they did not want to participate. He stated it is being appealed to the BTLA for abatement and Staff is exploring placing the property into a conservation status in order to have it appraised differently which would reduce or eliminate the taxes. Mr. Nourse stated he brought this matter up now because any status change to the property must be made by April 1, 2018. Mr. Nourse stated he is exploring the process of putting the land in conservation status. It has been discussed to donate the parcels to Southeast Land Trust (SELT) to preserve, and Rochester would have a conservation easement for them to manage the property to some degree. Mr. Nourse stated that the City is still discussing details to how and when this could be done with SELT. Councilor Torr asked how many acres do the 4 parcels in Farmington total.

Mr. Nourse said 124 acres. Councilor Keans asked where Farmington gets their water supply and would they want to use this water in the future. Mr. Nourse said they have wells and would not need this property in any way. He stated that he is surprised at how strong Farmington came on. He stated the City of Rochester has been a good neighbor to Farmington. Mr. Nourse noted that staff cleans the area, and maintains it nicely. He stated that there is passive recreation like hiking and geo caching and we allow all of that on our property. The land is not posted. He stated that staff schedules summer draw downs with Farmington to prohibit potential disturbances to their dug wells. Mr. Nourse stated the City puts out a bid for chemicals annually and has added Farmington to the bid in order to assist them with better pricing. Councilor Keans asked what would be in it for Farmington if they agreed to a pilot. Mr. Nourse stated that they would receive revenue. He stated that Barrington has a pilot with the City of Rochester without any issues. Councilor Keans asked if the land could be developed. Mr. Nourse said Whaleback could not as it is very wet but Tufts could be, but he doesn't see it being developed due to surrounding properties in conservation status. Councilor Varney mentioned shore land permitting that would likely rule out development. Councilor Varney asked if this could prohibit the project to increase the capacity of Round Pond. Mr. Nourse stated that it would not. Councilor Varney asked the total cost of the Round Pond Expansion Project. Mr. Nourse said it is approximately a five million dollar project. There was discussion regarding ground water development. Mr. Nourse stated that it does not seem like an option for Rochester at this time. Councilor Varney asked if the Round Pond Project would need funding in the FY19 CIP. Mr. Nourse stated that we currently have funding that should take us through permitting. He stated that there is \$500,000 in the FY20 CIP for design and 5.2 million in FY21 for construction. Councilor Varney asked if we were going to stop spending money on ground water development. Mr. Nourse stated that staff would look at that and advise the Council on the decision. Councilor Varney stated that he did not feel the City could do both Groundwater Development and raise the Round Pond water level. Councilor Hamann stated his take away from the discussion is no more wells and to preserve surface water sources and raise the level of Round Pond. Councilor Varney agreed and stated we shouldn't spend any more money than we have to on the groundwater exploration. Mr. Nourse agreed that the focus would be on the surface water augmentation.

4. **Congress Street Parking Lot/Downtown Lighting**-Mr. Nourse said the Congress Street parking lot was completed prior to 2009 and the lighting was never completed. The wiring was put in but not the lamps due to funding shortages. He stated that the underground wiring was completed. Mr. Nourse state that he is proposing the use of the approximately 40K surplus from the downtown lighting project funds and 30K proposed in the FY19 CIP to get these lamp posts installed. Mr. Nourse stated for \$70,000 the 7 decorative lamps could be installed. He stated that currently there are 2 existing cobra heads in the area and that one faces out to the street and one faces the parking lot. He

believes that these could be removed once the decorative ones are in. Councilor Keans asked if there is permitted parking there for the winter. Mr. Nourse stated yes. Councilor Torr asked how many parking spaces there were. Mr. Nourse said there were 35 spaces. Councilor Torr also asked how many apartments were there. Mr. Nourse said he wasn't sure. Councilor Torr asked if the parking lot was lit up at night. Mr. Nourse said it was not. Councilor Hamann asked if there was any crime near the parking lot. Mr. Nourse said at one time there was someone living on a mattress near the dumpster.

5. **Chestnut Hill Road-Drinking Water-**Mr. Nourse said back in December Lydall gave an explanation of the issue to this Committee. He stated there were two properties being discussed. One property was the only property tested that was above the limit for PFO's and was they were in negotiations for tying in to the City's water and the other property had previously refused to have testing but eventually had agreed to be tested and the results were pending. Mr. Nourse stated that those results are back and there were no violations so Lydall will contact the resident to let them know they will discontinue the delivery of bottled water.

- **NPDES Permitting-** Mr. Nourse stated there was a meeting with the Governor last Friday. He stated that the Rochester Mayor was there and the Great Bay Coalition members including Dover, Portsmouth, Rochester and the attorneys were present. Mr. Nourse stated that the Coalition felt this was the best meeting they had experience in seven years and he stated that the Governor was very interested in the situation and ready to assist communities. Mr. Nourse stated that Senate bill 450 (SB450) which is a bill that would put the delegation of authority to the State level instead of the Federal level, meaning that NHDES would be issuing the permits instead of USEPA. Mr. Nourse stated that 46 states have their own version of DES issuing permits and that, Massachusetts and Idaho are in the process of changing to the State authority and that leaves New Hampshire and New Mexico as the only states that would be regulated by the EPA. Mr. Nourse stated he thinks the Communities can partner better at state agency level and could better negotiate the permitting process based on the science and actual conditions within our communities. The alternative is to accept their limits and build 25 million dollars worth of infrastructure.

6. **Project Updates**

Colonial Pines - Mr. Nourse said they brought in a new engineer that will be working on the design of this sewer project. He stated that the 12" line has made it under the Spaulding and there is a manhole structure on either side. Mr. Nourse stated that the next step for the spring is to run the pipe approximately 1,000 feet down Rail Road Avenue to tie into the existing line that runs to the Wastewater Plant. He stated that and would like modify the current construction contract to complete this work. Mr. Nourse displayed a preliminary design on the monitor which showed the project going in at Juniper up to Hillsdale and Lowell and picking up the cross streets along the way. Councilor Keans expressed concern for the most needed areas. Mr. Nourse stated that he has survey

results that do show those areas and he is looking at that data. He stated that we will be having a public meeting and hopes to gather additional information there.

Strafford Square-Mr. Nourse wrote a letter back in November to DOT for additional funds. He stated he requested 2.6 million dollars which is the estimated for the actual cost of the roundabout itself. He stated NHDOT proposed a compromise that would give us up to 1 million dollars more for the project. He further stated that this proposal will need to go to Governor and Council. Mr. Nourse stated he would like to see the underground utilities portion constructed this year but Fairport is really holding up the process. He advised that there will be a meeting with Fairpoint and their new engineer next month. Councilor Torr expressed concern for traffic issues. Mr. Nourse stated that there would be a detailed traffic plan. Councilor Torr asked when the project would likely start. Mr. Nourse stated once Fairpoint comes back and designs the changes the city Can prepare the bid for the Utility Project. He stated he would like that to happen this construction season. Mr. Nourse stated the roundabout will be constructed the year following the utilities.

Rochester Hill Tank Repair- Mr. Nourse stated that He and Mr. Cox participated in the mediation process with Wright-Pierce and the contractors regarding the Rochester Hill Water Tank failure. He stated that it was successful mediation with a settlement in the goal amount.

Other:

Snow Budget- Councilor Keans asked about the snow budget. Mr. Nourse said there was an article in the paper and it was pretty accurate. The overtime is 59 percent expended. The material line for sand and salt is 50 percent expended. If this winter continues as it has been we will likely go over budget. Mr. Nourse stated that for the past six years there has only been one year that we were within budget.

Crosswalks- Councilor Varney asked about the crosswalks downtown. Mr. Nourse said that the plan is to restripe the downtown including crosswalks in the spring. He stated that the DPW has ordered the 37 crosswalk signs to be installed which include North Main Street and on near the Common on South Main. Councilor Keans said there are 3 crosswalks on South Main Street that she thought were of concern. Councilor Varney stated that he would like to see them go up as soon as possible.

Granite State Business Park Lighting Project – Councilor Varney asked the status of the project. Mr. Nourse stated he believe it was completed. Councilor Varney asked if we had painted it so that there was a walking lane. Mr. Nourse stated he would check on that.

Norway Plains Road Development Street Acceptance - Mr. Nourse stated that the City has received a letter requesting the next phase of this project for street acceptance. He stated that the deed has been submitted along with all testing data. Mr. Nourse had a display on the monitor showing that this acceptance was the second phase of the project. He stated we have accepted the roads in phase 1 and that the final phase 3 has yet to be

completed. Councilor Varney asked if this means they will get there toters for trash and recycling. Mr. Nourse stated yes, they would be part of the City's contract with acceptance. Mr. Nourse stated that the DWP will recommend acceptance for this portion of Millers Farm Lane and Range Way.

Lighting at the Community Center-Councilor Varney asked about the Community Center Renovations at the Community Center. He stated that we had authorized \$100,000 and there appears to be some work outstanding regarding the outside lighting.

DPW Design- Councilor Varney asked about the Public Works Building Design. Mr. Nourse said the engineers are preparing to solicit this project as a design build request for proposal (RFP). Councilor Varney asked when we would see the design. Mr. Fitzpatrick said we need to secure a location first.

Tennis Court-Councilor Torr asked about the tennis courts at the Community Center. Mr. Nourse said they would be completed around the tennis team's schedule.

Potholes- Councilor Varney asked about the potholes if DPW was keeping up with them.

Chairman Torr made a motion to adjourn at 8:04 PM. Councilor Hamann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Laura Miller, Secretary II, Rochester DPW.