



UTILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING SEPTEMBER 9, 2010

Committee Members Present: Todd Bergstrom
Brenda Hlas-Absent
Ken Braman

Also Present: Rick Ryland
Karla Richards

The Utilities Committee convened on Thursday, September 9, 2010 at 9:09 AM in the Council Chambers of the Safety Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Todd Bergstrom, Utilities Chairman.

General Topics of Discussion

Items accomplished:

Greenwich Road Sanitary Sewer

Mr. Ryland indicated that construction, which was awarded to Lockhart Construction, is set to begin on Monday, September 13, 2010 and that it would take 120 days for completion. Mr. Ryland stated that it would take the sewer line up to Brookside. Mr. Bergstrom clarified that the city will do the inspections and Mr. Ryland concurred, adding that Floyd Brown would be assisting.

Oak Street Sanitary Sewer

Mr. Ryland stated that this project is nearly completed and is ready for testing of the lines. Once that is done residents can begin to connect. It was noted that Wenger Construction was awarded the contract for this project.

Other sewer and water projects

Nash Heights Sanitary Sewer: It was noted that the legislation has not been adopted to move forward with the engineering because it only had a first reading last Monday. Mr. Bergstrom discussed possibly waiving the third reading at the Council meeting on Monday. Mr. Ryland stated this project involves approximately two hundred and fifty homes (250) and he would like to have the engineering team on board by January 2011 so that construction could begin in the spring.

Hudson Run Trunk Line: Mr. Ryland stated that because of the school levy failing this has now been pushed back and we have stepped up our work on the Van Hyning project. Mr. Ryland indicated he would be working to meet with the property owners regarding the easement issues this fall.

Waterlines for 2011-Grenfall to Easton: Mr. Ryland briefly discussed the scope of this project noting that water pressure is not the issue here. The lines have been tested and they are at 40 PSI now which is acceptable. Mr. Ryland stated the real issue here is adequate fire protection. Mr. Ryland stated the only issue he is aware of is when its time for the city to send letters out to the residents there will not be a dollar amount of the pending assessment. Mr. Ryland noted that in all of the past projects the letters did include a figure, however that was always stated as an estimate.

Trash survey

Mr. Bergstrom stated that after Tuesdays Committee meeting, it appears that we are ready to move forward with the bid document. Mr. Braman still had concerns relating to the opt-out issue as he recalled past discussions on this. Mr. Bergstrom discussed the bag issues in addition to some lingering questions on the billing. Mr. Ryland stated that if and when we ever get to the master metering stage then it would be more feasible for the city to do our own trash billing. Ms. Charlotte Whipkey, a Norton resident, stated she was not sure why we are being forced into this, it seems more like a business transaction to her. Mr. Bergstrom explained that the city needs to be able to have the control to protect our streets. Mr. Bergstrom stated the overall goal is to improve services at a lower cost, and this would be a service the city provides as a benefit to its residents. Mr. Bergstrom stated that when its all said and done, if the bids come back way too high or out of line we simply won't do it.

Items anticipated during next report period

Cost Share on Assessment Projects: There was discussion on what had been earlier proposed that the residents should not have to pay anything more than eighty (80) percent of the construction costs. Mr. Bergstrom stated he would like to have this discussion continued at the next Committee Work Session and have legislation drafted outlining the breakdown.

Tap in Fees for Water & Sewer: Mr. Bergstrom stated that we need to encourage our residents to connect early at a discount possibly only within the first year the line is made available to them. We could waive all fees if they connect within that first year, after that they would be required to pay full price. Mr. Ryland suggested the language should state "upon completion of the project". Mr. Ryland explained that we essentially go by the test date, and if you look at Oak Street it is about to be tested around October 1, 2010. The first year grace period could be from Oct. 1, 2010 to Oct. 2011 to connect. Mr. Ryland indicated we have three (3) homes right now that will need to connect as soon as that test is complete. Mr. Bergstrom clarified that by waiving these fees we are no way taking away any funding sources from the General Fund, and Mr. Ryland concurred, these are resources that are not calculated into the General Fund or the annual Budget. Mr. Braman suggested we also take a look at modifying the surcharges especially for some of the businesses that use a lot of water, they are really hurting with these fees. Mr. Ryland urged caution in adjusting these numbers because that would affect the city's revenues. However, when we eventually move over to the master metering system that would address the issue here.

Mr. Bergstrom asked for a status report on the master metering from Mr. Ryland. Mr. Ryland indicated the numbers from Summit County have not been released yet, they are still sitting in Mr. Pry's office. Mr. Ryland stated that we need to review the spreadsheet with Barberton as to the costs involved. There was further discussion on this subject and all of the necessary steps involved. Mr. Ryland stated the first step would be to secure the rate, secondly would be to determine the installation of the meters, and thirdly would be to turn the whole system over to the City of Norton. Mr. Ryland stated that establishing a Barberton-Norton Sewer District is not an easy task, this would have to establish a separate political subdivision, which requires a lot of legal work and is a very long term goal.

Next Utilities Committee Meeting:

There was discussion as to the next meeting, tentatively set for Thursday October 14, 2010 @ 9:00 AM (Tentative) as not to conflict with the Administration Staff meeting.

Adjourn

There being no other business to come before the Committee Work Session, the meeting was adjourned at 10:04 AM

Todd Bergstrom, Utilities Chairman

****NOTE: THESE MINUTES ARE NOT VERBATIM****

All Committee Meetings will be held at the Norton Safety Administration Building, unless otherwise noted.