

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
CITY OF TYBEE ISLAND
February 10, 2011
5:00 PM

Attendees: Paul Wolff, Diane Schleicher, Bill Lovett, Kathryn Williams, Jonathan Lynn, Barry Brown, George Reese, Joe Wilson, Mary Hogan and Bill Garbett.

Approve the minutes of the previous meeting

Paul Wolff asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Bill Garbett so moved. Kathryn William seconded.

New Business:

- I. STATUS OF THE GDOT PERMIT FOR THE MCKENZIE CROSS-WALK
 - A. Jonathan Lynn states that we have the tentative approval from the DOT with a couple of honorary provisions. Such as, white striping along the road, and 2 parking places. Other than that, we are waiting on their approval. It should be ready for bid in the next couple of weeks.
 - B. Paul Wolff asks if this will be done in house or do we have to bid it out.
 - C. Diane Schleicher states it is a thermal, imprinted crosswalk and doesn't think we can do the imprint.
 - D. Jonathan states with engineering and construction, the cost would be less than \$18,000.

Old Business:

- I. FINANCING AND/OR PAYMENT OPTIONS FOR CLAIRFIERS AND/OR BELT PRESS
 - A. Mary Hogan states that we can finance the project but will have to raise the water rates in order to pay for the loan. Handouts passed out. Mary asked if we could get a closer estimate.
 - B. Bill Lovett states, no. We have called the suppliers and asked them for the cost of these items. If you'll notice, there's \$160,000 in contingencies in this estimate. This is nothing more than an estimate for planning purposes.
 - C. Bill Garbett asked for clarification on the cost. It was at \$1,500,000 and now its \$1,300,000. Paul Wolff verifies, yes. Bill Garbett asked what happens if we don't do the Clarifier due to the expense to replace and also has maybe 10 more years of life on it. We have 2 now but if we lose 1 in the summer we'll be in trouble. With proper maintenance, what are the odds of it breaking? If it does break, what parts would that be?
 - D. George Reese states that the Clarifier is all mechanical from the bottom up. If something breaks on it, you go in and drain it, find the problem and fix it. It takes 1-2 weeks to fix, depending on what's broke, and if parts need to be shipped.
 - E. Bill Garbett asked, with routine maintenance, what are the odds of the Clarifier going down? George responded, 50-50 chance. You don't have to replace the Clarifier; I'm just giving you the worst-case scenario.

- F. Paul Wolff states let me clarify what we're trying to do. Right now we have 2 systems that during the summer have to operate at the same time. If one goes down we're in trouble. What we are budgeting for in reality is a third system and all 3 systems will be online at all times. Paul states he doesn't see an option.
- G. Bill Garbett states he sees some options but wants to go through the finances. Option 1 is to not replace it right now and keep up the maintenance on it.
- H. Kathryn Williams states the question she has been asked, by people who are concerned about any potential increase is, we are only half way through the anticipated life of this equipment, why are we now, all of a sudden, afraid they are going to break?
- I. George states that if our flow would stay down to a half a million that would be great. In the summer time it could bump up to 1.2 – 1.4 million gallons a day. When you get that kind of flow through the plant, 1 system will not handle it.
- J. Paul states he thinks the EPD is going to get a lot more serious about enforcing fines for discharging untreated wastewater. States he read where just recently somebody got fined \$70,000 before they could get their Plant fixed and was down a week. I firmly believe that we need to do our do diligence to be sure that we aren't polluting our own environment. If it takes a difficult decision, I realize its election year and I'm sure that's in the back of everybody's mind, but I don't care. We have got to act responsibly in terms of protecting the people on the island and the environment around it. And I don't think we can do that when we have a system, even if the odds are 100:1 that it's going to go down, we still can't take a chance.
- K. Kathryn states, the point is, we need to make sure that this information is presented in a way that a lay person, who doesn't have experience in the field, can understand it.
- L. George states, I brought it to your attention because I didn't want you not knowing when one went down and then wonder why we're polluting the Savannah River out there. You can act on it if you'd like, or you can wait. It might not go down for another 2-3 years, you just don't know. It depends on the flow due to volume on the island.
- M. Paul states, our water/sewer bills need to be going to the system, not to paying fines for non-compliance. That's one thing we need to think about.
- N. Barry Brown asked what kind of wear and tear does this put on the equipment when it's working overtime like it does in the peak season. It could be shortening the life span from 20 years to 15. George agrees and adds that the Press is run 2-3 times a week right now. In the peak season, we run it 5 days a week, non-stop because of the increase of solids coming through the plant.
- O. Mary refers to another handout which is our debt repayment schedule. We have about \$900,000 in total annual payments. I have put this money in our budget this year; it was not in the budget for the past 2 years. I've talked to GEFA, GMA and several financing folks about some opportunities and options on how we can do this and make it the least painful. For the most part, borrowing money is the most painful. The bonds are going to be the most expensive. It ends up being about another \$300,000 just in bond issuance

cost. Bond rates are around 5%. All the bids I got were about \$1,700,000. When talking with GEFA, we are on the line or maybe have crossed the line of not even being eligible for GEFA anymore because of our debt in this fund is so high. They only look at just this fund. On non-borrowing options: SPLOST is an option. If this is that serious we could use our SPLOST money to pay for this and put off some of our capital projects that we had planned for. We have SPLOST money coming in. The other thing that we could look at is the cost over the summer. What does the busy season really cost us in addition to the rest of the season? It sounds to me like this is one of those direct expenses of the busy season. Also, we haven't capped out on our Hotel/Motel tax like we could. That can be another direction we could look at going. Let them pay for this expense and it would be less painful to our citizens. None of these options are painless. We also have the pre-payment plan that we have been talking about where we actually add a surcharge to the bill now, bank it, and then in 1-2 years look at doing the project, if we can wait that long. We have 2 GMA current loans. One will be paid off in 2013, the other in 2014. That would give us almost \$300,000 in cash to work with if we can wait that long.

- P. Kathryn states, with these loans being paid off in 2013 and 2014, we could reallocate some of the SPLOST money and put in the records that our intent was to replace the money taken from SPLOST with the monies that we would save from the loan payments. States this is something I don't think we can gamble on, in terms of, if we do have a problem. I personally would like to see us using the SPLOST money.
- Q. Paul asked what projects would be on hold to do that? Diane Schleicher states part of the SPLOST money was for beach renourishment. Mary looked up the Capital budget. Mary states if this project is a serious, important need, then we need to treat it as such. So then it becomes a higher priority than some of these others on the list. The Public Safety Facility is \$327,000 and the Fire Department Bay is (no amount verbalized). These are the 2 largest costs. Some of the items on the list have been completed.
- R. Bill Lovett states that the Treatment Plant work hasn't been designed yet. If you told us to go to work tonight, it would probably take a year to get the job designed, permitted and bid. It is about a year project. One of the things we talked with George about is just replacing the belt press he has now, not a whole new system. The estimate on that is about \$300,000. That cost would not include any back ups or duplicates.
- S. George states that he said in the last meeting; we can wait for the new budget and see what our operating budget will be. See if we have the capital. We may be able to purchase it.
- T. Joe Wilson states that the Levy's are here now to find out what the status is of the 8th St. drainage project. The monies for this project were in SPLOST. I've got all the permits. I'm just making sure that the money is there. It will be about \$30,000. I can't really pave the road until I fix the drainage. Paul asked if we have that money in SPLOST. Mary states, yes. Joe asked if he can go forward with this project. Paul states, yes.
- U. Kathryn Williams made a motion to reschedule the Infrastructure meetings to sometime during the day so we don't have people working overtime. Several people commented that they are salary.

- V. Diane Schleicher states that in this year's budget we budgeted for a back truck with a camera, which we needed, at a price of \$268,000. Diane asked George what is the higher priority, the truck or the press? George states, the truck, due to the importance of cleaning out lines.
- W. Mary states that Barry Brown was in today and got a list of the households that have multiple units. The number was around 1500. George states that they are all broke down to where they are all paying a base rate. Barry states you cannot go by the number of meters. You need to go by the number of units. Mary said if we went with an increase, it would be \$8-\$10 more per month instead of \$18.
- X. Bill Lovett suggested he would get with Jennifer and revisit the rate study they did originally, using the updated ERU's of 4200-4800. Let me see how the new rates will do and how it fits into GEFA's policy.
- Y. Paul states what he would like to see for the next meeting from Bill, is a base rate increase (based on the ERU'S of 4200-4800) that will cover enough to get a GEFA loan and be sure that we're able to qualify. Secondarily, try a rate schedule with a slightly smaller base rate increase and a higher usage tier for the top 2 tiers.
- Z. Kathryn states we should have other options besides raising the rates, like using SPLOST money. We just raised the rates, Georgia Power has slammed us yet again, the unemployment is still high, people aren't getting raises, and all of their basic expenses have gone up. Paul asked of any other way to pay for this. Kathryn responds, Hotel/Motel tax. Bill Garbett states he disagrees with Kathryn and that Water/Sewer should pay for itself. Bill states he doesn't feel that we should be using infrastructure (roads and improvements) that is coming from SPLOST to pay for utilities that should be self supporting. Kathryn states, if we were starting from ground zero, that would be one thing, but we are dealing with a history of debt that spans many Councils and ultimately the citizens are responsible for paying it back. We should have probably never gotten to this spot. Paul suggests for Bill Lovett to bring his numbers to the next meeting as well as Mary to bring any other options she may have including pulling money out of SPLOST and paying it back. Mary states she thinks we need to add that the general fund is currently supplementing them \$180,000. This will pay for this project but we also have a couple of projects right behind this. Bill Lovett asked what projects do you want me to include. Paul Wolff states just the Belt Press & Clarifier.

II. HISTORIC BUTLER AVENUE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY PROJECT

- A. Concept Report
 - 1. Approved December 12, 2010
 - 2. Approval Letter Written January 7, 2011
- B. Preliminary Plans
 - 1. Submitted February 3, 2011

- C. Design Variance
 - 1. Comments Received and Addressed
 - 2. Resubmitted to DOT November 15, 2010
 - 3. Awaiting Approval
- D. Environmental Document
 - 1. Special Studies (4) Approved
 - 2. Categorical Exclusion Submitted to DOT January 10, 2011
 - 3. Comments Received and Resubmitted January 17, 2011
 - 4. Proposed Submittal to FHWA by M/A January 21, 2011.
- E. Schedule
 - 1. Meetings with Rep. Ben Watson and Speaker Pro-Tem Jan Jones
 - 2. DOT says they will meet Tybee's Schedule
 - 3. HGBD will continue to monitor
- III. GEORGE REESE'S PRIORITY LIST
 - A1. 50' Diameter Clarifier
 - A2. 2 Meter Sludge Belt Filter Project
 - B. 8,200 Linear Feet of 8" Waterline on Butler Street
 - 1. Bill Lovett states cost is \$1,400,000
 - C. Replace Lift Station No. 3 forcemain with 5,280 linear feet of new 8" forcemain
 - D. Replace Lift Station No. 6 forcemain with 5,500 linear feet of new 12" forcemain
- IV. TYBEE GREENWAY/BIKE TRAIL TE GRANT
 - A. Grant Application Submitted
 - 1. Diane Schleicher states we have received letters of support.
- V. OTHER PROJECTS

- A. Watershed Assessment
 - 1. Submitted to EPD in December
- B. Crosswalks and Signage
 - 1. Warranty Period – No work necessary
- C. Butler Avenue Handicapped Ramp
 - 1. Warranty Period – No work necessary
- D. 14th Street Drainage
 - 1. Warranty Period – Work underway
 - a. Bill Lovett states Joe Wilson had sent an email earlier this week about some depressions around some of the catch basins. They are out working on that. Joe states that may be from those sub-surface drains. I think that's probably where it's coming from. We are going to monitor that.
 - b. Bill states that Ms. Williams had asked us to look at some areas where there was some depression between the edge of the pavement and the ground. We've looked at that and the contractor said he would come out and fix that. Bill asked Joe if he wants them to come out before or after you plant the trees? Kathryn states the trees are planted. Bill states I guess it will be after.
- E. Chatham Avenue to Pump Station No. 2 Sewer Line
 - 1. On Hold

Bill Lovett states that we got today (that no one knew about) a copy of a draft of a NPDES permit that was sent to the City. They are throwing a lot of tests on us like phosphorus and field spectrum test.

George states that this letter was sent to the Shirley Sessions, Mayor Pro Tem, on December 14, 2011. This is a draft of the Wastewater permit and I've just gotten it today.

Bill states that the EPD sent it to Jennifer Oetgen today and she forwarded to me and George. This is supposed to be advertised and have a Public Notice.

Paul Wolff asked what is it that they are asking for, what do we need to do to comply and what the cost will be?

Bill states they are asking for more testing from everybody. Some of the testing that they are asking for, you're already doing, under your Watershed Assessment. They didn't change your permit limits any, which is good. They still say you discharge to the Savannah River because you are below Ft. Pulaski. One of the tests is for mercury. The mercury impacted area stops at the tide gates.

George states before we get too involved in this, we need to challenge some of this testing because it's a waste of money.

Bill states we will write a challenge letter for you with documentation. Paul asked Bill to copy Diane on the high points.

Paul states whoever is communicating with these folks, let's ask them, henceforth, to send any correspondence to the Mayor, City Manager and the Water/Sewer Director. Bill states he doesn't think they will do that due to protocol. All correspondence is supposed to go to the Mayor.

George states he thinks Shirley did sign the actual permit application because the Mayor wasn't here.

Bill states as a reminder, you need to be aware that your groundwater withdraw permit is likely to be cut even more.

Kathryn Williams suggest we be proactive and invite the local delegation for a meeting before they change it and let them know of our concerns and that we can not bear another reduction.

Paul Wolff motioned to adjourn. Kathryn Williams seconded.

A quorum of city council may be present which would constitute a meeting.

Respectfully submitted by Karen Reese on 03/09/2011