

The Utilities, Safety & Environment Committee

held a meeting on **Wednesday, August 10th, 2022** beginning at 6:00 P.M.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Mitchell, Members; Davis, Oswald, Simmons, **ABSENT:** Corbin

OTHERS PRESENT: Law Director Breunig, Engineer McKillips, WWPC Supt. Korzan, Councilman Tollett and President Stewart

1. Approval of the July 13th, 2022 Regular Utilities Committee Meeting Minutes.

Mr. Oswald moved and second by Mrs. Davis to approve the ‘said’ meeting minutes.

MOTION CARRIED

2. The matter of a Pilot Sidewalk Program utilizing special assessments.

Referred By: Engineer McKillips *(This will also go to Finance on August 29th)*

Engineer McKillips said the City is looking at adopting an assessment based sidewalk program. It will be a voluntary program. In the State of Ohio and the City of Elyria, sidewalks are the responsibility of the property owners. Knowing that the City has sidewalks in need of repair, they periodically go through neighborhoods and they take care of what they have to. But the sidewalks infrastructure in the City is pretty bad and the property owners are responsible for them. This sidewalk program is geared to provide some assistance with the cost to homeowners by fronting the money for the repairs and spreading that cost over five years so the property owner wouldn't have to pay for the repair or replacement at one time. This will be a voluntary program. Properties that receive sidewalk violations from the Engineering Dept. would get priority for this program. If someone calls in to complain about a sidewalk at a certain address or certain block, the engineers will go out and look at it and determine if the criteria met for a sidewalk violation and if so, they will send out a notice to the property owner. Once those letters are received by the property owner, those owners can participate in this program and they would be moved up on the list, for first priority. Other property owners can participate voluntarily if they know they have bad sidewalks and want to get them repaired but can't fund it. Those property owners will be put on the list.

This program is aimed toward one, two and three family properties and owner occupied properties. Once the department is notified that someone wants to participate, someone will go out and assess the sidewalk, determine what needs to be replaced, measure that area and provide an estimate to the property owner. Then the property owner would enter into an agreement which states they're willing to participate and that they're willing to have the cost of the repairs or replacement be placed on their property taxes as a special assessment and spread over five years.

The City would hire the contractor and would lump as many properties together so that the work the contractor does will be at a quantity that makes sense for them and to get a better price and to decrease the amount of mobilization costs into the City. The City would provide the bidding, specifications, inspections and oversee the work. That would be the City's participation in the program. That's something they would not charge the homeowner, that would be the City's cost for improving the sidewalk infrastructure in the City.

They're looking at a maximum costs per property with a maximum limit for the work per property at a maximum cost of \$5,000. This program is only for repair and replacement of bad sidewalks, it's not for replacing the entire frontage of someone's sidewalk.

It would be for replacing, on average, 3 or 4 slabs of the sidewalk. That is why the amount of \$5,000 should be plenty to repair the bad sections of someone's sidewalk.

In the program guidelines there will be a caveat that says there may be some extenuating circumstances where that amount may need to be exceeded, but that may be few or far between.

This program will be funded with General Fund monies. In years where we have the funds available to put into this program, then the program will take place. In years where the budget may not provide the funds necessary than that program will be suspended for that year. And for it to be picked up the following year. Those residents that still want to participate and are willing to wait can be put on the waiting list and they will see if that resident is still interested that following year.

The issue of trees came up during the initial discussion and review of this program. If the sidewalk needs to be repaired because trees are lifting up the sidewalks and or have broken the sidewalks, the tree would be reviewed to see if it needs to be removed. If it does need to be removed and the Engineering Dept and the City Forestry Dept are in agreement then the City would pay for the removal of the tree and if it's possible to save the tree and still replace the sidewalk that would also be done.

This is a program overall that will help the sidewalk infrastructure in the City and provide some assistance to those property owners that want to do their part to maintain their sidewalks. This is a program that is supported by Mr. Lipian as he has been a proponent for sidewalk improvements throughout the City.

Mrs. Mitchell asked how will we notify residents?

Engineer McKillips said she will make contact with the City's Public Information Officer and see how he will suggest getting the word out. There are limited funds for this year to get the program started, they are requesting \$50,000 which will come out of General Fund. If we get enough residents to participate this year, they can get the program up and running. If they don't then they will see if they can roll it into next year.

Mrs. Davis said there are target areas called census areas in Elyria and sidewalks were part of the repair. Those folks who live there and they may qualify at no cost for those residents who live in that census area. Their sidewalks can be repaired at no cost.

Engineer McKillips said the program on tonight's agenda is Citywide. She didn't have any information on the ARPA Census Track program. Engineer McKillips said she will direct those residents that are in that Census track area if they can benefit from that. It will help to spread these funds farther if they are able to use other funds that are available. Any of these programs will help improve the infrastructure of the City.

Mr. Oswald had two questions. 1. Is it just concrete replacement or can it be pumped, which would be for concrete that could be leveled? 2. He knows the forestry division is busy and strapped and if a tree needs to get cut down does it gets put on a list?

Engineer McKillips said she has looked into concrete leveling and she thinks it's an option. If there is an area where the slabs are just uneven, they will look to see if they can level it and if that will have positive results with drainage. That would require to bring in a separate contractor. As far the trees, she wouldn't think that the City crews would take the trees down. They would have a contract with an outside company for the tree removal and we would need to get on their list. Tree removal probably wouldn't be covered under the City's contract because it wouldn't necessarily be considered an emergency.

Mr. Oswald said there have been comments from residents who say they have roots from trees in the right of way that are heaving the concrete. An option would be to kill the tree so the heaving won't continue after the sidewalks are repaired.

Mrs. Mitchell said there are sidewalks heaving in the West Park area; Rockfern and Penfield, because of the big old trees.

Mrs. Simmons moved and Mr. Oswald seconded to recommend an ordinance authorizing a pilot sidewalk program utilizing special assessments, the amount to fund this pilot program is \$50,000.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

3. The matter of Delinquent Stormwater Charges to be certified to Lorain County Auditor's Office. (Standing Referral)

Referred By: Engineer McKillips

(This will also go to Finance on August 29th)

Engineer McKillips said this is routine for delinquent Storm Water bills to be certified to the Lorain County Auditor's office to be placed on property taxes. These fees are from 2021 and are delinquent more than 180 days. There are 3,745 accounts for a total of \$118,098.

Mrs. Davis moved and Mrs. Simmons seconded to recommend a resolution authorizing 'said' delinquent charges to be certified to the Lorain County Auditor's Office. Emergency clause request.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

4. The matter of Final Assessments for the Replacement of Private Sewer Services.

Referred By: Engineer McKillips

(This will also go to Finance on August 29th)

Engineer McKillips said this is also routine City business. We have a lateral loan program for residents that need sewer laterals repaired or replaced on their property and to help move their repairs along and as a benefit to the sewer system, the City provides this program where residents can participate, they get quotes, hire a contractor, the City pays and then they place the cost of the repair on their property taxes as a special assessment. For this cycle there are 3 properties at a total cost of \$21,736.

Mr. Oswald moved and Mrs. Simmons seconded to recommend a resolution authorizing the 'said' charges to be certified to the Lorain County Auditor's Office and to be assessed to the property tax. Emergency clause request.

MOTION MADE COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

5. The matter of applying for and accepting a Grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Referred By: Parks Director Reardon

(This will also go to Finance on August 29th)

This matter was removed from this evening's agenda.

6. The matter of a lease agreement with Jack Doheny Companies to lease two 2022 Vactor 2115 sewer cleaning trucks for The WWPC Plant.

Referred By: WWPC Superintendent Korzan

(This will also go to Finance on August 29th)

Supt. Korzan said his department has two sewer cleaning trucks that will be going back to Jack Doheny at the end of November, this year. Therefore they are asking to enter into a lease for two new 2022 trucks to take their place. This will be the last pair of trucks that will require new leases. We'll have about a four year break.

Mr. Korzan said the City makes out quite well on these lease deals.

When they trade these two trucks back in Doheny Company, we're getting \$90,000 per truck. They were leased at a cost of around \$400,000 a piece, so we almost getting half of the cost of the truck back. The annual lease payments of those trucks are \$58,000 per year, per truck. These two new trucks are more expensive because they're newer, but we're basically getting the same deal on these when we trade them back in in five years. We'll be saving almost half the cost of the truck for five years plus we get newer technology and usually by year six we start putting some big time money into repairs on these trucks because they're on the road every day. Repair costs can be up to \$35,000 to \$40,000. The jump pump that pumps the water can cost \$22,000.

Mr. Tollett asked if there is a wait or a backlog on getting these trucks?

Mr. Korzan said yes, there is a wait and that is why they are asking for an emergency clause and the monies have already been in appropriated in the budget for this year. Doheny Company has already put these trucks into the lineup for the City. That's how we're able to get them in November, otherwise we'd be looking at June '23.

Mrs. Davis moved and Mrs. Simmons seconded to recommend an ordinance to authorize a lease for 'said' vehicles through the Ohio State Purchasing Program. Emergency clause request.

MOTION MADE

COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN

Closing Remarks:

President Stewart said there was a referral in regards to the Oakwood School repairs that was going to be coming to this committee. He spoke with Chair Mitchell about maybe having a joint meeting on August 29th to accept the bids related to the stabilization of Oakwood School because it's both Finance and Utility items. Since there has been previous conversations with Community Development, maybe we can handle it all at one time.

Chair Mitchell asked for a motion to adjourn The Utilities Safety & Environment Committee:

**Mrs. Simmons moved, seconded by Mrs. Davis to Adjourn the Meeting at 6:32 P.M.
MOTION CARRIED**

Respectfully Submitted by,

Colleen Rosado, Secretary
/CMR