

(The following is not a verbatim transcript of comments or discussion that occurred during the meeting, but rather a summarization intended for general informational purposes. All motions and votes are the official records).

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Regular meeting of the Public Works Committee was held on Thursday, November 9, 2021 in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 869 Park Ave., Cranston, RI.

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 P.M. by the Chair.

Present: Councilwoman Jessica M. Marino
Councilwoman Nicole Renzulli
Councilman Matthew R. Reilly
Councilwoman Lammis J. Vargas (appeared at 6:05 p.m.)
Council Vice-President Robert J. Ferri, Chair
Council President Christopher G. Paplauskas

Also Present: Councilwoman Aniece Germain
Anthony Moretti, Chief of Staff
Kenneth Mason, Director of Public Works
John Verdecchia, Assistant City Solicitor
Rosalba Zanni, Assistant City Clerk/Clerk of Committees
Heather Finger, Stenographer

MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING:

On motion by Councilman Reilly, seconded by Council President Paplauskas, it was voted to dispense with the reading of the minutes of the last meeting and they stand approved as recorded.

I. COMMITTEE BUSINESS MATTERS CARRIED OVER

None.

II. PUBLIC HEARINGS* and/ or NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

A. *PUBLIC HEARINGS

Robert Wilson, 114 Mayflower Dr., appeared to speak regarding the basketball courts and baseball fields within the City of Cranston. He stated that the baseball fields at Carberry Fields and Beachmont Ave. have had locks and chains on them for quite a while now. When he spoke to Parks and Recreation Director Tessaglia earlier this year, he was told he would look into it and get back to him. He waited approximately one month and called Director Tessaglia back and spoke to him again and he expressed his concern and was basically told that the matter was above his head and he would speak to

the higher ranking members of the Administration. At a previous Council meeting, Director Moretti had stated that the ball fields were being looked into being reopened after the All-Star season was over. The season is over and nothing has been done. He just wants to know when the ball fields would be unlocked so all the kids in the City can have access to them and not just the little leagues. The fields are City property and not league property. He also addressed the basketball courts next to Carberry Field, which has had no basketball hoop attached to it since September. He spoke to the Parks and Recreation Administrative Assistant and she assured him that the basketball hoop would be replaced, but it was on back order. If it is on back order for three months, it may be time to look some place else for a basketball hoop.

B. NEW MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE

- *Request from National Grid for pole location at South Clarendon St.*

On motion by Councilman Reilly, seconded by Councilwoman Marino, it was voted to approve this request. Motion passed unanimously.

Council Vice-President Ferri:

- **Basketball Courts and Baseball Fields**

Chair stated that two months ago, he asked Director Tessaglia about little league fields being locked and he told him that he was going to provide a list of which ones were locked so we could know and advise the public when the Council is questioned on which fields are locked. He asked Administration or Committee Members for comments on this matter.

Director Moretti asked if Director Tessaglia provided the list of fields to the City Council. Chair stated, no, they were never provided with such a list. Director Moretti stated that he will ask Director Tessaglia to follow up on this. In terms of the missing hoops, the only one the Director has been able to identify is at Carberry Court and that has been on back order for quite a while. In terms of the baseball fields, Director Tessaglia has checked with the Administration and those fields are to remain locked during youth league season and will remain open when there is no longer league play. The rationale is that the fields are prepared by Parks and Recreation Department for the youth groups during the day.

Chair stated that we need to pay closer attention to the condition of the parks, basketball hoops and basketball courts and he does not feel the fields should be locked all the time. He asked Administration to consider this policy and allow people that want to go on those fields the opportunity to do that.

Councilwoman Marino:

- **Rat Abatement Update**

Councilwoman Marino stated that she has been getting calls from constituents regarding this and asked Administration what the timetable is for the abatements. She also asked if the third-party contract services is complete or are we still using their services. Director Mason stated that the contractor that was retained, that contract has been completed and the boxes have been removed. As far as the scheduling for appointments, right now, we are scheduling to the second week in December for new appointments. The biggest issue right now we are having is rebating existing customers and the Administration has authorized his department to expend some overtime hours to be able to get these existing baited properties rebated and checked.

- **Status of issue of ownership of Bike Bath, State or City**

Councilwoman Marino stated that there were some discussions with the Administration as to whether or not the State had ownership of the bike path that runs through Cranston or if it is City-owned. Since that time, Director Mason has provided an agreement and an addendum that the City has with the State stating that the ownership is in fact with the State and that the City is only responsible for a \$5,000 worth maintenance per year.

Director Mason stated that this is correct. That original agreement was dated 1998 and it is still in force today.

- **Stats of Maintenance/Winterization of Budlong Pool including facilities and pump house**

Councilwoman Marino stated that she is receiving calls of people wanting to know that the Administration is committed to reopening the pool in the Spring.

Director Moretti stated that, per Director Tessaglia, the last time the pool was winterized or attended to was the fall of 2019. The plans are to get the pool running for the 2022 season. In 2021, there was an evaluation done by a company called New England Aquatics and to open the pool at the time and just get it prepared was \$90,000. The Mayor thought it might be a good idea to refer discussion to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee to seek their input for best uses of that facility. The intention is to open the pool if budget allows it, but also get input and opinions from the Advisory Board.

Councilman Donegan agreed that we should do everything we can to reopen that pool.

Councilwoman Vargas:

- **Proposed Friendly Road Playground Project**

Councilwoman Vargas stated that she sees that the park age range that is being arrived at being used is children between the age of 2 and 5. That is something that she would like to see addressed. She has questions on the design. She is looking forward to an onsite visit. She hopes to have sensory items for children with autism.

Director Moretti stated that he agrees with all this.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:48 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Rosalba Zanni
Acting City Clerk