

City of Spokane

Citizens Street Advisory Commission

Tuesday, July 19, 2005 1 :00 p.m.
Street Department Conference Room
901 North Nelson

MEETING MINUTES

Commissioners Present

Dallas Hawkins, Chair
Donna Jilbert
Chuck Kearney
Max Kuney

Commissioners

Absent
Stan Stirling, Vice-
Chair

City Staff Present

Roger Flint, Director, Public Works & Utilities
Tom Arnold, Director, Engineering Services
Scott Egger, Director, Street Department
Mark Serbousek, Operations, Street Dept.
Michele Lesesne, Accountant, Street Dept.
Steve Hanson, Design, Engineering Services
Karen Kerpac, Design, Engineering Services
Staci Lehman, Communications Manager
(hasn't started with City yet)
Charlotte Thacker, Admin. Asst.

Commission Chair Dallas Hawkins opened the meeting at 1:00 pm.

I. Introductions

Mr. Hawkins extended a welcome to Staci Lehman, who will come on board August 1 as Communications Coordinator, working in the Engineering Services Department within the Public Works and Utilities Division. Developing the Council Report for September will be her first, main project. Mr. Arnold described the well-rounded, balanced work history that made Ms. Lehman the choice for the position, and stated his confidence that she would be a valued member of the Commission team.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes of June 21.

The Minutes of the meeting of June 21 were accepted as presented.

III. Replacement of Commissioners John Talbott and JoAnna Butler

Mr. Hawkins noted the absences of Commissioners JoAnna Butler and John Talbott, who have submitted their resignations because they will no longer reside in the City. Clay Schueman, a member of the Streets Committee that preceded the Commission, is

interested in participating on the Commission, and the Mayor has indicated support of his candidacy. Other members of the Commission were encouraged to suggest nominations.

IV. Update on Street Projects

Tom Arnold reported that 3rd Avenue will soon be opened downtown. He reported on the progress of the other projects, including Maple/Ash. Mr. Hawkins mentioned that inquiries have come to him from citizens regarding the timing of street closures, and Mr. Arnold and Mr. Egger discussed some of the components of those decisions, explaining that most citizens don't realize that construction planning involves dealing with entire corridors, for example. Mr. Hawkins welcomed Roger Flint's offer of staff assistance in talking with citizens who need information, stating that any questions he receives that might be of interest to CSAC members would be raised at the meetings, as well.

Mr. Arnold described a quality control incident involving the pavement mix on 3rd Avenue, which has been successfully negotiated with the contractor without deleterious effect.

V. Bernard Street Report

Karen Kerpac provided a PowerPoint presentation illustrating damage to sidewalks and curbs by trees on Bernard, pointing out the need for replacement of a number of mature trees. Engineers will coordinate with homeowners in the replacement process, working with recommendations from Park Department staff. All the trees to be replaced are presently in the public right-of-way, but staff plans to locate the replacement trees on private areas where appropriate. Mr. Hawkins wondered whether tree replacement should be included in "Usual & Customary Construction Items & Processes;" Mr. Arnold pointed out that trees were included in the items approved by the Commission at their meeting on April 19. The group agreed that Steve Hanson should follow up on Mr. Kuney's suggestion to work with Avista in tree removal costs, as it will mitigate their safety impacts. Ms. Kerpac will report back to the Commission regarding the size of the proposed replacement trees. Commission members decided to delay a decision on approving tree replacement pending this staff follow-up, expressing concern regarding the setting of precedent. Since Bernard Street will be in next year's projects, there will be adequate time to deliberate.

VI. 2006 Budget Process – Street Department

Michele Lesesne, Street Department Accountant, discussed Street Department budgeting (attached), pointing out that the Street Department represents 4% of the City general fund. Major expenditures include debt service on the 2003 councilmatic bond of \$1.6 million and roadway maintenance, including snow and ice removal. She described non-general fund revenue generated from other sources, including various taxes. Ms. Jilbert wondered whether the new State gas tax would provide revenue for Streets, and Mr. Flint suggested that it might well be able to contribute on the Capital Programs side, especially if used for leverage for matching projects.

Mr. Egger described the POG process, the Priorities of Government budgeting process being used by City administration. He and Mr. Flint pointed out that the process of bidding for services is designed to fully fund those items found to have highest priority, although recent revenue shortfalls in the City has caused even priority programs to be under-funded.

Mr. Kearny asked for assurance that bond money would not supplant general fund contributions to the budget, and Mr. Flint recalled for the group that the City Council had passed a resolution stating that they would not supplant funds for bond money coming in.

Mr. Arnold distributed work sheets illustrating his department's POG bids as well. Mr. Flint noted that the Engineering Services Department is able to recover 80% of its cost through charges to clients/users.

VII. Fall Report to City Council and Mayor

Mr. Hawkins passed out an outline for the Fall Report (attached), emphasizing that continued input from all members of the Commission was important to what he views as one of the most important functions held by the Commissioners from the standpoint of accountability. Financial data is expected to be similar to the Street report just studied, although the amount of detail provided needs to be decided; both commissioners and the Mayor would need to be satisfied. He suggested that a PowerPoint presentation be developed so that it could be taken "on the road," to community assemblies, etc.

Commissioners made suggestions regarding degree of detail; they agreed that the report should be kept simple, possibly with a face sheet showing simple running totals, indicating what percentage of the funds have been spent, with financial statements included as an addendum. They agreed it would be helpful for their understanding of the accounting process if, toward the end of August, they could come individually to a conference room in City Hall where the budget figures might be viewed on a computer set up for that purpose.

Mr. Kearney pointed out that the Commission would probably remain with the report format it uses initially, so although it would be good for Commissioners to know the source information, it needn't be detailed verbatim in the report.

VIII. New Business

Maple/Ash Island. Mr. Arnold suggested the opportunity for an enhancement to the Maple/Ash project. There is a 1,400 square yard dirt asphalt island at the entrance to the City that would offer the possibility for a hardscape that could withstand the test of time, perhaps a patterned concrete that could easily be washed off, or with some minor landscaping. Basically an entry to the City of Spokane, the area could ultimately feature a "welcome" sign, but in the interim it could provide a sign providing notification of the work being done with the bond funds. This would incur a cost of approximately \$40,000

on a \$2.5 million project, and without Commission approval would remain an asphalt dirt island. Mr. Kearney wondered whether it would be responsible for the Commission to authorize a \$40,000 beautification component. Ms. Jilbert's suggestion of joining with the County and Mr. Hawkins' idea of seeking corporate sponsorship were seen as unlikely, as construction decisions would need to be made quickly. The group indicated agreement with Mr. Arnold's suggestion that the island remain dirt asphalt but that a sleeve of conduit be installed so that enhancement could be accomplished later, if desired.

Bicycle Advisory Board. Commissioners discussed Mr. Hawkins letter following up on the Bike Board's visit to the meeting in June. Mr. Flint will follow up to discover whether the Bike Board has acted on the suggestion that they work with the City with Jerry Sinclair of Capital Programs as their contact point.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting concluded at 3:10 p.m.