

**Dublin City Council
Public Services Committee**

Wednesday, May 16, 2022 – 5:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive
Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Kramb called the May 16, 2022 Public Services Committee meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Vice Mayor De Rosa, Ms. Kramb (Chair), Mr. Reiner.

Staff present: Mr. Earman, Mr. Hammersmith, Mr. Stanford, Mr. Anderson

Also present: James Akins and Miles Hebert, EMH&T; John Ricketts, Stantec

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Kramb moved to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2022 Public Services Committee meeting.

Mr. Reiner seconded the motion.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes.

Discussion Items:

Waterways Maintenance Program

Mr. Hammersmith provided a brief background on the Waterways Maintenance Program to this point. This began about one year ago with the annual update to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Staff felt there needed to be a better focus to care for Dublin's waterways. The first step was to study the City to determine needs and begin to prioritize and identify funding. The consultants, EMH&T will present this evening. Staff's objective is for the Committee to make a recommendation to City Council on the implementation of the Waterways Maintenance Program in the CIP and the Operating Budget.

Mr. Stanford introduced the Waterways Maintenance Program. Dublin values the environment and realizes that waterways are important and contribute to the health, safety, and welfare of the public. There was a footnote in the CIP budget last year, but there has not been a formalized program for which funding was provided for waterway maintenance. In the development of a request for proposals (RFP), staff evaluated what the program should do moving forward.

It was determined that the program would:

- ensure waterways are kept clear of debris and blockages;
- maintain the conveyance capacity of open watercourses; (this is a true maintenance program)
- reduce/eliminate illicit discharges;
- improve natural riparian habitat;
- work to improve water quality of streams;
- make some structural repairs;
- repair and restoration in areas of significant erosion especially in areas which pose a threat to infrastructure.

Mr. Stanford explained that the program is important for several reasons. Water is an important natural resource; it adds value to properties and the community. This program will protect public safety through flood protection and water quality preservation and provide protection of public infrastructure.

James Akins, EMH&T, shared his presentation agenda regarding the development of the City's Waterways Maintenance Program. The Committee will hear:

1. Project Overview
2. Waterway Inspections & Data Analysis
3. Maintenance Program Development Approach
4. GIS Mapping Tool
5. Inspection Scoring
6. Program Cost Estimates
7. Work Map Demonstration
8. Program Summary
9. Questions.

Mr. Akins stated that the goals established for the program are to preserve and improve the stability and flood carrying capacity of the City's waterways and to protect riparian corridors and infrastructure. The Scope of Services provided by EMH&T included analyzing existing data; determining waterway maintenance needs and responsibility (City or private property owners); assisting in prioritizing maintenance needs; and making recommendations on enhancements for the riparian corridor. A map of streams within the City was shown. There are approximately 48 miles of waterways within the City. Between 2018 and 2021, Franklin County Soil and Water Conservation District (FCSWD) walked the streams and conducted inspections of those streams creating 535 inspection reports. The report identified the area of concern and clearly identified the concern. Photos were included with each inspection report. Photographic examples of channel blockages, channel erosion, and yard debris/dump sites were shared with the Committee.

Mr. Reiner asked if there is a map showing these sites. Mr. Hammersmith stated that an interactive map was sent linking to all of the data.

Mr. Akins detailed the data from the inspections. He stated that of the 535 inspection reports, there were 260 channel blockages, 217 instances of channel erosion, 46 dump sites/yard debris, and 12 other concerns. EMH&T's approach for the development of the program was to conduct field investigations to confirm the inspection report information. Inspection sites were located relative to City-owned land/easements. The data was then organized into a scoring and project cost tool.

Mr. Akins addressed erosion. EMH&T developed a channel cross section on how eroded areas would be stabilized. Rock riprap would be installed on the slope down to the stream with vegetation incorporated above that to help stabilize the bank and protect stream flow. This cross section was utilized in the program development to help with estimating quantities needed to stabilize the banks. This assisted in developing cost estimates.

Mr. Reiner asked what size riprap was recommended. Mr. Hammersmith responded with Type C which uses stones of 12-18 inches.

Mr. Akins stated that EMH&T developed a mapping tool that identifies the inspection location points and the problem. The map determines whether each inspection point location is on private property, City-owned property, or on private property with a drainage easement. They were able to review recorded plats and construction site improvement plans and identify drainage easements that will give the City access to private property to access those inspection points. 186 out of 535 inspections were determined to be on City-owned property or private property with drainage easements. EMH&T went into the field and verified approximately 100 of the locations. 22 sites were removed or reclassified based on the field visits. 14 sites were determined to be dump site/yard debris locations and were removed from consideration because they were resolved with property owners or naturally. 150 inspection locations remained.

Mr. Akins explained that EMH&T next developed a scoring system for the inspections by looking at the conditions of the inspection point, which consisted of accessibility, constructability, channel stability, channel capacity, and severity. Scores were assigned to those conditions which were then multiplied by a Criticality Score, which is the threatened infrastructure. This resulted in an Inspection Score. Mr. Akins detailed the Inspection Scoring. Condition Scores were assigned to the four areas of Access, Constructability, Channel Stability/Capacity, and Severity. Criticality Scores indicate the threat to infrastructure due to erosion or flooding with scores assigned based on the type of infrastructure threatened. Scores ranged from 6 to 95 with higher scores

indicating an increased threat to infrastructure. This Inspection Scoring is a tool for the City to use to assist with prioritization of maintenance activities.

Mr. Akins explained that next they determined project areas. EMH&T grouped the 150 inspection locations. Grouping multiple inspection points reduces costs for the City by allowing them to address multiple areas of concern at once. 59 project areas were identified that incorporated all 150 inspection sites. Project Areas were assigned the highest score of the inspection points within that area. A cost estimating tool was developed looking at stream erosion and debris removal. Construction costs were estimated using unit costs and estimated quantities. Engineering, permitting, and construction administration is then added to arrive at a total project cost. EMH&T was able to utilize cost data from the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for their regional channel maintenance program. Their cost was \$3,600/day for debris removal. No engineering or permitting costs are necessary for debris removal.

Mr. Akins detailed inspection points that will be addressed by City staff. City staff will address 25 channel blockages leaving 51 to be incorporated into the Waterways Maintenance Program (the Program). 30 of the 74 channel erosion sites do not need addressed, only monitored. The 44 remaining areas would be incorporated into the Program. 95 total inspections would be incorporated in the Maintenance Program Budget. Those inspection locations encompass 39 project areas. The total estimated project cost is \$1,750,000 comprised of \$460,000 for debris removal and \$1,290,000 for bank stabilization. A program budget schedule was then developed for a 5-year span at \$350,000/year.

Mr. Akins shared a live GIS map showing all 535 inspection points. He walked the Committee through an example of the determination of a cost estimate.

Mr. Akins shared why Dublin should address these concerns. For bank stabilization, it is for the protection of infrastructure. It also reduces channel blockage source material. Dublin should remove waterway debris in order to maintain flow and reduce flood risk. Mr. Akins stated that there is an opportunity with yard debris/dump site concerns to educate the property owners.

Mr. Akins stated that the next phase of services provided would be stream riparian corridor enhancement opportunities. EMH&T would be looking at channel stabilization by adding vegetation and improving habitat focusing on City park property.

Ms. Kramb thanked Mr. Akins for the presentation. Vice Mayor De Rosa thanked Mr. Akins as well and asked about the correlation between erosion and debris. Mr. Akins stated that removing debris alleviates flooding concerns within the City. Addressing erosion protects infrastructure and reduces the amount of material that enters the stream. Vice Mayor De Rosa asked what causes erosion. Mr. Hebert stated that channel erosion is a natural process. Sometimes there is a

correlation between debris and channel erosion, but he believes channel erosion stands alone as a separate concern for the City to address.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked if FCSWD will continue to conduct these inspections regularly in order to keep this tool current. Mr. Stanford stated that Dublin has had FCSWD do inspections for several years. Even after these points of concern have been addressed, this will be an ongoing program. The City wants a tool that assists us in continuing to address waterway concerns. Staff wants to continue with the inspections by FCSWD and now have them collect the kind of data that feeds directly into this tool.

Ms. Kramb asked if the 39 project areas are truly independent areas and not dependent upon fixing upstream or downstream projects. Mr. Akins answered affirmatively. Ms. Kramb confirmed that they could be prioritized. Mr.

Hammersmith confirmed that added there is always some interlinkage. Ms. Kramb stated that education is a huge piece for private property owners. She asked if staff will add a cost for an education program. Mr. Hammersmith stated that staff would make a proposal in the Operating Budget for education.

Mr. Reiner thanked the consultant for the cost estimates. He asked if staff will contact private property owners. Mr. Hammersmith answered affirmatively. Mr. Reiner stated that a nice thing about this report is that it can pinpoint areas. He asked if there is any penalty for non-compliance. Mr. Hammersmith responded that there is not. There are some code provisions related to property maintenance. Staff has provided a report from Frost Brown Todd on the private property concerns. Mr. Stanford stated that 349 inspection points are remaining when the ones on City-owned or accessed properties are removed. The goal is to plan a program that is only on public property. A legal document was provided about private property waterway maintenance. There is not a part of City Code that requires the City to clear blockages on private property. The City has the ability, under certain circumstances, to require the owner to perform stream maintenance and can assess the cost of the maintenance back on the property owner if they refuse to perform the maintenance, and the City can then perform the work.

Mr. Stanford shared staff recommendations. The first is to begin Program implementation in 2022 through a contract with tree removal service to have some critical areas cleared this year. Year one activities would also include some design and permitting of projects. An addition recommendation would be to continue current City practice regarding waterways maintenance on private property. Maintenance remains the responsibility of the property owner.

Ms. Kramb invited the public to offer comments.

Ann Geese, 5584 Brand Road, 43017, stated that she lives just west of project 5. They had an experience on Mother's Day 2021 where two trees had fallen into

Bristol Commons Park and were left for 5 months. Davey Trees then moved the fallen trees. She witnessed them throwing logs into the creek. Davey Trees denied that when confronted. One day later a huge amount of debris suddenly ended up on the Geese's property caused by a clearing project in Bristol Commons upstream from them. She wants to know what guarantees there are that these projects are not affecting properties downstream. She is speaking for all property owners on the riparian corridor.

Ms. Geese shared another issue. Someone did a lot of clearing upstream and left tree parts on the embankment. Gradually those logs that were piled up in the riparian corridor have ended up on the Geese's property. She asked what protections there will be for private property owners that receive debris from projects upstream. If that debris is put on her property does that mean she has to pay to haul it away? She has paid over the years to clean up debris that she has not caused.

Mr. Reiner stated that when a contract for tree removal is issued, it can be included in that contract to chip up the wood and haul it away. Mr.

Hammersmith stated that it really comes down to monitoring contractors. It is very difficult to determine the origin of debris and ownership. It becomes troublesome for the City to determine that after the fact. Debris also collects on the City's property and we feel it is our responsibility to remove that debris. Mr. Reiner stated that the issue of debris in the streams could be part of the education program. Mr. Hammersmith stated that it is also important to remove debris from the riparian corridor so that it does not end up in the stream during times of higher flow.

Tracie Bourquin, 5569 Fawnbrook Lane, 43017, stated that she does not live directly on the creek or pond but other people in her neighborhood have serious concerns. Bristol Commons pond has experienced severe erosion over the last decade. It is a drop off in sections and is encroaching on the bike path that goes around it. Many trees have been removed and erosion has become very bad. She was hoping that the area upstream of area 5 could be taken care of as well. The pond used to be a beautiful place but has become an eyesore with large concrete basins visible. She is hopeful that this area is on the radar and might be addressed soon. Mr. Hammersmith stated that basins are outside of the scope of this work, but the Service Director has made a note of it. A lot of basins are on City-owned property that homeowner associations maintain. Staff will look into the concerns noted.

Ron Geese, 5584 Brand Road, 43017, thanked the Committee and consultants for all of the information provided. They have four acres of land along the river where there are two bends, so any debris coming downstream ends up on their property. They know who some of the people are whose debris has ended up

downstream. He feels Dublin should be inspecting his property. The City needs to clean up all loose debris in project area 5. A tree fell down in Washington Township and blocked the waterway to the point where debris was almost 8 feet high. There is no place but City property for this to have come from. They have experienced a lot of damage to the edge of Brand Road. He asked if some money will be allocated to repair berms and/or install gabions. Mr. Hammersmith stated that if there is an erosion issue, that is included in this program. It will not reinforce areas that are already erosion-protected. If the existing gabions are deficient they will be reviewed, but inspections did not show any deficiencies in those gabion walls. Work on the road, pavement, or berm is handled separately through street maintenance.

Mr. Geese stated that there are no frogs or crawdads, so there must be something amiss with the water quality. He agreed that the detention basin at Bristol Commons and that park needs to be revisited in some fashion.

Ms. Bourquin stated that the reason the basin is eroding is because the creek overflows and runs into the pond. The whole area floods. Mr. Geese stated that he thinks that in that area of Project 5 there is an excessive amount of honeysuckle. Some has been cut and is still laying on the east side of the stream bank. Debris needs to be cleaned up. Mr. Geese closed by stating that he is appreciative of the progress they have seen.

Mr. Reiner asked if the consultants are civil engineers or landscape architects. Mr. Hebert and Ricketts answered that they are civil engineers. Mr. Akins stated that he is a water quality specialist.

Ms. Krumb asked when the City did a water quality analysis on waterways. Mr. Stanford stated that Dublin has volunteers that collect that data. There is a stormwater committee. Pond maintenance is a popular topic that comes up during their discussions. During Phase 2 of this project, there will be more work efforts to improve water quality. The first phase was to get areas functional. Ms. Krumb confirmed that Phase 2 is part of the EMH&T contract. Mr. Stanford answered in the affirmative. He stated that they mention invasive species in their scope. Mr. Reiner asked about the setbacks on creeks. Mr. Hammersmith stated that the stream corridor protection zone is in the zoning code. Setbacks vary but the stream corridor protection zone is defined. Setbacks would only be on watercourses that do not have FEMA designation because those already have prohibitions placed on them.

Vice Mayor De Rosa asked for more details of the request for Phase 1.

Mr. Stanford stated that they purposefully separated erosion and debris removal because those funding sources will be separate. Debris removal will be programmed through the operating budget. Erosion control will be a part of CIP

discussions. Vice Mayor De Rosa confirmed that the total cost to fix everything on City property is \$1.75M. Mr. Hammersmith stated that is everything on City property or within City easements. Vice Mayor De Rosa asked if it would be more prudent to front-load some of this rather than spreading it out at a rate of \$350,000 per year. Mr. Hammersmith stated that prioritizing and funding will be part of the ongoing discussion as the CIP and operating budget processes move forward. Right now \$100,000 every other year is budgeted for waterway maintenance, so investing \$350,000 annually would be a big jump. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that she would like to get a big enough baseline to get ahead of the waterway maintenance. Mr. Hammersmith stated that the battle is balancing financial resources with other priorities in the City. Staff would be in support of putting more resources toward waterway maintenance. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated this is a very logical approach. She asked for two or three models that would get us substantially to a place where we could then plan for an annual maintenance fee. She would like to know what spending more could accomplish. Mr. Reiner agreed.

Ms. Kramb stated that staff has the Committee's support on this process. Staff could bring the detailed options forward to Council and not have to come back to the Committee. Mr. Hammersmith stated that funding has been exhausted this year so the timing would not be immediate.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that if there are ways to help people with properties on waterways from a financial support standpoint, that information would be useful.

Ms. Kramb moved to recommend to Council the Waterways Maintenance Program as presented with additional funding schedule options. Mr. Reiner seconded.

Vote on the motion: Ms. Kramb, yes; Vice Mayor De Rosa, yes; Mr. Reiner, yes.

Mr. Reiner suggested consideration of work being non-union.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 6:26 p.m.


Chair, Public Services Committee


Deputy Clerk of Council