

**Dublin City Council
Public Services Committee**

Monday, August 23, 2021 – 4:00 p.m.
5555 Perimeter Drive
Council Chamber

Meeting Minutes

Ms. Fox called the August 23, 2021 Public Services Committee meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Vice Mayor De Rosa, Ms. Fox and Mr. Reiner

Staff present: Mr. Ranc, Mr. Plouck, Mr. Hammersmith, Mr. Stanford, Mr. Stiffler, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Earman

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Reiner moved to approve the minutes of June 15, 2021 Public Services Committee meeting.

Vice Mayor De Rosa seconded the motion.

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

Water & Sanitary Sewer Extension Policy

Mr. Ranc introduced the water and sanitary sewer extension policy and invited Mr. Stanford to present the subject.

Mr. Stanford shared a presentation (Exhibit A) and explained that this report is typically reviewed with City Council in the fall.

Mr. Reiner asked why a backflow is necessary on public water. Mr. Stanford stated that it is a City of Columbus requirement. Mr. Hammersmith explained that it is an EPA requirement and is inspected annually.

Mr. Reiner shared past experiences where residents found that drilling wells deeper was more cost effective than the fees required to connect to public utilities.

Ms. Fox asked what factors brought Area 1C to be scheduled. Mr. Stanford stated that an AEP project drove the need to bring this forward in prioritization. Mr. Hammersmith explained that with the Bethel/Sawmill transmission line improvement project, AEP impacted and removed vegetation from three mound systems along Glencree Place and those systems became inoperable. Current standards would not allow a new system to be installed on a lot of that size. The

City became concerned that if someone's system failed there would be no system in place and so that area was accelerated.

Ms. Fox asked if there is commitment from residents on upcoming projects. Mr. Stanford stated that though they have had a lot of public interaction, they do not have commitment. He added that a lot of the discussion around that project has focused on sidewalks.

Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested that providing residents with costs up front may be the only way to obtain a solid commitment.

Mr. Stanford shared that lack of expected commitment is affecting the 15-year implementation and when (not it) systems fail, if there is no public sewer available, residents will be forced to install new and updated household sewer treatment systems (HSTS). Once new HSTS are installed, the option to install a public connection is gone.

Ms. Fox asked about inspections of septic systems and if they require permits through the City. Mr. Stanford stated that permitting and inspecting is done through the Franklin County Board of Health.

Vice Mayor De Rosa requested updated information to show actual numbers of homes or connections. The Committee asked what other communities are doing with regards to implementing public sewer/water connections.

Mr. Ranc stated that Staff has done some benchmarking and none offer great options so they will continue to do research. He also committed to bring back to the Committee costs per unit (a range).

Ms. Fox shared ideas for assisting in financing like a grant through the State of Ohio, assessment, waiving the sewer cap charge for the first year, or low-interest loans. She would also like to inform property owners of concerns found by Franklin County. Ms. Fox recommended that desire for public water/sewer be a factor for prioritization. Mr. Hammersmith explained that they cannot install only a piece of the system.

Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that high risk areas must be taken care of first if this is being done for public health.

Mr. Ranc stated that Staff recommends getting Franklin County to look at the health assessment and prioritize that highest and finding ways to reduce cost to residents.

Vice Mayor De Rosa noted that the City of Columbus costs are still high.

Ms. Fox asked if there is a way to avoid putting in public sewer and water and have these HSTS become inspected and maintained in a safe way. This would also keep these areas rural in character.

Mr. Reiner and Ms. Fox are not in favor of making connections mandatory. Vice Mayor De Rosa stated that if a situation is going to impact the health and safety of the community, she is not sure she would be opposed to a mandate.

The Committee requested Staff to provide:

- Updated numbers to reflect number homes,
- Other financing options,
- And a reassessment of health and safety risks.

The item was requested to return to Public Services Committee for further discussion.

Waterway Maintenance Staff Report

Mr. Hammersmith introduced the Waterway Maintenance Program. This program will assure waterways are kept clear of unnatural debris and other blockages, maintain conveyance capacity, reduce illicit discharges, improved habitats and add value to properties. He shared visuals of waterways and streams in good health. Staff has been working with Franklin Soil and Water and received inspections over four years identifying areas of deficiencies. The area remaining to be inspected is north of 270 and east of the Scioto River. Portions of the waterways have been designated by FEMA as floodway and floodplain. Staff is in the process of developing an RFP for a consultant to assist in developing a waterways maintenance program. The program being proposed is an annual program shifting from ditch maintenance to a more comprehensive waterway program.

Mr. Reiner asked about setbacks on waterways. Mr. Hammersmith stated that stream corridor protection zones are in code and actively enforced. The setback requirements vary. Mr. Stanford stated that often that is a legally defined zone on a plat and includes language about what can and cannot be done in those areas.

Mr. Hammersmith stated that those setbacks are outlined in Chapter 53 of the code.

Ms. Fox stated that erosion control at construction sites is a big problem. She added that she does not see this as a strictly City-funded solution but needs to

be a partnership with Franklin Soil & Water. Mr. Hammersmith shared that Franklin Soil & Water will be included with any consultant process.

Mr. Ranc stated that Staff is proposing \$100,000 for the initial cost and the schedule is every other year beginning in 2022. He explained that it was formerly ditch maintenance and they are expanding on those efforts.

Ms. Fox asked if this were for all waterways in the City. Mr. Hammersmith answered affirmatively and added that it does not include stormwater maintenance ponds nor the river.

Ms. Fox expressed desire to see all waterways as another park amenity throughout the City. Vice Mayor De Rosa suggested that be included in 2035 discussions while this specific project moves forward.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

Deputy Clerk of Council