

Public Works Committee Meeting

City Of Virden
City Council Chambers
Thursday, January 16th

Meeting called to order by Alderman Bertolino at 6:00 PM

Aldermen in attendance: Mottershaw, Neighbors, Donley, Mitchell, Boster, and Calloway

Absent: Alderman Schnetzer

Additional in attendance: Mayor George Murphy, City Clerk Jon Myint, Public Works Director Gary Etter, Ryan Calloway Public Works, and Jessica Selhime Water Clerk

Visitors: Crystal Creasy

Comments from Audience:

- Crystal Creasy asked if it was possible to get an additional cleanup in the spring. Bertolino said I do not disagree with you. We had a fall clean up in September and October, ward one and two first weekend, wards 3 and 4 the second weekend. It was not a week or two after both wards were cleaned up, people put more stuff out there. I do not know if there is an answer if you have two cleanups a year if you have four cleanups a year or ten. The problem is going to continue. We have always done one year because it is a little pricey for the taxpayers. The cleanup has always been in the fall season because it worked better than the spring. Etter said he believed the cost was about \$6,800. Mayor Murphy said that when we go through the budget, we can always think about adding that. Bertolino said we will consider it in the budget but there are no guarantees.

Topics:

1. Approval of Minutes (12/24/24)

Motion made by Bertolino to approve meeting minutes for (Special 12/24/24)
Consensus passed.

2. LOCIS 8

Jessica talked to Ken yesterday and he said that the questions we had answered was sufficient. Etter asked if this could be put on the February agenda to get it passed? Bertolino said one of the benefits to this city is it is web-based and can be accessed anywhere. More discussion on; Annual cost, cost of additional modules (if needed), cost of training including travel and contract start date. Jessica said that Tanya told her that she thought that our renewals are coming up in March, and

we will pay the LOCIS 7 price in March if we have not done anything by that point. It would be 2026 before we would pay the larger renewal fees. LOCIS 7 membership for a year is \$4,428. The proposal for LOCIS 8 membership is about \$5,383 so \$900 more to go with 8 than it is with 7. For budget purposes we need to plan for approximately 53 (maximum) hours of training at \$100.00 an hour, plus travel time. Mottershaw said that he would need an actual amount for the budget. Jessica said that she would like to look at adding paperless billing, so we wanted to know what the cost of it was. Boster said, going from 7 to 8 is a 22% increase. We just need to figure out whether we are willing to do it in March. To me the water department is saying that they want to do the increase. I do not really think that is that crazy because you are getting an upgrade, so they are upgrading the membership. Etter said that they are going to do it obviously, they are going to phase out seven, so if you do not do it this year you will have to do it next year. All Gary's asking is to have a solid number to go off, so we can find out exactly what we need to take out of the budget, and to see if we can make it happen. Boster recommended that this topic be moved over to finance.

3. New Spray Law

Gary Etter said everybody needs 24-hour notice before we spray. Bertolino said the Senate bill or 3342 provides at least 24 hour notice before the state or any unit of local government including a mosquito abatement district or a commercial entity hired by the state or a unit of local government applying pesticides including pesticides that control mosquitoes and so on. We need to talk to Don and see if putting something that includes the date and time (weather permitting) on Facebook and on our website will be sufficient to cover us under this law.

4. Water Meter system

Etter passed out information on the Core & Main Sensus system. The annual cost to the city, the cost to maintain the system, and the different options to protect the system. This cost does not include moving meters outside. There will still be 10 to 12 meters that we will still have to go out to for the readings. Due to lightning strikes each year the present system is unable to read more and more meters at this time we are having to go out and read about 200 meters. Mayor Murphy said I noticed this and at least one of the other ones we are talking about way over 1,800 meters, which is every pit in town. Are we going to put new meters in pits that have not been used for years? Jessica said somewhere in the 1500s active meters. Etter said we still need to install if it is an empty lot or an empty house eventually it is going to need a meter. Hopefully, something moves into it, but you are going to have to buy extra meters. I am going to buy extra meters anyway; we are just going to put in the ones that are active. My number might be closer to 1,550, at one time we used to have 1,736 customers. Boster said you are looking at an overflow of 10% to 15% which is what you would do for normal construction. Mottershaw said it would be nice to get a fixed price to move the inside meters outside, now this is the best time to consider it. Ryan said he believed the price to move a meter outside was about \$1800 each. Etter said the other pages is from Mueller System one of them is a traditional AMI system, which is what we currently have. The 2nd 2 pages is a

cellular AMI system. The Cellular system is more expensive. I am in favor of the Sensus. I know Gordon System is going to be cheaper. What concerns me is, he is a one man band. I love everything he has done, and he has saved this city a lot of money, helping us find leaks. He has done amazing, and he is still collaborating with us every day. He sends a text or e-mail that says, hey the water is up a little bit today something is going on in town, so he is still watching our town, so he is a very good asset to the town. But on this kind of meter system and doing the kind of meter system that we got to do here he is only one person that concerns me. If something happens to the gentleman or something else happens, can somebody else take this system over? What happens with the system if we have problems with the gateway like we are having now with his system, if you have any problems would Jessica be able to call? Who would we contact since he is one person? That is why I think we would be better off with the Sensus System than the Gordon System. Mottershaw said that his bid was only for the meters and not the installations. Etter said I know Sensus is a lot of money but, at least you know there are a well-built company. They have enough people that you can contact that will say that they are a good company. Mottershaw said the cheapest is not always giving you the most for your money. Boster said we went down that road and from what I can understand buying the cheapest has bit us. To me there is nothing wrong with getting the bells and whistles and in this case, the bells and whistles is what this town needs on this water thing because we have been raked across the coal over this, and we are at least stepping in the right direction. Ryan said Sensus has a history of being one of the largest meter suppliers in the state of Illinois. They said at any given time they will have almost 5 or 10,000 meters sitting on shelves between Collinsville, Chicago, they supply Joliet and Rockford, they are massive. They said they could get us meters within days not weeks. Etter said that on some houses when the meter is inside, there is only a little curb stops outside, that is hard to find, especially when you have 8 inches of snow and ice, you must find it, de-ice it and get to it. When you have a meter pit in the yard it is a benefit, you can get to it and do what you need to do. I am just looking at the concern of the city as to why we should update that system. Ryan said that it also gives you two options to shut off the ones that are not around the square that are homeowners inside meters. Mottershaw said I am hoping that we can finalize the budget by the March finance meeting. Etter said I will get ahold of the guy from Sensus and have him come here and I will work with Jessica to nail down exactly how many meters we have active. Then find out how many outside readers (ORs) that are not around the square that are homeowners. Right now, I think counting the square we have around 300 Ors. Mottershaw asked how soon after they were awarded the bid they would start. Etter said that he would ask. Ryan talked about concerns about the differences in the warranties, Sensus is the best warranty, it is 15 years full warranty and 5 years of prorated, so you have almost 20 years. Everybody else has 10 years full warranty then 5 years prorated. Etter said I will call this guy and Jessica will give me some numbers then we will go from there. Just to give you some number and I can see if I can meet with this guy. Mayor Murphy asked whoever it was that had the \$1800 to move the meter outside what all does that include, a pit, does that replace the line that was already there,

are you tapping into the line? Ryan said a plumber would cut the line, install a jumper, and leave the meter base in the house.

5. Semi-truck

Donley said there is a problem with semi-trucks parking on Green and Jackson streets. One guy got stuck three separate times on Green and in my yard, he put a 2 1/2 foot deep hole in it. His truck had to be dragged out. I know there must be all kinds of deliveries like rock and other stuff, this is just somebody trying to make a living. I always thought they had to park by the railroad tracks. With the weight some of the tile started breaking. Etter said I do not know that we have a weight restriction on that area and unless you put restriction on it there is not much we can do. Bertolino recommended that this be addressed again at the Police committee meeting and have Chief Steven Snodgrass investigate it. Mottershaw said a conversation with the driver would help too.

6. Update on Dean St. project and (7) Safe Route to School Project.

Bertolino said that we are going backwards with this Stephanie. I got some stuff here from September 6th of 2022 and November 7th of 2022 for Dean Street and Safe Routes to School and here it is January 2025, and we are no closer today, this job should have been done. Etter said that he talked to her on Tuesday and the bids for Dean Street should go out mid-February. She needs a deadline for the start to finish. I told her that I would like to see that project go no later than the end of October. When you start getting in November and December and getting into nasty weather it would be a mess. I would like to see that it could be done by the end of October. Bertolino said I am OK with that deadline. She also asked about advertising. They sent it out on a certain website that they have, that goes to everybody that does this kind of work. We did not make the June Letting for Safe Routes to School. There is a meeting in June of this year, so it will be on the August Letting Safe Route to School. What means is, that is when the state Oks the plans in the August Letting it then goes out for bids. After the bids is done, that is when the person starts the project. Which could put it in the next calendar year. What she explained to me is that contractors bid on that job, the State will be managing the bids, none of this happens through the city. The state takes care of it all, then they notify her who got the bid and then it goes from there. Mottershaw asked for an update on the estimate for Dean Street so it can be worked into the budget.

Executive Session:

None

Additional:

- Mayor Murphy said that he was given Master Plan for the parks by the Chamber it is here if anybody wants to look at it.

- We got the tree grant; there's number steps we must do. The first thing is getting a tree inventory, we must contract out to have that done. I did talk to a Master Certified Arborist; I called all around trying to find someone to do a tree inventory, no one knew what I was talking about. This guy knew what I was talking about. I think we could contract him to do it using a certain software to do this. This is not just the trees in the parks but trees on city easements throughout the town, part of the grant is to pay for that. When they get that done, they transfer that software data over to Public Works. Then they would have a tree location, type, and condition and so on. Mottershaw said it will be done in this fiscal year, so we do need to create a line item for the expenditure even though we're getting a grant for it. Mayor Murphy said to purchase the trees and have the trees planted they did say they really want the trees to come from within 80 or 90 miles of where they are going planted. Another thing is training for the public works people because we must develop a maintenance plan for trees. Morton Arboretum will help us write that into our code and then these guys will get training on how to do that. There's money in there to certify one person to be a certified arborist. We must have a Tree Committee that is going to include one or two of the council and two or three, someone from the Parks Initiative. We have 3 trees at East Park and 2 at West Park there is plenty of room for trees.
- I received a letter from Brian Rapozo with the FOP demanding to bargain for the telecommunicators. I sent an e-mail to them saying if they could get a proposal to us before the next Police Meeting on February 6th and they replied that they could. Then he is going to check whether they are all available to meet at that meeting. Which time do we open the bargaining?

Motion made by Bertolino seconded by Boster to adjourn at 7:23 PM. Consensus passed.

Jonathan J. Myint
City Clerk

Date Approved: