

MILFORD CITY COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
December 12, 2016

A Meeting of the Public Works Committee was held in the Joseph Ronnie Rogers Council Chambers at Milford City Hall on Monday, December 12, 2016.

PRESIDING: Public Works Committee Chairman Owen Brooks Jr.

IN ATTENDANCE: Committee Members:  
Councilmembers Lisa Ingram Peel & Douglas Morrow

Mayor Bryan Shupe

City Manager Eric Norenberg and City Clerk Terri Hudson

Chairman Brooks called the Committee Meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

City Manager Norenberg then deferred to Public Works Director Mark Whitfield to present the agenda items.

*Review & Recommendation/Bid Award/Automated Refuse Truck*

The Public Works Director recalled previous discussions about a one-man refuse vehicle that would replace the existing 2000 rear loader. He observed the 2000 vehicle this past week and is unsure if it will even hold refuse right now as a result of several holes in its bottom which confirms the desperate need to replace it.

Mr. Whitfield noted the one-man collection vehicle has a very short wheel which will allow maneuverability in some of the tight areas in and around Milford. It also has a fairly long arm reach of just over eight feet. As a result, getting in and around parked cars will be much easier.

He noted that the unit will also allow the sufficient collection of the trash by only using one person versus the two collectors and one driver presently needed with our trucks. Thus, the new vehicle will eliminate two positions in that department. He then emphasized that the Solid Waste Department currently has two vacancies; as a result, no one will be losing their job as a result of the change.

He believes a proficient collector is capable of collecting up to 1,000 containers a day. The City has approximately 3,500 customers though we, on an average, collect 2,800 containers a week. He feels that is the result of seasonal residents that do not always put their container out or those that only need a pick up every third week or so.

Once the new truck is in operation, the Public Works Director is very confident our crews will be able to collect the entire City within four days.

Because there will be no human contact with the container, the operation will be much safer for our employees and reduce the possibility of needle sticks, back strains, flying dust situations and slip and fall incidents due to inclement weather. Currently, we have one person out on a workmen compensation claim due to an injured shoulder. This should eliminate those type of claims in relation to refuse collection.

Mr. Whitfield reminded Council that the collection schedule will be changed to four-days with one ward a day picked up, Tuesday to Friday. Mondays will be used for yard waste and bulk item collection.

Provided the truck will be delivered by April and allowing six to eight weeks for the driver to become sufficient, the refuse schedule should be changed by July 1<sup>st</sup>. The City will only be publishing the January to June 2017 schedule due to the anticipated change in July.

The purchase price is available through the Houston-Galveston Area Council (HGAC), a recognized purchasing agency by the State of Delaware. The City of Rehoboth Beach, City of Dover and Sussex County are members of that Area Council;

the City of Milford would need to join though there is no associated costs.

The truck is available for \$220,290 or \$40,700 under budget.

Mr. Whitfield also pointed out that the cost of a new rear loader is roughly \$160,000. The automated vehicle is approximately \$60,000 more but eliminates two positions. He reported this should easily pay for itself within the first year.

The committee then viewed a video showing the vehicle in use.

Chairman Brooks asked how long the body of the truck is expected to last; Mr. Whitfield predicts approximately eight years. He noted that the trucks are manufactured in Somerset, Pennsylvania and should we experience any problems, their repair crew will come to Milford to make the repairs.

The truck has a fairly standard package and most repair parts that can be purchased from local auto parts store.

It was confirmed the truck has a one-year warranty.

Mr. Morrow then asked if the City is able to track items that are improperly mixed or prohibited in recycling, such as a car battery. Mr. Whitfield feels that some spot inspections can be done though he is unsure if that is needed on a weekly basis. However, the biggest problem is people placing the wrong items in recycling versus the trash side. Milford's crews have become very good at spotting those items though that can no longer be done with this type of vehicle. However, periodic spot inspections of recycling containers will still be needed.

Mr. Norenberg added that cities whom have implemented recycling programs have employees checking containers in advance of the refuse truck making the collection. They issue tags to customers in violation which prevents the driver from emptying the prohibited items into the recycling truck and instead ensures collection by the trash truck.

DNREC and the Solid Waste Authority will be placing much stricter regulations on the cities and private haulers who are delivering trucks containing contaminated recycling material. Recycling is not very profitable and is worth less or nothing if contaminated. The City will be penalized and Mr. Norenberg feels our employees will need to do a better job educating our residents.

Chairman Brooks recalled the identification portion of the DNREC grants in the amount of approximately \$60,000 was not granted; the Public Works Director explained that the grant did not include the ID readers which would have helped the City track the containers though ID's will still be added to the containers. The City could purchase the ID readers at some point in the future even though that was not included in the grant.

Mr. Whitfield noted that of the \$152,000 allocated for municipalities, \$138,000 was awarded to Milford for its first ever recycling grant.

The City Manager said this is on the Council agenda later this evening and he wants to make sure any questions or concerns the Committee have will be addressed and that they are ready to make a recommendation.

Councilwoman Peel noted that the Public Works Director has done a very thorough job adding that the City will have an annual savings with the new truck. Chairman Brooks agreed we will have save in salaries and benefits by eliminating two positions.

When asked if another automated truck should be considered, Mr. Whitfield stated that long-term, he would recommend three vehicles if we continue collecting yard waste and recycling materials. Two would be used on a regular basis and the third vehicle as a backup. Until such time a third vehicle can be purchased, the City will continue to use the rear loader though that will take two additional people or a total of three employees each day.

Chairman Brooks said we are going to save \$40,000 so we need to get started on the next truck. He then pointed out the other truck is going to cost \$100,000 to fix. Mr. Whitfield commented the second truck in the fleet is also in bad shape. Chairman

Brooks said he is only speaking as the Committee Chairman.

Councilwoman Peel moved to recommend to Council the purchase authorization of an automated refuse collection truck using the HGACBuy Cooperative Purchasing Alliance in the amount of \$220,290, seconded by Councilman Morrow. Motion carried.

*Update/M&T Bank Parking Lot*

Public Works Director Whitfield then recalled the City recently purchased the M&T Bank parking lot, which will be used by various residents, but most importantly, the new patrons of the Touch of Italy. He has been working with the Touch of Italy owners, in addition to the City Crews who are handling the necessary changes in the parking configuration.

He explained that DBF had originally developed a plan to bid the project. Because of the tight time frame for Touch of Italy, DBF agreed to handle it as a turn key operation and only called when needed. They worked up a price for the concrete work with local contractor Mike Shea and are also working with Jerry's Paving to provide a price.

Mr. Whitfield hopes to have the majority of the work, including the electrical and lighting work, completed by the end of the year. His intent is to have the project paid from the Economic Development fund.

Additional work will be needed this spring at which time the parking lot will be seal coated and a complete overlay added with new striping. Crews are doing what they can at this point though it will be completed no later than the opening of the Touch of Italy which is anticipated in early March.

He reported that while the canopy at the old drive-thru held the project up, it was removed last week. The City will be completing the final restoration in that area by the end of December.

Chairman Brooks wants it made clear that this work must be done right and that Mike Shea and Jerry's Paving will be handling the contracting work.

The Public Works Director confirmed that both contracts are under \$30,000 and neither has to be publicly bid.

When asked how many additional parking spaces were added, Mayor Shupe said that 67 parking spaces can now be used for public use. In the past, it was used as a private parking lot.

Mr. Whitfield believes that 17 additional spaces were added with the center drive (drive-thru) removed.

*Update/UFS Electric Cost of Service Study*

Mr. Whitfield informed the Committee that UFS will be here on January 9th to do a presentation for both this Committee as well as City Council. One of the things they had discussed was to make sure everything was accounted for in terms of infrastructure and depreciation. In that manner, the Committee will have a picture of all associated costs and the minimum fee needed before the range is selected.

He explained that one of the biggest changes will be the new customer charge. Right now, the City has a very low customer charge which does not cover the cost of infrastructure and depreciation. In reverse, the kilowatt hour will be lowered. As a result, there will be some winners and there will be some losers.

Mayor Shupe confirmed that the customer charge is assessed on each monthly bill. Mr. Brooks confirmed that each customer will have the same charge with no increase. Mr. Whitfield emphasized that will depend on their usage though the average user will see virtually little or no increase. However, a very low-end user will most likely see a higher increase because of the customer charge.

Mr. Whitfield explained the City has to charge infrastructure to get electricity to the homes. The customers need to bear part of that cost. He stated that the City still has to supply infrastructure to a home where a customer has installed a whole array

of solar panels though they may not be generating much demand for kilowatt hours. That is the type of situation that is being looked at and a fair and balanced way to handle.

Chairman Brooks indicated that is a big cost; the Public Works Director agreed it is a significant portion noting that the customer charge is probably a quarter to one-third of the bill.

*Update on University of Delaware Industrial Assessment Center/Energy Assessments/City Office Buildings*

The Public Works Director advised that the University of Delaware was hired to do an environment assessment in terms of energy usage on all buildings. The City contracted a professor and four college students who did a review of each City building at a cost of \$1,600 per day for two days. However, they came up with a list of items that will save the City \$1,600 a year. A preliminary report will be provided later this week with a final report expected in January.

Mr. Whitfield will share that report with the Committee after which those recommendations will be implemented.

Mr. Norenberg said this is a smart thing to do and recalled that during the retreat, City Council asked him to look at all City departments in order to operate more efficiently. As a result, better purchasing procedures and policies are being considered, greater efficiency of utilities and greater cooperation with other local governments are all under consideration with regard to spending taxpayer money.

He said this Committee will be seeing a lot more evaluations and recommendations over the next few months with regard to spending less money while still providing the quality of service the public expects.

*Schedule January/February Meeting*

City Manager Norenberg reported that UFS is going to need at least an hour for their presentation. He asked the Committee if they wish to schedule the presentation as a Council Workshop versus a separate presentation before the Public Works Committee and a repeat at the Council Meeting. City Council will then need to provide feedback on various items such as the increased customer charge.

Chairman Brooks prefers it be presented to the full Council on January 9<sup>th</sup>. The City Manager will confirm that UFS is available on that date and will follow-up with the Committee upon receipt.

When asked if anything else will need to be presented to the Public Works Committee, Mr. Whitfield said he will have more items in February. He recommends meeting on either February 6<sup>th</sup> or February 13<sup>th</sup> before the Council Meeting.

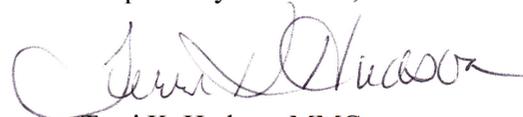
It was agreed that Public Works would next meet on February 13th at 6:00 p.m.

*Adjourn*

There being no further business, Councilwoman Peel moved to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting, seconded by Councilman Morrow. Motion carried.

The Committee Meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Terri K. Hudson, MMC  
City Clerk/Recorder