

Public Works Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

May 17, 2005

Public Works Building

CAC Representatives Present

Dr. Harold Cones

Ms. Sandra Davis

Ms. Sharron Kitchen Miller

Ms. Lois Custer

Mr. Gus Owens

Ms. Talysa Parker

Ms. Ciara Reid

CAC Representatives Absent

Ms. Sharyn Fox

Ms. Artistine Reid

Public Works Representatives

Ms. Dori Brown, Solid Waste Division

Ms. Tim DeSalvo, Administration Division

Mr. Reed H. Fowler, Jr., Administration Division

Mr. Tony Risk, Street Maintenance Division

Guests

Mr. Thomas Herbert

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the Vice Chairperson, Harold Cones, at 5:40 p.m.

Approve Meeting Minutes

A motion made by Lois Custer and seconded by Sharron passed to approve the February 15, 2005 meeting minutes as submitted.

“New Resident” link request on the City of Newport News’ homepage

Tim DeSalvo, Information Technology Administrator, discussed the challenges of getting modifications made to the City website. He stated that Public Works staff have control over changes made to the Public Works Department website only. CAC members recommended a more user-friendly City of Newport News website such as with the use of graphics or icons to aid in navigation efforts. This suggestion will be forwarded to the Public Information Officer for the City of Newport News. It was decided that a subcommittee (Tim DeSalvo, Ciara Reid, Harold Cones) be formed to offer improvement ideas (graphics, icons and frames) for the Public Works Department website. Subcommittee suggestions will be brought to the September CAC meeting. The goal is to eventually approach the City Manager with the request that the City of Newport News website be modified to a more user-friendly format with the Public Works website as an example.

Residential “Street Sweeping” Pilot Program

Lois Custer, who volunteered her neighborhood as a pilot to test out the receptiveness of residents to having signage installed in neighborhoods to assist in the enforcement of vehicles

being removed during street sweeping collection, was provided with the petition paperwork necessary to gain majority support for implementation of the pilot program. She will be working with the outreach end of this pilot program with her block captains. She also informed the committee that other neighborhoods (Richneck Estates) have expressed interest in participating in a similar pilot program. The following streets were identified as potential participants in the pilot: Woodside Lane (from Richneck Road to Oak Circle), Aspen Drive, Cottonwood Street (from Shields Road to Woodside Lane), Oakwood Place, and Red Oak Circle (from Cottonwood to Melrose). Tony Risk reported that this pilot project would require approximately 56 signs.

Lois also stated that there were eight streets willing to sign petitions forgoing street sweeping services and practice resident-sweeping of the streets in front of their own property due to the ineffective nature of sweeping in these cul-de-sacs. Due to the tight proximity of vehicles in these cul-de-sacs, street sweeping efforts result in debris being thrown up onto the curbs. Staff will investigate the placement of "This Street Swept Courtesy of ..." signage for these cul-de-sacs. The following streets were identified as potential participants in this self street-sweeping program: Orangewood, Peachwood, Maplewood, Cherrywood, Pinewood, Redwood, Hazelwood, and Chowan Place. Once the street sweeping pilot programs are completed, staff will evaluate their effectiveness to determine if other areas of the City would benefit from such a program.

Motion

A motion made by Harold Cones and seconded by Gus Owens passed to provide CAC endorsement of the street sweeping pilot program as proposed.

CAC Action Plan

- A written publicity update report from Dee Bryant was distributed to the CAC members. The report included information about a CAC segment airing on City Channel 48 *Newport News in Review*. She has requested that CAC members provide soundbites for future video segments on Channel 48. The CAC agreed that such soundbites would be beneficial and Lois Custer volunteered to provide the first soundbite with reference to the upcoming street sweeping pilot program being referenced.

CAC Retreat

As requested by CAC members, a ½ day retreat was held on April 19th at the Public Works Building in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Eight of the nine CAC members attended the retreat. The consensus from both the CAC members and the Public Works staff was that the retreat was extremely informative and insightful. The CAC members learned how the Divisions try to integrate their individual goals and objectives with daily limitations and challenges. CAC requested annual retreats be held with "specific Division project issues" being intermingled with the "general overview" information that needs to be reviewed annually.

APWA Regional Conference

The CAC was informed that Public Works representatives (Reed Fowler and Dori Brown) and the CAC Chairperson (Sharyn Fox) were on a panel discussing the Newport News Citizens Advisory Committee at the regional APWA conference on May 12th. The topic was well-received and many neighboring localities found the Newport News approach to obtaining citizen feedback on Public Works policy issues to be good government.

Public Works Employee Appreciation Day

CAC members were invited to attend the annual Public Works Employee Appreciation Day on May 18th. The event is an opportunity to show appreciation to Public Works employees for their commitment to high quality services throughout the year.

Other Issues

- Mr. Arthur Keyes and Ms. Inettie Edwards submitted to the Public Works Department letters of resignation from the CAC. Staff will spend the summer soliciting potential CAC candidates to fill the three vacancies (Kathy Dennehey resigned earlier in the year). A potential CAC candidate, Mr. Thomas Herbert, was in attendance at this meeting to observe CAC projects and goals.
- Lois Custer informed the committee that the police community store in Patrick Henry Mall would be relocating to Hilton Village. A gas station has been donated and once the building is refurbished, the new community center will be open to the public.
- Ciara Reid was congratulated on her recent induction into the National Honor Society. Ciara is currently a junior at Woodside High School.
- The CAC stressed that they need a sense of “accomplishment” regarding Public Works policy issues. Although the networking and CAC recommendations provided to date have been beneficial, they would like to feel that their efforts have resulted in improvements in Public Works services.
- It was requested that any updates made over the summer to the Solid Waste ordinance be shared with the CAC at the September meeting.
- Reed Fowler stated that the issue of early setout of bulk waste is still a concern of both the CAC and the Department and that it would remain an issue for staff investigation.

CAC Meeting Schedule for remainder of 2005

All meetings will take place from 5:30 pm – 7:00 p.m. at the Public Works Department Conference Room.

Tuesday, September 20th

Tuesday, October 18th

Tuesday, November 15th

Meeting adjourned

6:45 p.m.