



DEPARTMENT OF
ENGINEERING

CITY OF NORWALK
Department of Engineering
125 East Avenue
Norwalk, CT 06851
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**CITY OF NORWALK
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
JANUARY 2, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: James Frayer, Chairman; Barbara Smyth; Nora Niedzielski-Eichner; Darlene Young; Melissa Murray; DaJuan Wiggins; Heather Dunn

STAFF: Vanessa Valadares, Chief of Operations and Public Works; James Meehan, Principal Engineer; Chris Torre, Superintendent of Operations; Thomas Szabo, Waste Program Manager

OTHERS: Johan Lopez, Common Council Member; Diane Lauricella, Resident

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Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.



Members of the public who wish to provide public comments are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting's start time. Please email Monique Cipriano at monique.cipriano@norwalkct.gov to provide written public comment prior to the meeting.

Chairman Frayer called the meeting to order at 7:04p.m.

ROLL CALL

Chairman Frayer called the Roll: James Frayer Barbara Smyth Darlene Young Heather Dunn
Nora Niedzielski-Eichner Melissa Murray DaJuan Wiggins

At Roll Call there were seven (7) Committee members present constituting a quorum.

PUBLIC HEARING

PUBLIC HEARING TO INCREASE THE FEE FOR PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PUBLIC WORKS RATES AND FEES SET BY THE DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS FEE SCHEDULE AS PER ATTACHED.

Diane Lauricella of 21 Little Fox Lane. She appreciated Ms. Niedzielski-Eichner mentioning whether some of the items, besides those presented, needed to be increased and she agreed with her. She spoke about the ordinance 94-10 relating to solid waste disposal fees. She asked if the fees

and fines reflected the real permit review or pose as a deterrent. She noted dumping issues in the City. She asked if they are paying for the true cost of hauling away trash. She said what gives her pause is that there is currently underway a waste characterization study and this year they will be going out to bid for the solid waste and recycling and transfer station contracts. She is asking that they do not have a specific vote on this until they have begun a discussion about unit-based pricing. Unit-based pricing has been found to reduce the total trash hauling by up to 40% to 50%. She is asking that the Committee, Council and Mayor sit down and discuss unit-based pricing before going out to bid for the next contract. It is also known as pay as you throw.

There were no other participants for the public hearing. Chairman Frayer closed the public hearing at 7:10p.m.

PUBLIC INPUT

PUBLIC INPUT (GUESTS AT COMMITTEE MEETINGS MAY SPEAK TO ANY ITEM ON THE AGENDA. COMMENTS SHALL BE LIMITED TO NO MORE THAN THREE (3) MINUTES PER SPEAKER.)

Diane Lauricella of 21 Little Fox Lane. She said while they are anticipating the coming waste characterization study as well as the upcoming writing of the contract bids for solid waste, recycling and transfer station, she would like the committee to have guest speakers come to talk to them for a while about the benefits of unit-based pricing. She feels the recycling rate is consistently not what it should be but with robust public outreach it can be. November 15th was America Recycle Day and there was nothing coming out of the city regarding it. She is currently working on a food scrap recovery program and would like the committee to come up with some kind of blue-ribbon panel for the residents that care about this. She thinks the panel could optimize the current programs so to reduce the overall costs. She is a member/organizer of the Norwalk Zero Waste Coalition, and they are reviving themselves after the pandemic and they will have a listing of ways that Norwalk could update their recycling and reuse programs.

Chairman Frayer thanked Ms. Lauricella. There were no other participants for public input. Chairmen Frayer closed public input at 7:13p.m.

NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2023.

There was no report on this item.

****MS. NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER MOVED THE ITEM**

****MS. DUNN ABSTAINED**

****MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION**

2. APPROVE TO INCREASE THE FEE FOR PROPOSED ADJUSTMENTS TO THE PUBLIC WORKS RATES AND FEES SET BY THE DEPARTMENT OF OPERATIONS AND PUBLIC WORKS FEE SCHEDULE AS PER ATTACHED.

There was no report on this item.

****MS. NIEDZIELSKI-EICHNER MOVED THE ITEM
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

- **TREE OPERATIONS AND PROGRAMMING**

There was no report on this item.

- **MONTHLY SOLID WASTE REPORT – NOVEMBER 2023**

There was no report on this item.

- **FOOD SCRAP DROP-OFF REPORT – NOVEMBER 2023**

There was no report on this item.

- **METRICS 2023**

Ms. Valadares requested to skip the other discussion items and report on the metrics for 2023. She shared her screen with the Committee. She went through the capital budget items including the paving program, sidewalks and curbs, bridge repairs, encroachment/driveway permits, trees (planting and removal), drainage, solid waste/recycling, catch basin cleanings and road repairs, and gave all the numbers for each item. She also explained the process and answered all questions the committee had.

It was asked why the sudden increase in numbers regarding permits. The answer is because of COVID, many people began working on their homes during such time and utility companies have been working in the right of way. They talked about the expansion of scope for projects that require permits. Since the implementation of the Drainage Manual in 2017, they are required to look at all the plan reviews. Their goal is to minimize the water runoff that gets into their system. They also look at any impact to the right-of-way under those plan reviews. A discussion ensued about the department's goals, staffing, and how they implement them.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Young moved to adjourn.
Motion passed unanimously.
The meeting was adjourned at 7:56p.m.

NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2024**
PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
7:00 P.M. LOCATION TBD