

City Council Service Committee Minutes Thursday, May 13, 2010
City Council Service(s) Committee
Thursday, May 13, 2010
Sanitation Garage – Lunch Room
1261 Lawrence Street, Lancaster, Ohio 43130

Call to order at 7:38 a.m.

Present: Bruce McAtee - Chair of Committee, Wendy Shannon-Garbrandt - Committee Member, Tom Stoughton - Committee Member, Jennie Nixon -Utilities Collection, Mike Pettit – Gas, Paul Martin – Sanitation, Andrew Yost -Income Tax, Brad Fagrell –Engineering & Certified Building, Dave Smith –Mayor, Mike Courtney -Service/Safety Director, Ken Culver - President of City Council and Joe Giessler –Eagle Gazette.

Engineering & Certified Building Departments – Brad Fagrell

1. The report titled Notable Events for 2010 breaks down the stimulus projects, engineering projects and the building permits issued for the first four months. The number of Building Permits issued is 340 since January which is the same number as in 2009. Building Permits were much higher in 2008 and 2007. Most of the permits are small residential remodeling and upgrades.

Gas Department -Mike Pettit

1. **Legislation will be coming very soon on the North Columbus Street and Wacker Drive Area.** It is possible to be ready by the May 24th City Council Meeting to go out for bids. Gas Department would like to get this work done this year as Engineering wants to do some paving in that area next year.
2. There are three main pipe line replacements and four service related projects that were listed in the May Gas Department report. Also listed is the work on the Coated Riser Services as needed for compliance. There will be a new position in Safety and Regulatory Compliance for the Gas Department that was discussed under the Utilities Collection Office portion.
3. Discussion around the work on Memorial Drive- in which the Gas Department is making the effort to increase the flow of gas in this area to avoid disruption via the expansion of pipeline.

Income Tax –Andrew Yost

1. The Lancaster Income Tax Monthly Collection Report ending April 30, 2010 was provided to the committee. We are ahead of last year in collections.
2. Income Tax Department; we have been so busy answering phone calls, tending to walk in taxpayers requesting us to prepare their returns, auditing and posting individual and business returns and processing monthly/ quarterly withholding, that we have had no other time to do anything else. Unfortunately, 75% of taxpayers wait to file at this time which bogs us down considerably. (4-27-10)
3. Department will be concentrating on returns with payments first, refunds second, the remainder will be finished in mid July. (4-27-10) still has 125 refund checks to issue, then will be processing other returns.

Utility Collection –Jennie Nixon

1. Submitted Utilities Collections Office May report. Everything is the same as last year at this time.
2. Operator Qualification Training is new. Gas Department is training three UCO Field Service Representatives.
3. Mr. Stoughton asked if the new Gas Position Safety and Regulatory Compliance position that will come on line in July was driven by Federal Regulations. This is being driven by Federal Regulations and is being audited in Ohio by the P.U.C.O. according to Mike Pettit.

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4. The gas price as a whole is flat and the city reduced utility rates by 20% in May for residents. The economy as well as a new source of getting gas from shale formations is keeping the price of gas down.

Sanitation Department –Paul Martin

1. Discussed Paul Martin's April 21, 2010 Solid Waste Management for Ohio training session that he attended in Columbus. He shared some of the trends and issues that can affect our city.
 - A. Waste reduced again for 5 years local and as a National Trend. Lancaster processed 33,000 tons of trash 150 to 180 tons less than in 2009. Waste is down because of less buying there fore less trash and recycling/reusing is increasing.
 - B. Ohio has a current standard of 25% waste that must be reused or recycled. Paul estimates that Ohio will move to a 35% recycling /reusing requirement in the next few years.
 - C. The country is moving to more emphasis on being green . In some states, organic (food) material from restaurants is being placed in a separate dumpster from inorganic waste i.e. paper. This trend would be helpful for City of Lancaster per Mike Pettit as it relates to the reuse of glass for one of the companies that he works with.
 - D. When we go to 35% reuse or recycle standard, industrial waste will play a big part of meeting this new standard. The Solid Waste District is the only source for paying for the recycling programs in the county. The City has no source of funding to do curbside recycling.
 - E. The city does not currently have a mechanism to give incentives to those who recycle and reduce their waste for sanitation to pick up. The city needs to look in the future for charging a fee based on the amount of waste that is picked up. This will increase recycling as people will have the incentive to recycle. **The community is not ready for this.** There are individuals that are really into recycling and the trailers in the community receive more recyclables than was ever done when the City tried curbside recycling.
2. Improvements/replacements made at our closed Stonewall Cemetery Landfill.
 - A. Four water wells on this site that are pumped through various filtering medium and discharged into the stream. Replaced all the pumps to pump faster. \$40,000 improvements.
 - B. EPA is very involved with this. The city will be a forever responsible to maintain the cap and the water so that no hazardous materials would enter area water sources.
 - C. All our waste is going to Pine Grove near Amanda and is under contract with Republic for around \$850,000 cost out of a \$4,000,000 Sanitation budget.
3. Looked at new technology for waste pick up with an attachment to front loader garbage trucks. <http://www.curottocan.com/municipal.html> was a site given to check out this new technology.
 - A. Residential Front Loader is a one man truck and is economical to run with a front attachment equipped to pick up –residential trash. Right now the city uses a crew of two and this would no longer be necessary.
 - B. Sanitation has worked hard to be competitive with private haulers without using front end loaders.
 - C. Taking over ownership of commercial dumpsters has allowed the city to use Front End Loaders which has made the city completeive in this Commercial Market.
 - D. *The committee observed a demonstration of an automated loader attachment to the front of Sanitation Waste truck at the end of the committee meeting.*

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OLD BUSINESS: Utility Rates Questions directed to City Council? Chair deferred any discussion at this time as it is not an active issue since winter is over.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion on Street Leaf Pick up options to retain service - Wendy Shannon-Garbrandt understands that there has been no money budgeted for leaf pick up in 2010. She felt that we should look at options that could retain this service by adding a fee for this service through our utility invoices.
 - A. Some have expressed that they would be willing to have this option for the convenience to pick up the leaves. –Wendy Shannon-Garbrandt and Bruce McAtee both had constituents voice this option.
 - B. However, it was pointed out by Ken Culver that – not everyone would agree to this. Many think are rates are too high now. Everyone does not want to pay for this service.
 - C. Tom Stoughton expressed that we should look at all the alternatives and that we are narrow minded in just ceasing this service without exploring all options

Being no more discussion there was a motion to adjourn by Wendy Shannon-Garbrandt and seconded by Tom Stoughton at 8:28 am

Submitted by

Bruce McAtee

Chair of the City Council Service(s) Committee

THE Next Meeting: will be hosted by Mike Pettit and the Gas Department

Thursday, August 12th 7:30 a.m.

At Lancaster Municipal Gas

1424 Campground Road

Lancaster, Ohio 43130