

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMITTEE**

*Minutes of Public Hearing*

*May 20, 2004*

Village of Downers Grove  
801 Burlington Avenue  
Committee Room

**ROLL CALL:**

PRESENT: Commissioner Martin Tully, Public Services Committee Chairman  
Commissioner Marilyn Schnell

STAFF: David H. Barber, P.E., Director of Public Works  
Stan Balicki, Assistant Director of Public Works - Operations  
Mike Millette, P.E., Assistant Director of Public Works - Engineering  
Sam Webb, Fleet Manager  
Rick Ebel, Pavement Manager  
Kerstin von der Heide, Forestry & Grounds Manager  
Megan Dugard, Recording Secretary

Visitors: None

**Commissioner Schnell** called the Public Services Committee meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. There were no minutes to approve.

Discussion of Pavement Milling Machine - **Mr. Barber** reminded members the status of the paver grinder/milling machine was in their packets. **Mr. Balicki** continued the discussion and summarized the use of the milling machine, dating back to 1997 and discussed the manual pavement removal process prior to the purchased machine. Budgeted funds for the rental of the milling machine increased yearly and it became more difficult to rent the machines from DuPage County. Therefore, Public Works Staff proposed purchasing their own machine at \$185,000, with an expected life span of approximately 21 years. Since 2001, staff has not paid for any disposal fees for the grindings. In fact, Oak Brook has been using some of the Village's grindings for their roadway projects. The grindings have also been used as a base to build the Village's Main and Maple parking lot and the grindings have been used in the Village's downtown infrastructure project for sidewalks.

**Mr. Balicki** reviewed the square yardage for pavement patching for years 2001, 2002, and 2003, noting that in mid-June 2001, when the Village authorized the purchase of the machine, the Public Works Department did not have a complete 13-week duration to use the machine. During 2003, however, because the department was down by two employees, the machine was not utilized fully for paving operations and the paver suffered some mechanical failure and did not operate for two months. Looking back, **Mr. Balicki** stated the purchase recommendation for the milling machine should have been based on sufficient staffing and the availability of other paving equipment to reach certain benchmarks in his department.

Marketing of the machine has not taken place due to the fact that it will require an operator from the Public Works staff to travel to another municipality and the fact that the Village does not own a trailer to transport the milling machine. Other costs were also associated with renting the equipment out to other communities.

Conversation followed on the different types of roadway patching, i.e., an entire roadway section versus a small patch. **Commissioner Schnell** pointed out that while the smaller machine, as purchased by the

Village, may not necessarily be used for larger projects, it would probably last longer over a period of time; staff concurred. **Mr. Balicki** stated the machine has saved time in maintaining smaller roadways until those same roadways could be serviced by the Village's own resurfacing MFT program. Approximately 8,000 square yards of needed pavement patching exists currently in the Village.

Looking from an economic perspective, **Mr. Barber** could not confirm an exact figure as to the total savings on the machine. However, in disposal fees and rental alone, approximately \$13,000 per year was being saved and, simultaneously, was not being requested in the budget. Over the 20-year period, the machine would pay for itself. **Mr. Ebel** discussed the feasibility of owning the machine versus waiting on DuPage County's schedule. **Mr. Barber** mentioned the grindings have become a commodity material to use rather than purchasing new materials for roadways.

#### Chart/Reorganization of Department of Public Works

**Mr. Barber** presented a reorganization chart of the Public Works Department, specifically as it relates to management issues. Management teams will be created versus individual management, resulting in better solutions and communication. Three management teams will be created: a senior management team, two assistant directors, and one director. **Mr. Barber** envisions Messrs. Balicki and Millette leading the operational and technical aspects of the department with a smaller number of individuals reporting to the senior management team. Restructuring will continue as the department moves forward, i.e., permits will be moved into the development process.

**Mr. Barber** opened up the topic for questions/comments. **Commissioner Tully** inquired whether staff would provide a six-month or 12-month benchmark of benefits by the restructure. **Mr. Barber** indicated his focus was on the services being provided and the goal in creating the structure was that the individual groups created would review those services, streamline them, and then measure the effectiveness of the reorganization.

Discussion followed on the general morale at Public Works and the steps **Mr. Barber** was taking to show recognition and appreciation to the Public Works staff. **Mr. Barber** believes that smaller group meetings will probably steer the course of action. Currently, he is reallocating resources differently in Mike Millette's department, i.e., providing some technical assistance.

Responding to **Commissioner Tully's** question about achieving goals with the reorganization, **Mr. Barber** stated he did not have goals for his department yet. **Commissioner Tully** believed in the importance of measuring success and inferred that he would have liked to have seen the success of the prior organizational charts. **Messrs. Balicki and Mr. Barber** then followed up with some examples of streamlining operational aspects and changes in the Permitting/Drainage divisions. **Commissioner Tully** suggested reporting the positive results on a quarterly basis to the Village Council; **Commissioner Schnell** concurred.

Moving forward, **Mr. Barber** spoke about the recent May 7<sup>th</sup> retreat where he and managers discussed their goals and strategies for the Public Works Department in general. A list followed of those ideas discussed, including the department becoming proactive rather than being reactive; celebrating the department's successes, and developing a customer feedback tool, such as a postcard sent to the resident. **Commissioner Schnell** suggested using the postcard after the permitting process was completed. Another idea raised at the retreat was an accreditation process or self-assessment review to begin this year.

Per **Mr. Barber**, some issues facing the Public Works Department include uncoordinated training in the department, no active existing safety program, and no community awareness. Discussion followed on the creation of a short video educating the public on how a snowplow operator may work during the day and utilizing the Village's cable channel to the fullest. **Mr. Barber** agreed it would be beneficial to report

quarterly to this committee on the goals and accomplishments of the Public Works Department and to eventually draft a simple vision plan for the various divisions of the department. In the grand scheme of things, **Mr. Barber** envisioned prioritizing some of the main issues in the department, determine what needs to be implemented, and use the plan as a basis in order to budget for certain items.

**Mr. Barber** spoke of the required ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements that will be necessary now. He spoke of the need to update the department's policy and procedures since they were last updated back in the late 1980s. **Mr. Barber** agreed the steps he was taking would assist his department in the five-year planning and would also justify any need for additional staff. Regarding prioritizing capital projects on a five-year basis, **Commissioner Tully** raised his concern that each standing committee member was suppose to "look" at a department's needs and his impression was that no prioritizing process really existed. **Mr. Barber** conveyed that Mike Baker raised the same issue and stated that Public Works had not completed the prioritizing process and that information would be forthcoming from the Master Plan.

Conversation followed regarding the stormwater projects and their prioritization, but **Commissioner Tully's** main concern, from council's perspective, was what top projects would be completed. **Mr. Barber** believed it was important to look at each project from a life/safety standpoint, which was part of the capital planning.

**Commissioner Schnell** suggested creating a document which prioritized the projects, as recommended by staff, for the next five years. **Mr. Barber** agreed, stating the document needed to be balanced to revenues for the next five years, which was not done in the last plan. The Village Council could then determine which priorities are completed. **Commissioner Schnell** agreed, stating the document was invaluable as to when projects would be completed and at what cost. **Mr. Barber** indicated he would have the document ready by this Fall, but in the meantime, the construction schedule needed to be completed prior to the budget so the process could be completed early enough to get bids out. Better implementation management was also suggested.

Regarding major construction projects, **Commissioner Tully** suggested that a five minute status report be given on the projects, wherein **Mr. Barber** explained he provides a blue sheet either monthly or every other week which provides a project's status. He suggested attending the council meeting to provide the same update; commissioners concurred.

More discussion was raised regarding an old policy on the inter-relationship between the Parking Fund and the Transportation system and reviewing the issue further, budget constraints, reviewing the snow procedure routes, and consolidation of the sidewalk programs. **Mr. Barber** purposely scheduled the sidewalk discussion after the budget process since he expected significant discussion on the topic. He preferred this committee to review the sidewalk programs first to receive input. Further dialog followed on how the sidewalk matrix was broken out separately by county, city, and state to seek separate funding. Other topics of discussion included sidewalk policy issues; reconsidering some sidewalk ideas as they relate to new development and redevelopment; and whether the 10-year program still existed and the fact that it was falling behind schedule.

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The committee then discussed how often they should meet. After some conversation, members agreed to meet monthly and discuss one Public Works division a month. **Mr. Barber** suggested scheduling a meeting to discuss which division should be reported each month before the council meeting. He would put together a schedule of the divisions to be discussed throughout the year. **Commissioner Schnell** suggested meeting the third Tuesday of the month; members concurred.

Next meeting is scheduled for June 15, 2004 5:45 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
(as transcribed by tape)

/s/ Celeste K. Weilandt  
Celeste K. Weilandt, Recording Secretary