

Administration & Public Works Committee

Monday, April 28, 2008

All Aldermen Present

Staff present: Judy Aiello, Legal Dep't, Finance Dept., Streets & Sanitation Dept., Water Dept.

Press Evanston Review, Round Table, NU Daily

Meeting began: 5:40 pm Meeting adjourned: 7 pm

Most agenda items approved by consent. There was much displeasure expressed by the Committee about the length of the agenda (20 items). Alderman Rainey and others felt that the staff was not submitting items for approval in a timely manner --causing the committee to rush through these items since they had a deadline of May 5, therefore not allowing for careful appraisal, or time to seek further bidding on certain projects. The staff took note and said there would be improvement in the future.

This matter was further exacerbated when the committee took up the renewal of the Otis Elevator Contract for servicing the various elevators in Evanston garages. It was revealed that the City had let the previous contract expire in December 2007 and the automatic renewal went in to effect in January for a 5 year period. The City was able to negotiate the contract for 3years, but the committee was angry that this had happened. They blamed the staff for being lax about this, and instead of voting to "approve" the contract which was already in effect, they ratified it, since reneging now would involve a lawsuit.

The committee asked the staff to re-bid on the contract for the renovation of the Crown Park tennis court feeling that the amount of \$267,900 was too high.

There were many questions about rising water rates in the City. The Water Dep't. had lots of explanations involving wet seasons and dry seasons effecting rates which were difficult to grasp. However it was agreed that they would come back with some figures which might be based on raising rates of those whose water use was way above normal. The Dep't will report back in August.

Judy Aiello reported on the future use of the Recycling Center as a much needed storage facility for the City. This would involve a master plan for the entire site which would fill the needs of many departments (Fire, Transportation, etc.) Alderman Rainey said a new traffic plan should be included since the traffic on Oakton at rush hour is already bad.

Streets and Sanitation Dep't. spoke of the anticipated total restructuring of the Sheridan Road Corridor to begin in 2009. In the meantime pot h ll be repaired with hot asphalt (much longer lasting than the cold stuff they use now).

Alderman Rainey expressed her displeasure with the City for taking so long to condemn the property at 309-311 Sherman. There have been 2 drug busts there, the building does not meet property standards, and the latest shooting was behind this address. This has been ongoing for 3 years.. The Law Dep't. responded that they had gone to court asking for condemnation and the Judge had postponed the request 3 times in 3 months. They will go back into court.

The one happy spot of the evening was the approval of Indira Freitas Johnson's installation "Conversation: Here and Now" for Raymond Park, made possible by an anonymous donation of \$256,000.