

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

May 23, 2023

6:30pm

PRESENT: Alderpersons Fulop, Garza, Savage

ALSO PRESENT: City Administrator Volkert, City Engineer John Griffin

Call to Order – Alderperson Fulop called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. in the Common Council Chambers of Hartford City Hall, 109 North Main Street.

Roll Call – All members of the Committee were present, except Alderperson Carroll

Public Comment Period – No public comment.

Discussion and Recommendation: City Alley maintenance and repair; scope, schedule, and financing options:

City Engineer John Griffin explained that problems with alleys in the city have come up and need to be addressed. There is one alley in particular that has become a potential safety issue with snowplowing and will need to be repaired. There is another alley, which was brought to Mr. Griffin's attention by Wayne Rusniak, that has such a drainage problem that residents have put up a "slow no wake" sign in the alley. The residents around that alley have organized a petition to remedy that situation. Mr. Griffin presented an estimated cost to repair those two specific alleys, as well as an estimated cost for maintenance and repair of all of the alleys in the city. Alderperson Fulop asked if all of the city alleys have had assessments, and Mr. Griffin answered that only a couple of them have been lightly assessed. Mr. Griffin then outlined the criteria he is going to look at to determine which alleys need repair, which included safety concerns, PASER rating, coordination with other work, and public interest and concern. Financing is normally done through the existing or future Capital Improvement budget, and this type of work would be bid publicly. In order to fit the alley repairs into this year's CIP budget, there would have to be an adjustment in the overall budget amount, or one of the asphalt overlay projects could be replaced with the emergency alley repair project, and then any additional alley repairs could be programmed into the CIP budget for later this summer and then get on the schedule for 2024-2028. Mr. Volkert added that the estimated amount for repairs for all of the city alleys is not included in the CIP borrowing normally, so the city would look at adding that amount, or a portion of that, to what the city normally borrows for road work and construction in 2024 and 2026. Mr. Griffin then recommended a plan for moving forward, which includes engineering evaluation and ranking of repair priorities, preparing plans, specifications and details for repairs and programming priority repairs in the 2024-2028 CIP budget, performing the emergency repair on the alley that is currently presenting a safety hazard, and bidding selected 2024 alley repairs in late fall of this year.

Alderperson Fulop asked about the lifespan of the city's alleys; he has not heard of this problem coming up in the five years he has been alderperson. Mr. Volkert explained that when road work is contemplated, the priority goes to those roads with infrastructure underneath them. With a very limited budget to do roads, alleys did not get very high on the priority list. Additionally, Mr. Griffin explained that unfortunately, the alleys have not been part of the programming as far as road work is concerned, but now that these issues have been brought to the city's attention, the city is trying to develop a tool to make sure that they are included in the CIP going forward. Alderperson Fulop then asked if there were any alternatives to increasing

borrowing in order to fund this additional project, such as using fund balance. Mr. Volkert answered by explaining that fund balance could be used to fund a lot of things, but the fund balance will eventually run out. He also mentioned that in 2023, the city has dipped into the fund balance for a number of things, including the Centennial Park project, but those were for things of a more emergent nature. Repairing more than just the one alley that poses a safety hazard does not quite rise to the level of an emergency, so he recommends looking at the 2024 budget and determining if there is room for additional fund balance to be pulled then. Mr. Volkert then mentioned that as fund balance decreases, there is risk of the city's bond rating going down. Alderperson Fulop also asked if there was infrastructure under all of the alleys. Mr. Griffin said that is a possibility, which also would need to be taken into consideration.

MOTION by Alderperson Garza, seconded by Alderperson Savage approving the recommended plan for city alley maintenance and repair.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion and consideration of authorization of expenditure of undesignated funds to complete the removal and replacement of contaminated soil at Centennial Park and to authorize appropriate staff to execute the Environmental Services Agreement between the City of Hartford and Stantec for investigation and remedial planning for Centennial Park Soil Management and a contract change order to Wondra Construction for removal and replacement of the contaminated soil:

Mr. Griffin explained that the total estimated project cost for removing and replacing the contaminated soil will be \$272,665. Stantec would be employed for environmental services and Wondra Construction would remove the additional soil and bring in clean material, so the project can be completed this summer. This additional cost is coming from fund balance.

MOTION by Alderperson Garza, seconded by Alderperson Savage authorizing the proposed plan for Centennial Park Soil Management.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Adjournment:

Motion by Alderperson Garza, seconded by Alderperson Savage for adjournment at 6:57 p.m. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Hetzel, City Clerk

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Compiled by Samantha Walters, Deputy Clerk