

**Special Board of Public Works Meeting  
Meeting Minutes  
April 8, 2020**

A special meeting of the Board of Public Works was held on Wednesday, April 8, 2020, at 2:00 p.m. via WebEx Conference Call.

Mayor Donchess, Chair, declared the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. and called the roll.

Members Present:

Mayor James Donchess, Chair  
Commissioner Tracy Pappas  
Commissioner Kevin S. Moriarty  
Commissioner Shannon Schoneman

Members not Present:

Commissioner G. Frank Teas

Mayor Donchess

I am attending remotely due to the social distancing which has been advocated by the Governor. I am at my home and I am alone.

Commissioner Pappas

I am attending remotely due to the social distancing which has been advocated by the Governor. Although my husband and three kids are in the house they are not in the room with me.

Commissioner Moriarty

I am attending remotely due to the social distancing which has been advocated by the Governor. I am alone and at home at the present time.

Commissioner Schoneman

I am attending remotely due to the social distancing which has been advocated by the Governor. I am alone and at home at the present time.

Mayor Donchess

All of the votes taken at this meeting need to be taken by roll call to satisfy the requirements.

Also Present:

Ms. Lisa Fauteux, Director, Division of Public Works  
Attorney Steven A. Bolton, Corporation Counsel  
Mr. Jeff Lafleur, Superintendent of Solid Waste  
Mr. John Stewart, Fleet Manager  
Mr. Dan Hudson, City Engineer

**MOTION:** Commission Pappas made a motion to approve the agenda as presented.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	4
Nay:	0

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

**Solid Waste Department**

**A. MOTION:** Commissioner Pappas to approve a contract with Milton Cat of Londonderry, NH, to perform a Caterpillar Certified Rebuild to the Solid Waste compactor #052 for a cost not-to-exceed \$500,000. Funding will be through: Department: 168 Solid Waste; Fund: Solid Waste; Activity; CERF.

**Discussion:**

Mr. John Stewart, Fleet Manager

Milton Cat has a program in place to refurbish their equipment that will eliminate the problem we are having with the emission issues on the current compactor. It has caused some reliability questions. We attempted to use the dozer as a fill-in when it's down for repairs but it doesn't have the weight or compaction. It's just not designed for trash compaction.

The program for refurbishing will take the compactor and totally strip it down to the bare frame and sandblast and paint each piece as it is being put back together. It will have a certified power train in which they will rebuild the engine, the transmission, and every system on the compactor which will bring it to a like-new status. In fact, so new that it will have a new vehicle identification number and they will warranty the material and workmanship for four years. This is half the cost of a new compactor that would have the same emissions as the one we have now.

Mayor Donchess

A new compactor would cost approximately \$1 million.

Mr. Stewart

That's correct.

Mayor Donchess

Are there any questions on this motion?

Commissioner Pappas

How long would a new machine last?

Mr. Stewart

It should last between ten to fifteen years.

Commissioner Pappas

Okay, so we are getting four years at about half the cost.

Mr. Stewart

Correct.

Mr. Lafleur

You are actually getting a warranty for four years, Commissioner Pappas. You get a brand new machine for the \$500,000 as a certified rebuild.

Commissioner Pappas

So will this last ten to fifteen years?

Mr. Lafleur

Absolutely. It's the warranty that is only for four years. When Cat builds a machine like this they actually build a second life into the machine and that's what we are going for.

Commissioner Pappas

When it was stated that it wasn't designed for the use, do you mean it was no longer capable of compacting or was this particular caterpillar not designed for being a compactor?

Mr. Stewart

I was referencing that the bulldozer was being used as a back-up compactor and it was not designed to be a compactor.

Commissioner Pappas

So it's been out of service since 2018, and you need it back into service because what you were using as a back-up isn't working.

Mr. Stewart

Correct.

Commissioner Pappas

Is there something wrong with the machine #80 that this back-up for or not?

Mr. Stewart

It's just that it's getting some time and hours on it and it has had some issues with emission and by having this other machine rebuilt there are no emissions on it.

Commissioner Pappas

Are we only going to have two compactors at the landfill?

Mr. Stewart

Yes.

Mayor Donchess

Are there any other questions or comments?

Commissioner Schoneman

How long is the rebuild going to take and I am sure it is going to be done on-site, is that correct?

Mr. Stewart

Milton Cat said it will take eight to ten weeks.

Director Fauteux

It will not be done on-site Commissioner Schoneman, it will be taken to their dealership to rebuild.

Commissioner Pappas

When we have these compactors worked on, does Caterpillar work on them and that's not something that our mechanics can do, is that correct?

Mr. Lafleur

Yes, that is correct, they are very specialized.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, 4  
Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman

Nay: 0

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

### Engineering Department

**A. MOTION:** Commissioner Pappas to approve Change Order #2 for the 2019 CIPP Lining Project with Kenyon Pipeline Inspection of Queensbury, NY, for an amount not-to-exceed \$1,500,000. Funding will be through Department: 169 Wastewater; Fund: Bond; Activity: Sewer Infrastructure Improvements.

### Discussion:

Mr. Dan Hudson, City Engineer

Kenyon has done a good job for us in the past. They have inspected a lot of sewer pipe and lined a lot of it for us. Our sewer system is about 315 miles of pipe. So far, working with Kenyon and others we have inspected 98 miles of that and we have lined 13 miles so this is a continuation of that effort. Lining pipes is much less expensive than it is to reconstruct pipes. It's important that we get out into the system and look at the pipes, assess them, and line what we can before they deteriorate and collapse and then we have a more expensive repair which is more destructive. We are asking to continue that work through this change order.

Mayor Donchess

Are there any questions or comments?

Commissioner Pappas

I think it is certainly worth the money to go ahead and line them because it is so much cheaper than totally replacing pipes and it does save our newly paved roads so we are not cutting into roads to replace the sewers. My only question is if there are any sewer pipes in such bad condition that they can't be lined?

Mr. Hudson

Yes, that is the case. Parallel to this, we have a contract with SUR West where we are actually digging up and replacing some of the lines and also going in and making point repairs if we just have a spot collapse. That's about a \$1.5 million project this year but we see a lot of value of doing this video inspection and lining work. One of the big benefits to this too is as we are looking at all of our sewer pipes, many of which had not been looked at in a long time; we are doing a cleaning of them. We will also be doing the digging which is a better value for the city in the long run.

Commissioner Pappas

So before we line them will they be able to tell if...we won't get into a situation where the lining might cause a sewer collapse? Are they able to tell that through the camera?

Mr. Hudson

Correct, so we look at the pipes and you can tell by looking at them why type of pipe material it is and see how much deterioration it has. If you have a pipe that has collapsed then you can't line it. These are pipes that are structurally in the correct shape, they are still round and we can provide basically a pipe within pipe when you are done. It's a good product and it seems to be working well.

Mayor Donchess

Are there further questions or comments?

Mayor Donchess

I have one, how many miles of sewer do you think we can line for the \$1.5 million?

Mr. Hudson

It's about another 10 miles or so of lining. I can't tell you the exact amount that we are going to line because we have to look at it first. We will do as much as we can and this will make a good dent in what we need to do. We have focused this program in the downtown area where the older sewers are. Some of the other areas where they have PVC sewer...those tend to be in much better shape.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	4
Nay:	0

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

**Director's Comments**

Director Fauteux

The sewer user warrants that all of the Commissioner's typically sign...I currently have three of them that need signatures. I spoke with Attorney Bolton who is on this call and he mentioned that perhaps the Board, during the COVID-19 pandemic, could authorize me to sign those on their behalf.

Commissioner Pappas

I have no problem with that.

Mayor Donchess

I think we should approve it by a motion.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pappas to allow the Director of Public Works to be authorized to sign the Sewer User Warrants on behalf of the Board of Public Works during the COVID-19 outbreak.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	4
Nay:	0

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

Director Fauteux

Today we received resolution R-20-025 that we need to act upon, we didn't receive it until this morning.

**R-20-025: RELATIVE TO THE APPROVAL OF FUNDING FOR THE REBUILD OF THE SOLID WASTE CAT COMPACTOR FROM THE CAPITAL EQUIPMENT RESERVE FUND DURING FY 2020 IN AN AMOUNT NOT-TO-EXCEED \$500,000.**

When we have our CERF funds approved they are for a specific purpose. The purpose had been to buy Solid Waste but we decided instead that this was a more important use of the funds. This is to authorize the change in the use of the funds from purchasing the solid waste vehicles to rebuilding the compactor. The Board of Aldermen is looking for a positive recommendation from our Board for that.

Mayor Donchess

The CERF (Capital Equipment Reserve Fund) list of purchases is approved by the Board of Aldermen so the expenditures are (inaudible). What is being proposed via this resolution is a substitution of the rebuild of the Caterpillar compactor and that has to be proposed to the Board of Aldermen which has been done. The Board of Aldermen is simply looking for the Board of Public Works' recommendation regarding whether to proceed with that change. Basically, it just backs up what we have already approved.

Commissioner Pappas

What are we not replacing in place of the Caterpillar?

Director Fauteux

We will be replacing two solid waste trash truck packers, but we are just referring it for a year.

Mr. Lafleur

That's correct.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Pappas to favorably recommend R-20-025 to the Board of Aldermen for the funding of \$500,000 to rebuild the Caterpillar.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	4
Nay:	0

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

Director Fauteux

The other item I wanted to mention was the issue of the challenges of public comment and I didn't know if you wanted to explain what the Board of Aldermen had decided regarding that during this crisis.

Mayor Donchess

Some of the Governor's emergency orders have addressed this issue but Attorney Bolton, would you please go ahead and further explain?

Attorney Bolton, Corporation Counsel

Generally speaking, there is no requirement that public bodies allow for public comment or like participation by members of the public. It's not uncommon that it is permitted, but many Board's including the Board of Aldermen (and I believe the Board of Education is considering a similar measure) are suspending public comment periods during this time because of the difficulty with the technicalities. It proves to be quite cumbersome and it doesn't violate any laws to suspend public comment during this emergency or forever for that matter.

Mayor Donchess

Well, we are not proposing forever, we are just suggesting it during the COVID-19 period.

Commissioner Pappas

I think we have always been pretty good about having our e-mail available. If someone has a question or a comment regarding something for public works if it could be shared with the Commissioners I think that would be a good thing to do. Even if we are not required, in my view it's not a bad thing to do.

Mayor Donchess

That would be fine and I will certainly share anything that comes to my attention. Comments should be directed to Director Fauteux so they can then be circulated to the entire Board.

Attorney Bolton

That would be fine but don't get in the habit of having the Mayor and the Commissioners be discussing matters by way of e-mail or the like, even if it starts off with a member of the public making a suggestion or a comment, if a majority of the Board (three members) would send comments each other back and forth about what is going on that could run afoul of the Right-to-Know law itself. We are not supposed to discuss these matters within your jurisdiction outside of a meeting.

Commissioner Pappas

Agreed, thank you.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Moriarty to suspend public comment during the COVID-19 crisis.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	3
Nay: Commissioner Pappas	1

**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously (Nay – Pappas)**

## Director Fauteux

I wanted to give the Commissioner's an update. Public Works employees in our operations have been deemed essential by the Governor. We have a responsibility to the residents and we will continue our services as long as we can do so in a safe manner. We have as many people as we can working right now safely. We are working very closely with the Unions and assigning people according to contract guidelines. We have vetted our plan both through Bobbi Bagley, Director of Public Health, and Justin Kates, Director of Emergency Management. We are limiting staff to groups of three and many of our employees are working independently. We are keeping the same groups together every day in the same vehicles to the extent possible. We do not have staff going into break rooms and they are not badging in but foremen are using a checklist in a social distancing manner. Our facilities are being cleaned regularly and we have developed some COVID-19 recommended guidelines for our essential staff which includes daily wellness checks and procedures to prevent exposure. We are also providing our staff with the necessary personal protective equipment to do their job safely. We are pleased to say that most of our staff are working. We have been very creative in finding ways that people can work independently and still get their jobs done.

The last thing I wanted to mention, because there has been some confusion about it that we will be beginning soft-yard waste pick-up on Monday, April 13<sup>th</sup>.

## **Commissioner's Comments**

### Commissioner Pappas

My guess is we probably have some lost revenue because we probably don't have as much commercial trash. Can we get a general ballpark figure on that and maybe some sort of forecast or comment to see what the amount of money the city will have to kick into the landfill and if it will be significant.

Can we get an update on the new phases of the landfill?

I was looking through my notes and I think it's been a while since we have evaluated our sewer rates and I know in the past the city ran into a real jam where that wasn't done for a few years and we ended up with not as much money as we should have for sewer rates. I hope we don't lose sight of that; it really needs to stay on our radar.

### Director Fauteux

As far as trash volumes, I don't believe we have seen a decrease, although I guess time will tell. If anything, I think they might come up a little bit because folks are home and cleaning up.

We are still moving forward with the new phases at the landfill. We are very close to being able to place trash in the phase III landfill and Sanborn Head is still moving ahead, even though they are working remotely, with the permitting of phase IV.

Mr. Lafleur

That should happen in a month or so.

Director Fauteux

We did receive approval for phase III and then there was just one more step that we needed to do to start placing trash in there but it's moving along fine.

As far as the sewer rates go, there has been a discussion with our Financial Manager, Carolyn O'Connor, and she said she and the CFO, John Griffin, are continuing to work on that and the plan is to have an increase for July 1<sup>st</sup>. I will keep the Board updated on that as I hear more information from Financial Services.

Commissioner Pappas

I know that we are probably getting more residential trash but we don't get revenue for it but I understand that we get revenue for some commercial trash.

Director Fauteux

We do get a little bit of revenue from commercial trash, Commissioner Pappas, because most of it is for the residential complexes like apartments, and condominiums so they get the residential credit but we don't get revenue. We do get some commercial trash and we can certainly have those numbers for you at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Mayor Donchess

That would be helpful because we may through various...the Relief Act, the Care Act, and other things...the measures passed by Congress. Maybe we will be able to seek reimbursement for lost revenue and things like that and we do have lost revenues.

Commissioner Moriarty

I continue to be concerned about having two drivers in the cab during this crisis. I don't know if that can be prevented at all...with the trash pick-up.

Director Fauteux

The automated drivers are by themselves, the semi-automated can work by themselves but, unfortunately, the driver's that are in packers need at least one person on the back tipping the toter's. We are providing them with masks, gloves, wipes, and sanitizer. We will also do a wellness check for every day they are feeling okay and there are not any issues. The other thing is we are keeping the same groups together so if we have three people out on a packer it's the same three people every day in the same truck. That is one way we are trying to limit exposure.

Commissioner Moriarty

Will there be an update on the architectural plans for the new building?

Director Fauteux

Yes. I will work with Diane to set-up a meeting for the committee to work on that. It hasn't gone as quickly because of everything that has been going on. We have recently received some information and we will try to set something up so we can do that and the architect can give a presentation on what she is thinking.

Commissioner Pappas made a motion to adjourn.

*A Viva Voce Roll Call was taken, which resulted as follows:*

Yea: Mayor Donchess, Commissioner Pappas, Commissioner Moriarty, & Commissioner Schoneman	4
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Nay:	0
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**MOTION CARRIED: Unanimously**

Meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

