ADMINISTRATION & PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE
MINUTES
Monday, October 26, 2009
Lorraine H. Morton Civic Center, 2100 Ridge Avenue, Council Chambers


Members Absent: Ald. Jean-Baptiste

Staff Present: Chief Berkowsky, David Cook, Dolores Cortez, Joellen Daley, Chief Eddington, Suzette Eggleston, Doug Gaynor, Jewell Jackson, Lonnie Jeschke, Pat Keegan, Marty Lyons, Joseph McRae, Jeffrey Murphy, Sat Nagar, Elke Purze, Morris Robinson, Paul Schneider, David Stoneback, Evonda Thomas

Others Present: Ald. Jane Grover
Junad Rizki, Resident

Presiding: Ald. Rainey

I.  DECLARATION OF QUORUM
With a quorum present, Chairman Rainey called the meeting to order at 5:48pm.

II.  APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING of October 12, 2009
Minutes were unanimously approved, 4-0

III.  ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

(A1)* City of Evanston Payroll through 10/11/09 $2,318,218.94
A1 was unanimously approved 4-0

(A2)* City of Evanston Bills through 10/27/09 $3,180,954.99
A2 was unanimously approved 4-0

(A3.1)*Approval of Natural Gas Purchase for 2009 through 2010
Recommend approval to authorize the City Manager to sign a contract between the City of Evanston and one of the two following bulk natural gas providers: Centerpoint Energy Services or US Energy Services, based on proposed actionable pricing to be provided on October 26, 2009, for natural gas supply for twelve months beginning December 1, 2009, in an amount not to exceed $370,000. Funding provided by the applicable approved operating budget for each of the 14 affected facilities.

Marty Lyons (Assistant City Manager) pointed out that the pricing for this was on the memorandum dated 10.26.09 that was passed out just before the meeting. It is a one year pricing obtained during the “saddle months” of the year, Spring and Fall, as compared to a price being based on usage during the high seasons of Summer and Winter. They are relatively lower. Having checked with other buyers, Northwestern University did the same thing though they will be paying a bit higher due to the timing of their negotiations.

Ald. Rainey asked how the current price compares to this new negotiated price. M. Lyons said that currently it is $8.00 per dekatherm and the new rate is $6.20 per. Ald. Rainey asked if the cap is still at a not-to-exceed 370K. M. Lyons said it is an estimate not a not-to-exceed amount. Ald. Rainey reiterated that the phrase not-to-exceed is in the
description of the AIS. M. Lyons said that the City is asking for the unit price. Ald. Rainey asked that given the saving in dekatherms, what the projected overall savings would be. Dave Cook (Superintendent of Facilities) expressed that the cost at $6.20 is 376K. The savings would be the difference from the previous charge of $8.00. Ald. Rainey asked if he had projected the amount through December of this year and D. Cook said he had not figured it that way.

A3.1 was unanimously approved 4-0

At this point, Chairman Rainey introduced Junad Rizki, a resident of Evanston, who asked for a moment to make a few observations to the committee. The first point he made, holding up a piece of the sidewalk from in front of the library, saying these pavers, used all over the city are all deteriorating. They are similar to patio pavers that have a lifetime of only ten years at most. All of them will need to be replaced. The small grates around the trees in town are why the trees are dying; they cannot get enough water. Sidewalks have proven to be too narrow as is evidenced by the new sidewalk going in on Maple Avenue. He also pointed out that the pre-cast exteriors at the library are starting to show spider cracks. He urged the committee to have all of this looked to as the repairs will only get more extensive and expensive.

Ald. Rainey added that at every A & P W meeting they are asked to replace something that is often not very old. The explanation is “we were trying to save money.” Ald. Burrus agreed with Ald. Rainey. However, she said, it goes to our process of accepting the lowest bid. We need more due diligence on materials and contractors. Ald. Rainey declared that bids are submitted based on specs the City puts out. Therefore, she stated, we get what we ask for. It is value engineering. She mentioned that the replacement of kitchen cabinets in the new fire station is an example of buying the lowest priced item. She thanked Mr. Riziki for his remarks.

(A3.2)*Approval of Contract for Viaduct Screening

Recommend approval of award of contract for the viaduct-screening project to Smithereen Pest Management Services (7400 N. Melvina Ave. Niles, IL) in the amount of $30,660.00. Funding provided by the Capital Improvement Fund. $30,000 was budgeted for this project.

Ald. Holmes, remembering when this original contract was put into force asked if it came with any warranty or statement about how long the screening would last. She knows of one area that has been breached. Suzette Eggleston (Interim Public Works Director) said the warranty was for one year after the work was done. Technology has improved this past year. She explained that there is a new netting system now. The City is upgrading all the areas. There are also edges along the sidewalks that need work. Ald. Fiske asked if the netting put in the early 90’s is being redone. S. Eggleston said the contract calls for all netting to be replaced. Ald. Fiske asked if chemicals will be used and S. Eggleston replied that they are not, only nets and spikes would be used. Ald. Rainey mentioned that the Mulford cul-de-sac viaduct is crumbling and asked if it had been looked at. S. Eggleston some of those areas are included in CIP request for coming years. Ald. Rainey said that her point is that with so much money recently spent to upgrade the area, the pigeons are making a horrible mess of it. S. Eggleston said that first they needed to upgrade the viaduct. Ald. Rainey questioned the work schedule in this project. She noted that with only one Metro crossover, Howard #19 was listed as two work sites. S. Eggleston agreed it was probably a mistake. Ald. Rainey said right, so now you can do the work at Mulford. A. Eggleston said that is not quite right, Mulford will be a 5K project.

A3.2 was unanimously approved 4-0
(A3.3)* General Wage Increase for all Full and Permanent Part-time Non-Union Employees
Recommend approval of a general wage increase for all non-union full and part-time permanent employees in the amount of 2%, retroactive to 03-30-09. For purposes of parity, it is recommended that a general increase be granted to the non-union full and permanent part-time employees at a rate equivalent to the AFSCME bargaining unit. Funds for the general wage increase were included in the FY09-10 budget.

City Manager Wally Bobkiewicz came to the podium and stated that it was his decision to move forward on this item. Normally such a decision would have been made at the end of the bargaining unit’s sessions but this process is not yet completed and rather than wait any longer, he wants to move forward. It was a difficult decision considering the financial situation of the City but parity is necessary. The dedicated staff of the City needs this consideration. Ald. Burrus thanked him for suggesting this action. She noted that the staff is excellent and very helpful. She feels that the City can do without a lot but not without staff. Ald. Fiske also thanked him for his initiative mentioning that this is incredibly important in the interest of fairness. Ald. Rainey asked if there were any advantages for a staff member to be in the union or not in the union. W. Bobkiewicz responded that there are employees throughout the organization. It also includes middle and upper management.

A3.3 was unanimously approved 4-0

(A4)* Change Order for Duncan Solutions (Citation Management) Expenditure
Recommend approval of revised costs associated with Duncan Solutions (Citation Management) for parking citation cost and collections.

Ald. Holmes asked how miss-calculations happen. The memo she stated was hard to understand. M. Lyons stated that by changing auditors, there is a change in accounting procedures resulting in the costs being better identified. A mistake was that postage charges should not have been removed from the budget. Ald. Rainey thought that Duncan Solutions should have seen this. Of the three bids, did another, albeit higher bid, point this out? In addition, she asked what is left to collect of the $2,500,000 from 2000. M. Lyons said that there is still a lot to collect but mentioned that many are old tickets that may have to be written off. He admitted to not having figures readily available but that he would get them together and to the committee. Ald. Rainey did not understand the collection team going after residents with late fees on paid tickets when there are others with twenty plus tickets sitting out there. Ald. Burrus pointed out that residents who paid their tickets often did not know that a late fee had been attached. She declared that the City needs to look further into this problem of in-house payments that Duncan Solutions is not made aware of. Ald. Rainey said she still wants to know how much of the $2,500,000 is still left to be collected. M. Lyons said that he would follow-up on her request.

A4 was a divided vote. Two for and two against. Ald. Rainey said that this item would be taken off of the Council consent agenda for further discussion.

(A5)* Resolution 75-R-09 Authorizing the City Manager to Sign an Extension of the City’s Electricity Supply Agreement with Mid-American Energy Company
Consideration of proposed resolution 75-R-09 authorizing the City Manager to sign an extension of the City’s electricity supply agreement with Mid-American Energy Company based on the existing contract terms and conditions and actionable pricing to be provided on October 26, 2009, for electrical power supply for a maximum of 24 months beginning December 1, 2010, in an amount not to exceed $2,712,000 per year. Funding provided by the applicable approved operating budget for each of the 23 affected facilities.
M. Lyons apologized but stated that he would like to remove this item from the agenda. It had come to his attention just this day that there is possibly a better price to be had for the City’s electric power supply. If this is true, the City may go out for proposals. Ald. Rainey asked if the current contract was for one more year. M. Lyons said that was correct. However, if a better price could be found, the current contractor might reduce the cost of the last year of the contract and give a better price for the City continuing with them on an extension. The item will be held until further notice.

IV. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

V. COMMUNICATIONS

VI. ADJOURNMENT, 6:20 pm

Respectfully submitted:
Phillip Baugher
Administrative Assistant, Finance Department