



**CITY OF BURLINGTON, VERMONT**  
**CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION, ENERGY & UTILITIES COMMITTEE**

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**Councilor Maxwell Tracy, Chair**, WARD 2  
**Councilor, Tom Ayres**, WARD 7  
**Councilor William “Chip” Mason**, WARD 5

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**Transportation, Energy and Utilities Committee**

**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES:**

**Wednesday, November 12<sup>th</sup> - 2014 at 4:45 PM**

**Burlington Public Works Department – Front Conference Room  
645 Pine Street – Burlington, VT**

Members present: Chair, Maxwell Tracy (TEUC)  
Tom Ayres (TEUC)  
Chip Mason (TEUC)

Others present: Chapin Spencer, DPW  
Guillermo Gomez, DPW  
Nicole Losch, DPW  
Charlene Wallace, Local Motion  
Karen Walton, CCTA  
Andy Montrell, CCRPC  
Resident of Rose Street

Chair Tracy called the meeting to order at 4:50 pm.

**1. Agenda**

Chair Tracy moved to approve the agenda.

All in favor

**2. Public Forum**

**3. Minutes of 11/12/14**

Motion to approve the minutes from the 11/12/14 TEUC Meeting.

All in favor

#### 4. Snow and Ice Fighting – Rob Green, DPW

Green: The Snow Fighting Plan for the City has been developed with guidance from a list that the American Public Works Association (APWA), which includes all the elements that a good snow and ice removal plan should have.

*(Mr. Green went over the main aspects of the plan. For more detail, refer to the Snow Fighting Plan document, included as supporting material for this meeting)*

Green: We have approximately 95 miles of roadways and 127 miles of sidewalks. We have a plan for snow and ice removal. This plan is flexible. It is a work in process, based on the things we see we can improve and based on feedback from the public.

We generally track storms using a weather subscription service that provides us detailed information and even access to communication with a weather specialist. Whenever we have an snow event coming, we use multiple channels of communication to inform the public (Facebook, Twitter, Front Porch Forum, etc.). Additionally, in the City website there is a service called "gov delivery", where residents can opt to subscribe to get information via text messages.

For snow removal, we have 18 full time employees and 2 seasonal employees. For major snowfall these employees work long shifts and we can also request help from additional staff. Additionally, a fleet manager needs to be available for repairs. We typically use salt for the roads, but this year we are experimenting with a liquid (magnesium chloride).

Our crews have a lot of experience in snow removal. Routes are assigned to cover the entire City. We have 10 truck routes for road snow removal and 9 tractor routes for sidewalk snow removal. A considerable effort goes towards snow removal on sidewalks. It takes a lot of effort and money to keep the sidewalks clear of snow. We go a lot further than most municipalities in the snow removal effort. Recently, we started plowing bike lanes also, given the importance of bicycle transportation in the City.

Damages do happen occasionally, typically from mail boxes or other things. Plantings in the Right-of-Way are a problem.

Cars are also a challenge for snow removal. We sometimes have to declare parking bans. These have to be declared by 3 PM. Despite our efforts to inform people about parking bans, there are always some cars left on the roads and we have to tow these cars left behind to clear snow from the roads.

*Rose Street Resident:* It is really interesting to see how the whole snow removal plan works. One comment that I have is that in the Old North End, sometimes we feel we are the last ones

to get the snow removed. One thing that would really help us out is if the information about the snow removal routes was made available to the public.

*Green:* As I have become more experienced in my current position, we have made changes where we have noticed that there is room for improvement. As I mentioned before, the plan is flexible, so I appreciate your feedback. If we hear from people that something is not working, we can see if we can make changes to improve. Specifically in the Old North End, we have noticed that one of the snow removal routes is very long, which led to some streets waiting more time to get the snow removed. We have recently made adjustment to this route, breaking it into two different routes, so you should be noticing some improvement.

*Mason:* In terms of the budget, how are we doing this year?

*Green:* We are on target right now. This winter hasn't been as extreme as the last one. As I mentioned, we are experimenting with the salt/liquid mix.

*Ayres:* How is this applied?

*Green:* Trucks have tanks that are controlled by computer.

## **5. Discussion of Projects for the Unified Planning Work Program – Nicole Losch, DPW**

*Losch:* Every year we list projects where we ask assistance from the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), under the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). We have been working together with other City Departments on this list and today we have an opportunity to discuss the projects on this list. The projects are:

- Circulation and Corridor Study for the entire length of Winooski Avenue
- Intersection Scoping Study for the Colchester/Riverside/Barrett intersection.
- Identify improvements for the Development Review Process.
- An update on Urban Forestry Management.
- Evaluation of Downtown traffic and circulation.
- Scoping for a bike/pedestrian bridge between Burlington and Winooski.
- Define next steps in the parking management district.
- Transportation Demand Management for the City (so far we have worked on this for City Employees)
- Assessment of new parking developments.

We will be working to prioritize this list, in case there is limited funding.

*Montrell:* It will really help the CCRPC if the City's priorities are known early on in the process.

*Mason:* For is it is really hard to know the priorities without access to the project list in advance

Losch: The list is a work in progress.

Montrell: I suggest the City includes as many projects as feasible in the list. It is always easier to remove a project from the list than to add one later on.

Ayres: What is involved in the decision making process?

Montrell: We need to make sure the proposed projects qualify for funding. Then the number of projects depends on the total funds available. The last thing we look at is whether these are projects that the CCRPC has the ability to work on.

Tracy: The Winooski Avenue project is one that stands out to me as a priority.

## **6. North Avenue Corridor Study Task Force – Nicole Losch, DPW**

*Losch:* One of the projects where we have been working with the CCRPC is the North Avenue Corridor Study. The UPWP has a mid-year adjustment. Through this adjustment, we have been able to start convening a task force to move the pilot project for North Avenue forward. We have been contacting stakeholders to start selecting representatives for the taskforce. We should hear from the majority of them by the end of January. The members of the taskforce need to be appointed by the Mayor. We should have this all by March. The first meetings from the task force will focus on studying other pilot projects (case studies).

We will also be working with the CCRPC and the Task Force on developing the best way to keep the TEUC and the City Council up to date.

*Ayres:* I think it is incumbent on Councilors to stay updated. Have you heard from the NPAs?

*Losch:* Only from Ward 3.

*Ayres:* I am concerned about all the misinformation circulating around and I think the sooner we have the Task Force selected, the sooner we can tackle all the rumors and start the public process to keep this project moving.

*Losch:* We are hopeful that the taskforce will be as diverse as possible.

## **7. Development of Asset Management Plan – Chapin Spencer, DPW**

*See "Draft Overview and Scope of Work/Deliverables" in Item 7 in the supporting documents.*

*Spencer:* Public Works is all about Asset Management. There is always the issue of funds availability for capital investments. The goal of developing an asset management plan is to know as much information as possible about the city owned assets and shift from reactive

mode of operation to a more proactive approach of maintaining our assets. This will allow us to save money in the long run by reducing the number of times we have to react to emergency and more costly repairs. This asset management plan will be a multi-year effort. We have ongoing efforts getting inventories of all the city-owned assets. Our goal is to have a software solution that will help us track all of our assets. With this information and software we will be able to make more informed decisions of where our funds should be invested to get the best return. If you have any comments to this scope of work, we can make changes in the next two weeks.

#### **8. Update on Employee-Management Relations – Chapin Spencer, DPW; Karen Walton, CCTA**

*Spencer:* We want to know what if you have any specific questions or areas of concerns for CCTA.

*Tracy:* We would like to get an introduction from the new CCTA General Manager, Karen Walton. We would like to know about her background and goals, and learn about her philosophy.

*Walton:* I started out as a Social Worker. Management, and especially in transit, it's all about people. In my view, we are all in one team; it's not drivers on one side, administration on the other side. Prior to Burlington I spent some time in multiple transit agencies. In Sioux Falls, I have dealt serious issues between the union and management. From what I have seen in my short time here, union stewards are very sharp, they understand the big picture. We have been meeting every other week.

*Ayres:* I have received positive feedback from drivers about what is happening in CCTA.

*Walton:* We have now divided our operations into urban and rural operations.

*Tracy:* I am really happy to hear that this collaboration is happening. This will pay huge dividends in the future.

#### **9. Speed Radar Feedback Signs on Major Thoroughfares – Nicole Losch, DPW**

*Losch:* We have received multiple requests for installing these speed radar feedback signs. Most recently, this request came during the North Avenue Corridor Study. The biggest challenge we have is that we don't have a dedicated funding source. We currently rely on grants. The challenge we face with funding is that these signs are expensive for us without having a dedicated funding source, but their price is pretty low for the grant thresholds. Also, grant applications score better when all the improvements are focused in one particular location vs. improvements at multiple locations. In the past few months we started meeting on a regular basis with the traffic department with the goal of having more collaboration. I believe we are on the right track to get funding to get some of these signs installed. We are exploring all the different options.

*Ayres:* There has been mention about some of these signs being portable in the past. Is that an option?

*Losch:* Unfortunately, the portable signs we were using in the past came through the police. The portable signs are currently not offered by the police. Besides this, the locations we have currently identified would really benefit from having a permanent installation.

#### **10. Sidewalk Inventory Update – Guillermo Gomez, DPW**

*Gomez:* Sally Swanson Architects (SSA) is the name of the firm that was retained to do the sidewalk inventory for the entire city. There are two components to this project. The first one is the sidewalk inventory and prioritization. The second one is the Transition Plan, which will identify all the existing barriers for compliance with ADA requirements and will develop a long term approach to eliminate these barriers. Staff members from SSA were able to complete the data collection before the first snowfall. They are currently working on applying the different criteria to categorize the different sidewalk segments. Sidewalk segments will be categorized depending on their current condition, proximity to pedestrian generators, commercial development, educational institutions, senior population, etc. In the next few weeks, Sally Swanson will complete a first draft of the inventory and prioritization. Their categorization methodology will be a mix of what we have provided and what they have used in inventories at other locations. We will be able to make adjustments to this first draft. This information will put us in a better position to make informed decisions about where our investment should go. After this inventory is completed, SSA will be working on the Transition Plan, and will train City Staff in the use of the inventory and in the necessary protocol to keep the inventory up to date.

*Tracy:* Is this something that can be revisited in the upcoming TEUC meeting?

*Spencer:* Yes. Additionally, there will be some funds that can be allocated to boost the investment in sidewalk repairs, as was done last year.

*Tracy:* That is very good. The additional investment last year was noticeable.

#### **11. Bicycle Master Plan Resolution – Max Tracy, TEUC**

*Tracy:* I am looking to get some feedback to the draft resolution presented to the Committee for Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Planning.

*Ayres:* What is the timing for the feedback on this resolution?

*Tracy:* I would like to get it in front of the Council for the first meeting in February.

*Ayres:* I am not ready to provide feedback at this time, but I can provide comments in the next 48 hours.

*Spencer:* Please get these comments to Nicole Losch.

*Ayres:* We need to make sure the pedestrian component is part of the equation as well.

## **12. Councilors' Updates**

*Date of the next TEUC meeting is yet to be determined.*

## **13. Adjourn**

*Meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM*

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