

CITY OF SHORELINE
SHORELINE CITY COUNCIL
SUMMARY MINUTES OF WORKSHOP DINNER MEETING

Monday, October 12, 2009
6:00 p.m.

Shoreline Conference Center
Highlander Room

PRESENT: Mayor Cindy Ryu and Councilmembers Keith McGlashan, Chris Eggen, Janet Way, Doris McConnell, and Ron Hansen

ABSENT: Deputy Mayor Scott

STAFF: Bob Olander, City Manager; Julie Underwood, Assistant City Manager; Mark Relph, Public Works Director; Scott Passey, City Clerk

GUESTS: Ronald Wastewater District Commissioners: Brian Carroll, President; Arthur Wadekamper, Vice President; Arnold Lind, Secretary

At 6:10 p.m., Mayor Ryu called the meeting to order and welcomed the guests from the Ronald Wastewater District (RWD). She asked what inspired them to become Commissioners and requested a brief history of the District.

Mr. Wadekamper provided some background and history, noting that RWD has been in business since the early 1950's. He noted that they are proud of what they've accomplished and want to keep progressing into the future. He added that they are currently working with a group to keep wastewater treatment rates down.

Mr. Relph emphasized the importance of coordinating the City's capital projects with RWD because they are a key player in terms of growth and development.

Mr. Olander commented that the City's Comprehensive Plan is updated regularly and must address the City's long-term growth. He said working closely with all utility districts is essential in accomplishing this task.

Mr. Carroll concurred. Mr. Wadekamper noted that RWD must include the City's capital projects within its own capital improvement plan in order to be successful.

Mr. Relph referred to a map he provided and explained the City's 5-year capital projects depicted on the map. Mr. Carroll asked about the Ronald Bog outfall, to which Mr. Relph responded that it has been replaced with fish-passable culverts. He noted that staff is still working on solutions for the flood plain south of Ronald Bog.

There was brief discussion of the overlays on the map.

Mr. Carroll asked if the City had GIS maps of the as-built storm water system. Mr. Relph responded affirmatively, however, he said there are problems with the data. He stated that certain assumptions about the system, which was inherited from King County, didn't turn out to be true. He noted that the City does not have accurate information for the area fronting RWD. He added that the City is trying to take a more sophisticated, basin-by-basin approach to storm water.

Mr. Carroll asked if the City tries to coordinate its pavement management program with utility work. Mr. Relph responded affirmatively, citing the ongoing challenge of discovering new problems with the inherited infrastructure. Mr. Olander added that the City is not only dealing with the street drain system, but also with pipes, streams, easements, and flooding issues. He said new issues continue to be added to the City's mapping and asset inventory.

Mr. Relph said he understands the extensive effort that RWD is making with its rate study and inventory assessment. He pointed out that even if the City doesn't discover any more problems, there is a huge list of items to address.

Mr. Olander commented that City improvements are paid for by fees, which are largely based on the amount of impervious surface. He noted that a utility fee is added on to the property tax bill that King County collects for the City. He said the City tries to keep its rates similar to comparable cities, and the City will bond if necessary. Mr. Relph added that going back and repairing a failed storm water system is very expensive.

The Commissioners commented that the City coordinated well with RWD during Aurora Corridor Phase 1; however, SWD felt ignored on issues raised in Phases 2 and 3. Mr. Relph noted that he met with Michael Derrick, RWD General Manager, concerning the need for more frequent and improved communication. Mr. Carroll suggested that having the City Manager communicate directly with the General Manager might prevent some of the secondhand information some have received. Mr. Relph agreed that we need to discuss who is involved and when. He noted that a discussion about design standards is needed, particularly in the more complicated segments of Aurora Phase 3. Mr. Wadekamper said that the sooner the two parties discuss these items, the better.

Mayor Ryu asked if any Councilmembers attend the RWD meetings, to which RWD responded that they do not; neither does the public. They noted that their meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday each month.

Councilmember Way asked about the communication "mix up" a couple months ago. Mr. Relph and Mr. Wadekamper agreed that there needs to be more coordination and discussions on issues of mutual interest. Mr. Olander said the City is open to discussions about design standard options.

Mr. Carroll called attention to the impact that wastewater improvements have on ratepayers. He pointed out that if the infrastructure has to be moved, RWD has to charge for it.

Mayor Ryu asked if there are any opportunities for the RWD to utilize grant funding. It was stated that the entire Puget Sound area received very little in the way of economic recovery funds from the federal government.

Mr. Carroll noted that RWD is almost finished updating its 5-10 year plan. He emphasized that the City's capital improvement plan is vital to their plan.

Councilmember Eggen inquired about the Crista Master Plan and how it interfaces with City infrastructure and RWD. Mr. Wadekamper noted that RWD is conducting a study of that area. He described it as an older, private system that has had major problems.

Mr. Wadekamper pointed out that with the help of the State Attorney General's Office and Representative Ruth Kagi, the RWD can now do work on private side sewer lines, subject to approval from private property owners. Mr. Wadekamper clarified that this change in law applies to the whole state.

Mr. Lind suggested that the City should take advantage of the information gathered by RWD's engineer, who did all the inventory and capacity work on the Ronald Wastewater system.

Mayor Ryu asked if there was a concern about the impacts of infill development on the sewer system. She also asked if there is coordination on mapping, and if there were any private homes pumping wastewater uphill. Mr. Wadekamper replied that the RWD is not aware of individual houses pumping uphill. Mr. Lind pointed out that the sewer system is analyzed at the time a development application is filed because a sewer permit is required. Mr. Relph responded that the RWD mapping can be useful in the City's land use planning.

Mr. Olander commented on the high cost that new development has to pay for Brightwater fees. It was noted that new connections to the wastewater system are paying a majority of the costs, and that Brightwater is on a 15-year payout schedule.

The discussion then turned to areas of the City which do not have sewer infrastructure. It was noted that RWD cannot force residents to connect to the sewer system, but they must get a permit if they're not on the sewer system.

Mr. Relph noted that the City is coordinating the pavement management with all the utility CIPs and that they conduct annual meetings for this purpose.

Councilmember Way commented on the need to coordinate utility work along State Route 523 (N 145th Street) and also in the SE Subarea. Mr. Olander responded that State Route 523 falls under the jurisdictions of King County and the City of Seattle.

Mr. Lind noted that RWD often gets questions from residents about why their sewer bill is so high. He explained that 80% of the sewer bill is a pass-through charge that goes directly to King County. It was noted that Brightwater rates are expected to increase in 2011.

Mr. Olander discussed the possibility of using the City's *Currents* newsletter to occasionally highlight information for the utility districts.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Scott Passey, City Clerk