

January 28, 2010
Storm Water Advisory Committee Meeting - 5:15 P.M.

Meeting started at 5:15 pm with committee members, Diane Foss, Dennis O'Brien, Don Steele, Kathy Witkovski, Rollie Bramhall, Susan Jones, Mel Hrubetz, Louise Moon, Betty Glover, and Darren Fife. Staff present: Marketa Oliver, Dave Breese.

Marketa started off with discussing about the storm water grant that was submitted to the DNR for the Rain Garden/Bioretenion pond behind the DNR Air Quality building off of Hickman Rd. Steele ask if we had actually received the grant or heard back yet. Marketa said not yet, but the City hopes to hear back soon. Breese went on to talk about how the Bioretention would work and how it would eliminate a lot of the run off of large building roof and parking lot that runs directly into Walnut Creek. Breese discussed that once City hears about the grant; the City will inform committee on status of when the project will start and the estimated cost.

Breese passed out Watershed Assessment RFP to all committee members that attended and went into informing committee members that Watershed Assessment Program is a requirement of the NPDES permit and that we have to get approval of City Council to make this happen. Fife announced that his place of business is involved as well as he is involved in coordinated Watershed Assessment Programs. Witkovski said we need to have in the RFP an hourly rate for contractor. Fife thought it would be beneficial to the City to have consultants include a lump sum in their proposal. The Committee read through the RFP and made a few changes. Witkovski suggested changing "bank stability" to "stream bank stability". Breese encouraged Committee to attend City Council meeting on February 1st, 2010 to discuss the need of this program to City Council. Oliver is working on getting new revised RFP drafted up for Council meeting.

Oliver introduced the stormwater budget to the committee. In order to maintain the bare minimum of what the City has now, the City is going to have to raise stormwater utility rate for all residential properties and businesses. Steele asked if Marketa could break down the budget for them. Marketa went through line by line of how budget is broken down and what money goes where. She noted there is currently a deficit in the stormwater fund and the proposal for the rate adjustment does very little to address the deficit, but given the current economic situation, she wanted to be sensitive to homeowners' situations. Oliver had contacted surrounding Cities to find out where their utility is compared to Windsor Heights. Following is a recap of those rates.

Area Residential Stormwater Rates

	7/1/2008	1/1/2009	7/1/2009	1/1/2010	7/1/2010	1/1/2011
Windsor Heights	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$3.50	\$4.25	\$4.25
Des Moines	\$6.75	\$7.29	\$7.29	\$7.87	\$7.87	\$8.50
Clive	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$4.15	\$4.15
Waukee*	\$3.75	\$3.75	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25
West Des Moines	\$3.75	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25	\$4.25

*Waukee has not yet determined its FY 2011 rate, but there is potential for change.

Every city surrounding Windsor Heights is fifty cents or higher than the WH current utility rate. In order for Windsor Heights to cover expenses estimated for FY 2011, the residential utility must go from \$3.50 to \$4.25 and business will adjust accordingly, presently businesses are undercharged in Windsor Heights compared to surrounding Cities. Moon said we have to do what we need to do and there is no sense in sugar coating it. If it needs to be raised it has to be done. O'Brien said the adjustment is less than a bottle of water. Witkovski agreed that it needs to be done as soon as possible with the wording that City can adjust rate accordingly to continue the stormwater program and to deplete the current deficit the budget has now. Foss asked if the adjustment will be enough to address any of the recommendations in the results that come from the watershed assessment and Oliver said no. She suggested it may be better to build in some cushion for that now and figure out how to address the deficit in that fund.

Jones suggested raising the commercial rates a little higher. There was additional discussion about what commercial rates should be. After discussing it further, the following rate structure was suggested.

Categories:	Monthly Rate	Revenue
Residential:	\$4.25	\$97,563
Commercial:		
Small:	\$29.75	\$27,846
Medium:	\$42.50	\$3,570
Large:	\$85.00	\$5,100
Major:	\$340.00	\$12,240
		\$146,319

Steele asked if the tax levy could take care of some of the costs and Oliver explained the utility had been created initially because the City is at its \$8.10 levy limit and the State had eliminated reimbursements to cities, which is what led to the creation of the utility. The costs that have increased in the stormwater area are directly related to a Federal mandate that is being administered through the State. Steele said it is unfortunate because you can deduct taxes from your income tax, but not fees. Oliver said that is true, but on the positive side, everyone pays a stormwater fee, whereas not all properties pay for income tax. The cost of the stormwater activities has gone from \$15,468 prior to the implementation of the Phase II stormwater requirements to an estimated budget of \$146,186 in FY 2011.

Jones suggested the City adjust rates evenly from residential properties all the way up to major business category. Jones, Witkovski, Fife all mentioned since the Stormwater Program is a Federally Mandated program, we need to have these rates adjusted to make this program function and be able to afford to do the projected projects required by the current NPDES permit. Witkovski said the adjusting the rates to address compliance is a lot less expensive than paying a big fine.

Breese discussed the School Curriculum that is required by the permit and how we can suggest to the two schools in Windsor Heights on how we can help them. Bramhall said why do not we contact the West Des Moines School District and ask them what schools are doing now and how we can be involved. Moon said that Waste Management has a program that we can take advantage of and credit for. Witkowski said she developed a program when she was with Metro Waste that might be good to bring to the school. Fife said he would be interested in promoting the IOWATER program. Glover suggested it might be possible to do something in conjunction with Spring Clean Up to promote the program. Fife and Glover are going to touch base on trying to promote a local IOWATER effort and maybe also involve Keep Windsor Heights Beautiful

Meeting ended at 7:15 p.m.