

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

RBHA BOARD MEETING

The RBHA Board of Directors will meet on Saturday, January 17, 2009, 9:00 am, at All Saints Episcopal Church, 18 Olive Avenue. Further discussion of the City's Wastewater project will be held. The Board decided to advocate a position at its last meeting and will study several specific options at the upcoming meeting.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS WORKSHOP

The Rehoboth Beach Commissioners held a Special Meeting and a Workshop on Monday January 5, 2009. At its Special meeting it awarded construction contracts to install curb cuts to comply with ADA provisions. The work will take place on six intersections along First Street (and King Charles) at Maryland, Baltimore, Wilmington, Delaware, Brooklyn and Philadelphia. The work will commence in late January, 2009 and is expected to be completed in April, 2009.

During the Workshop discontinuous Sidewalks were again discussed. Commissioner Mills updated the list of affected sidewalk locations, adding eight "missing corners" where sidewalks end abruptly at street intersections. There was some discussion about financing these projects. Mayor Cooper, referencing the ADA issues and missing corners, said "I think this is clearly a place where the City could and probably should pay to do the corners." Several other Commissioners expressed agreement with the Mayor's suggestion. The City Manager then advised that these corner cases should be separated from the previous list and be made a part of the budget process, which is about to start. The City Solicitor offered that he is nearing completion of a resolution for the Commissioners to call for a public hearing to address discontinuous Sidewalks, possibly for consideration at the next regular meeting (1/20/09). A public hearing might be held in March.

Wastewater was another ongoing matter considered. Estimated costs for the Ocean Outflow option are being finalized according to a recent (12/31/08?) conversation Mayor Cooper said he had with the City's consultant, Rip Copithorn OF Stearns & Wheeler Engineers. The Mayor also discussed a letter he received from the Sussex County Council concerning a potential County/City partnership for a land application option. The Mayor indicated that he has spoken with the County Administrator in an effort to arrange a meeting with County and City engineers (in the next week or so) to discuss the scope of work for this option.

Commissioner Barbour offered what he described as a "whole new" Tree Ordinance. He also submitted copies of comments from both the Building Inspector and from a State Arborist, Bryan Hall, about reworking the ordinance. The Commissioners scheduled a continued discussion possibly at the February Workshop.

Under New Business considerable discussion ensued on a recommendation from the Planning Commission to enact a Site Plan Review Ordinance. Again, Commissioners decided to further study the very complex subject and bring it up again for further discussion at the next Workshop. A spokesperson from the Planning Commission will be invited to participate in the discussions.

The City Manager's report was full of useful news. Mr. Ferrese has drafted the Budget. He said, "Revenues aren't coming in. Transfer taxes are down. Building permits are down . . . I'm going to be honest with you; this budget is going to be a tight one." The first Budget meeting is scheduled for 9:00 am, Friday, January 16th. The Boardwalk construction project is on schedule with no apparent problems, Mr. Ferrese said.

The City provides curbside recycling at no cost to property owners. Currently there are 991 users for which the City pays the Delaware Solid Waste Authority (DSWA) \$1/pickup. Effective April 1st the DSWA will increase the fee to \$3/pickup and that rate will again increase in December 2009. Mr. Ferrese said that there are waste haulers who would be interested in performing this task. He has prepared a bid proposal that will be advertised

soon. Under the proposal the service would be provided once per week from the first Friday in April to the last Friday in October; in the off season pick ups would occur on Fridays, twice per month. DSWA said the City could retain the bins it now uses; the selected hauler would provide additional bins, as needed. A contract would run for three years with options for the fourth and fifth years. Bids will be due back in mid February. Commissioners will consider the matter further in their budget deliberations.

Finally, in an effort to reduce expenses Mr. Ferrese reported he is taking a number of actions with an objective to trim the budget for each department an average of \$5,000. As a consequence this season's Bandstand concerts will be reduced from four to three days per week. Thursdays will be eliminated with a resulting savings of as much as \$10,000. The Beach Patrol is seeking ways of cutting costs without reducing staffing.

RBHA NEWSLETTER

Our Newsletter is in final production and will be distributed soon. Your response to our request to for the electronic version has been impressive; trees will be saved! Thank you. If you missed the last News item, please let us know whether or not you like to join those receiving a paperless edition of the Newsletter.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT

Your comments on the Discontinuous Sidewalks were forwarded to and appreciated by Commissioner Mills; we understand he has been in direct contact with some of you. Similarly, the City Manager is open to suggestions for cost cutting on the new Budget. For example, how would feel about reducing the number of weekly trash pick ups in the winter months? Once/week service might be extended into December without a significant adverse impact on residents, but might free staff for other cost efficient tasks. Do you have ideas for saving City expenses? Please share them with us.

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to start. The City Solicitor offered that he is nearing completion of a resolution for the Commissioners to call for a public hearing to address the other sidewalk cases, possibly for the next regular meeting (1/20/09).

Wastewater was another ongoing matter considered. Costs for the Ocean Outflow option are being finalized according to a recent (12/31/08?) conversation Mayor Cooper had with the City's consultant, Rip Copithorn. The Mayor also discussed a response to a letter he sent to the Sussex County Council concerning a potential County/City partnership for a land application option. The Mayor indicated that he has spoken with the County Administrator in an effort to arrange a meeting with County and City engineers (in the next week or so) to discuss the scope of work for this option.

Commissioner Barbour offered what he describe as a "whole new" Tree Ordinance. He also submitted copies of comments of the Building Inspector and a DNREC arborist, Brian Hall, about reworking the ordinance. The Commissioners scheduled a discussion after further meetings of the Building Inspector and the DNREC arborist and Mr. Barbour, possibly at the next Workshop.

Under New Business considerable discussion ensued on a report from the Planning Commission regarding Site Plan Review. Again, Commissioners decided to further study the very complex subject and bring it up again for further discussion at the next Workshop.

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