

**LYNCHBURG CITY COUNCIL**  
**PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HIGHLIGHTS**

Tuesday, November 10, 2020

8:00 a.m.

Members: Council Member Treney Tweedy, Chair  
Council Member Sterling Wilder  
Council Member Chris Faraldi  
Mayor Dolan, ex-officio

Staff Present: Reid Wodicka  
Kent White  
Lee Newland  
Gaynelle Hart  
Tom Martin

Others Present: N/A

Recent/Pending Contract Awards:

- Presented by Lee Newland

Mr. Newland stated that the first informational item is recent/pending contract awards. We have one this month and it is for the Link Road Bridge Project. The apparent low bid is Burleigh Construction Company out of Concord. The award amount is \$1,835,483 and change. That was the low bid. The next high bid was only \$11,800.00 higher, so they were really competitive bids. We had four bids total. The engineers estimate on the project was 3.2 million, so they were also good bids.

Ms. Tweedy asked if there were any questions. Mr. Wilder indicated that he had a question. Mr. Wilder questioned if we had worked with this company before. Mr. Newland responded by stating yes, that Burleigh Construction had done several of our bridge repair jobs and they have done one new construction job as well. Mr. Newland also stated that they work a lot for the state, VDOT. Ms. Tweedy questioned the timeframe on this project. Mr. Newland responded by stating that we are finalizing some easements now. We are hoping to get started by December. It is a nine month project and we are hoping to be done by August. That is what we are hoping for.

Priority Projects:

- Presented by Lee Newland

Mr. Newland indicated that there have not been a lot of changes with these since last month. Really no update on any of them.

**Link Road Bridge** – We are awarding the contract.

Everything else is pretty much ongoing as planned. There is not a lot here, but I at least wanted to cover that. Ms. Tweedy asked if there were any questions on the priority project list.

## General Business:

### 1. CIP Strategies

- Presented by Tom Martin

Mr. Martin began by stating that this was an exciting project to work on. This was an attempt to come up with a set of strategies on how we prioritize CIP Projects and making sure they are all being looked at cohesively on the same set of criteria and making sure the projects are moving forward in the way our citizens and council members want us to move in. Mr. Martin stated Mr. Wodicka had come to him and asked him to work on this and he agreed. There was a cohesive team that was put together to look at this. You can see the staff there (indicated on the screen). There was Economic Development, Finance and Budget Staff, City Engineering, Water Resources, Parks & Rec. and these two guys (referring to Reid Wodicka and Kent White). And Michelle White from Public Works helped us out quite a bit.

What is CIP Project? Mr. Martin indicated that it was anything that..... The CIP is a five year method of planning for the provision of capital projects and the city may want to look longer term for budgeting needs up to at least ten years. That gives us a better idea of how to look at cash flow over the long term. The project should by betterment to the community, have at least a twenty year life cycle and a cost exceeding \$25,000.00. The goal of the CIP is to establish a plan for budgeting. All these projects need to be done, but it helps the city budget its finances. The projects include such things as public facilities, buildings, parks, roads and infrastructure. Major maintenance projects like we have a building that needs to be repaired or a bridge that needs to be repaired. Acquisition of property and equipment. Things like fire trucks or bulldozers. Things that are used. Mr. Martin went on to state that the most importantly the projects should meet the goals and the priorities of the community. It should not be city staff goals; it should be the goals of the community.

Mr. Martin stated how we prioritize the projects is that it must meet the definition of a CIP Project. If eligible it will be ranked and included in a yearly project grouping and completed by city staff by the use of strategies. One thing that this document recommends is that even if a project is put in an outlined year it doesn't mean it will automatically move up in time. We are suggesting that projects are looked at annually and re-evaluated.

Mr. Martin indicated that the project types are not different than the CIP now. You have buildings, transportation, public transit, economic development, parks and rec., water, sewer, stormwater and miscellaneous things. Things like culverts and those types of things. Funding Limits, we need to understand that the city has limits in funding. We can't do everything at once. We need to plan our projects on how we are going to pay for them and our bond capabilities over time. Mr. Martin indicated that our funding comes from things like the general fund, the pay-as-you-go fund, bonds, grants, CDBP, VDOT Revenue Sharing like SMARTSCALE Projects. And others like Enterprise funds and Public/Private Partnerships. One of the things you will see in this document is that a project may get a higher score if there is outside funding that's available to it. A lot of times that funding is not always available. So the city can take that opportunity to do a project it would rank higher than one that does not have alternate funding.

How will a project be scheduled? Mr. Martin indicated it would be based upon available funding

again and based on how it correlates to other projects. If the city is doing a project on 5<sup>th</sup> Street when Water Resources was coming through to replace the raw water line that was a great opportunity for the city to come through and do the streetscapes that were adopted by council in the 5<sup>th</sup> Street Master Plan. We were already in that area, go ahead and do the work so you don't have to tear the street up twice. Downtown is a perfect example. Projects with a significant impact on debt service will be scheduled to the extent possible to limit dramatic increases in year to year debt service. Smaller projects may be scheduled sooner. So what that means is if it's a 50 million dollar project like a school it might have to be put into an outlining year just because of how the debt service works. That kind of changes over time based on interest rates and bonding capability. We need to look at that annually.

Mr. Martin stated that the strategies are intended to be a technical evaluation. They are apolitical. Looking at things equally across the board when evaluating projects based on the same set of criteria, but ultimately we realize that projects included in the CIP is decided by council. What this document will be used for is by city staff will take everything and priorities they based on the set criteria and we will present that to council. Obviously, if they don't agree with that or if there is a reason it needs to be moved forward obviously council can do that. That is your priority because you ultimately sign the checks or pay the people that sign the checks. This is just a flow chart (making reference to the screen). The need is identified in the blue circle. The department develops the CIP Sheet. And then we ask ourselves some questions. Is it less than twenty-five thousand dollars, if it is it doesn't need to be in the CIP. It should be included in your operating budget.

Mr. Martin continues stating is it a project with a benefit greater than five years, if not it goes into the operating budget. The operating budget is a whole different set of things. Does it add to the city's assets, if no include it in the operating budget. Has it been review with the prioritization strategies, if yes then we include it in the CIP and we look at it with the criteria in this document. So what are we looking at. Number one is the project in compliance with plans or studies. Is it something that has been adopted by council. Has it been vetted by the Planning Commission. Has there been citizen engagement on the project. If it has then it would get a higher priority than a project that's not. The next one is regulatory compliance. Is there some outside agency like the EPA or the Department of Environmental Quality the Americans with Disabilities Act where other state and federal laws telling us that we have to do this project. College Lake, they came in and said you have to fix this so there is a pressing outside need where you are under a mandate to fix it. If so, it would get a higher score.

Timing and location, this is when we are in the same area and there is a pressing need to go ahead and do this project. Impact on operational budget, again there is only so much money that the city has. Is there an outside funding source that can help move the project forward. I'll take a step back. What this is really talking about is there maintenance that would take additional staff to operate it. Will it reduce maintenance costs. What does it do long term to our operational budget. Does it cost us more or does it save us money on that side. Alternative funding source, this is the thing about CDBG Grants and Private/Public Partnerships like the Wards Road Pedestrian Bridge. We would not have been able to do that project unless Liberty stepped up and helped us do that. So we seized that opportunity. Those projects would score higher than those that do not. Economic Development, does it increase property values. Does it maintain jobs. Does it create jobs. If it is a CIP Project that would do that of course it would score higher than one that doesn't.

Improving public health and safety, does it result in reduced accidents and traffic crashes. Does it improve something with structural deficiency like a bridge that is no longer meeting standards for safety or design.

Mr. Martin continued this ongoing discussion. Will it improve response time by emergency service personnel. If it does it would rank higher than a project that doesn't. Connectivity and accessibility to the transportation project, does it reduce congestion, is it a multimodal project meaning it has sidewalks, does it tie into our bus network, does it tie into trails, is it creating connectivity throughout the city. Natural systems, how does the project affect our environment. If it has an overall negative impact it would rank here. If it actually was to be improving the environment it would rank here. Social equity, is it neutral is it positive or is it negative. How is it affecting the neighborhoods throughout the city. That is a very quick overview but we actually took our current CIP and went through and ranked the projects. I try to stay away from the word ranking. Prioritize our current projects. They actually fell about the same way they were included. Instead of one or two who decide there would be a multifaceted team of people across the city that would get in a room and look at these projects and go through these priorities. Mr. Martin indicated that he may look at a transportation project differently than Mr. Newland or Ms. Hart. When we get in and start discussing it, it may rank a four instead of a three based on that discussion. No city staff person knows everything about a project. That is why it is so important to get everyone in the room. That is a quick overview on how staff is planning on moving forward determining what projects end up where on the CIP. Mr. Martin indicated that he would be happy to answer any questions that the board has.

Ms. Tweedy asked if there were any questions. Mr. Faraldi questioned if this was SMARTSCALE on a city level given the ranking system. That is kind of what it sounds like. In a way. Mr. Wodicka responded by stating that we're trying to be more transparent in the process. Mr. Wodicka indicated that yes it is. Mr. Wilder questioned whether this was just for city projects or does it include school projects. Mr. Martin responded by stating that the City Manager has indicated that it will include schools. Mr. Martin also indicated that the CIP process may evolve over time. The city's priorities may evolve over time. Mr. Wilder questioned if the school system is prioritizing their capital projects. Mr. Wodicka stated that we are beginning to build a relationship now and will be including them on the budget process as well. Mr. Wodicka also indicated that that was what we were trying to do with the facility study as well. That we really understand what's happening in the school buildings. Mr. Wodicka also indicated that the Public Works staff is going to at least advise the schools of their facility study and include this moving forward. That relationship has not been on a strategic level previously. I think what we are trying to do is build that relationship stronger.

Mr. Wilder indicated that he heard something the other day about prioritizing projects and he felt that we should all be coordinating in that same process moving forward. Mr. Wilder questioned whether it was a rating system. Are we staying away from a rating system or is it a numbering system? Mr. Martin responded by stating that it is a ranking system because ultimately there is a number assigned to it. There is also a subjective component because if you look in the document you will see where in some cases it may fall between a one and a three or a three and a four and that's why it is so important to have a discussion amongst staff to see where it would really fall. Mr. Wodicka stated from a funny prospective with what Mr. Martin said a few minutes ago if you have a fifty million dollar project and that's the number one project that might take up all the debt

capacity for three to four years and you might not be able to do anything else. So you might need to rearrange things even though you have to get a higher score you might have to rearrange on a micro level to fit it together. It's like setting up a puzzle.

Mr. Faraldi questioned the chances of this back firing on us in the future just in the community or staff saying you ranked this lower and it doesn't make sense. Mr. Faraldi was looking for any negatives to using this system. Mr. Martin responded by stating that the scoring would not be seen by anyone other than city staff. We had debated whether to put the ranking on the project. We decided against that. This is to make sure that staff is doing this the same way over time. To try to take some of the arbitrariness out of it. That is his opinion. Mr. Wodicka stated that we have been working on reforming CIP for three years. We have been doing a bunch of different things the last couple of years. One of the things that we learned with the Florida Avenue Project that had been talked about and talked about for a long time. There was a feeling in the community that there was less data driven processes in that. So what we learned from that is we want to take every project through a technical assessment. We can articulate exactly why a project is necessary and how it fits in with everyone else when other options are there. Mr. Wodicka indicated that he feels the impact of that is we took a project there that was a really good project and you can have a debate on cost and things like that and you end up with a project that is very political when it was just about people being able to get off the road when they walk. That is one of the driving parts as to why we are doing this. Mr. Faraldi questioned whether there is any benefit to having someone of planning commission or members of council involved in that. Just so when it does make it to us one of us could say that we were part of this discussion. At least we would have that representation for the community. Mr. Wodicka responded by stating that is the first item for compliance with the studies, what we think the right thing to do is. Mr. Wodicka believes that we think the right thing to do is that we should be developing CIP projects based on larger plans. Those are ran through the Planning Commission and sometimes council.

Mr. Martin responded that he understood what was being said but felt the key word is technical. We are trying to keep it apolitical first and then you guys get your view of it. Ultimately you could move a project out stating that this is more important. Mr. Martin stated that we are trying to look at things equally across the board based on a certain set of criteria. Mr. Faraldi stated that he was not saying that he was opposed to this at all, that he thinks the only problem he can see in the future if there is no representation of the community, whether it be Planning Commission or some aspect of that you could catch a scenario where it get to council and we are saying how did it get here. Mr. Faraldi stated that he thinks it's a great idea he is just looking for a way to have community engagement some kind of way. We represent the community. It is our job to represent the community so I'm just trying to protect that. Even though you are trying to keep it from being a political discussion just trying to respect that when putting a rating behind it. We as council members could develop a preconceived notion that it got a five.

Mr. Martin responded by stating that as the City Manager pointed out that one of the first ranking criteria is it in an adopted plan of study. Has it been vetted by the community. Like the downtown project where there was huge public input into that plan and it was vetted. Often times we feel when we go out and do these plans and they are ultimately adopted by council. Even though there is so much support across the board and council adopts it there really isn't that support there until you put the funding behind it. Mr. Faraldi stated a possible solution is what if you had the Chambers of Commerce, the Regional Business Alliance, members of the Business Planning Commission. He

indicated that he was just saying try to think outside the box by brining other representation from the community so it's not just city staff. He wasn't saying he didn't trust making the ranking decisions that he is trying to get more representation from the community involved the process. Putting numbers behind and then we have to turn around and put dollars behind. Just trying to think outside the box.

Ms. Tweedy wanted to further that conversation. She stated that she knows that Mr. Martin had mentioned social equity and prioritization strategies. So would our growth and how we're growing in the city be part of the data that drives service buildings, service needs, as part of the discussion. Ms. Tweedy stated that she was a little bit not wanting to put a regional spin on that because this is Lynchburg dollars and Lynchburg plans. She was wondering as part of the prioritization and strategies if we look at how we're growing, where our numbers are and where development is occurring. Things are going to change and evolve over the years. Do we look at that data like shifts in school age children or building single family homes to where our current building assets are and how they are meeting the need. Ms. Tweedy indicated that she was thinking about Timberlake. We've talked about a fire station. We've talked about the Small Business Center out there. But we have no community center. We have schools, but we have no community center. Heritage Park is a little bit of a park.

Mr. Faraldi indicated that in Sandusky there is no huge green space. Ms. Tweedy asked is that a part of the prioritization strategy. Can you talk with the community that is the point that she was getting to. If you build it like that or add that component can you talk to the community through that type of communication. Mr. Martin responded by stating that he feels this is a great discussion. Honestly, he thinks he would need time to ingest it. His first thought on the parks and stuff. Shouldn't that be something Parks & Rec is looking at right now where parks are needed. Once that it is determined that a park is needed in Sandusky obviously that is going to come and be vetted by council and then once they say we agree with you. Once they say we agree with you then that park would show up on a CIP. Then all these things will be looked at like fire safety the fire department would know where they needed another station. The same thing with the police department. Once that is kind of vetted it shows up on a sheet and then we look at all of the projects.

Mr. Wodicka stated that the purpose of this project is that once those needs are identified that work is going on a fair amount of time. We are working on this parks plan; we are working on some other stuff. Once those needs are identified just like we do the bridge plans and other kinds of stuff. Once those needs are identified that's when we come together and rank them through this process. Mr. Wodicka informed the members that there is absolutely public engagement related to the park development process there is that sort of stuff going on like primary planning projects. The questions though is we don't want there to come up that we thought we wanted a fire station over here but we are going to do this one instead and that is not in the planning document. It hasn't been vetted by council or voted on by whomever. That is kind of where we're getting that.

Ms. Tweedy asked if there were any further questions and there were none.

#### Roll Call:

Mr. Faraldi questioned how brush and bulk are going. Ms. Hart stated that she rode again

yesterday and they are working on Monday's route and it actually looked pretty good. She did see where we have missed a couple of spots. We've got those on the list. We are still over resources. We're still trying to run it with extra trucks. Those resources are going back to leaf collection so we are going to be losing some of those drivers. Ms. Hart stated that she has some temporary drivers coming in hopefully Friday. Ms. Hart indicated that she thinks it is getting better. She does recognize that we do have some complaints that we're dealing with. She believes overall from her observation in the field, going out every Friday or Monday it's getting better. Mr. Wilder indicated that his question was about bulk. He indicated that whenever he goes out a neighbor always stops him. Mr. Wilder indicated that he has sent those pictures to Ms. Hart. One spot has been there for a couple of months. It takes up almost a whole block so it will take a while to pick up.

Ms. Tweedy indicated that she was given a suggestion that she wanted to share with Mr. Newland. Logan's Lane and Wards Ferry Road where people over shoot the lane to get onto the highway. Someone had suggested where we have arrows that say right turn that if we put only one the road like we've done at the Heritage right turn maybe it will at least..... Ms. Tweedy is aware that there is a sign up there but she witnessed it the other day myself again. How many times does it happen where we don't see it so they suggested that only be put on the road. Mr. Newland stated that we should be able to get that done before it gets cold. That when it is cold it is hard to get the paving markings to stick. We will try to get it done before hand if not it will be spring.

Next Meeting: December 8, 2020