



Operations Committee - Board of Representatives

John Zelinsky, Jr., Co-Chair Joseph Coppola, Jr., Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Wednesday, May 19, 2010
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Place: Democratic Caucus Room, 4th Floor, Government Center, 888 Washington Boulevard

The Operations Committee met as indicated above. Present were Co-Chair Zelinsky and Co-Chair Coppola and Committee Member Reps. Adams, Gabriele, Merritt, Raduazzo, Taylor and White; absent/excused was Committee Member Rep. Mallozzi. Also present were Ernie Orgera, Director of Operations; Lou Casolo, City Engineer; and Dan Colleluori, Alex Tergis, Mike Scacco and Jim Fasoli of the Operations Department.

Co-Chair Coppola called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. O28.006	RESOLUTION; <u>and approval of public hearing</u> ; establishing a recycling tipping fee of \$15 per ton.	COMMITTEE APPROVED 6-0-0

Director Orgera and Alex Tergis stated that the City would like to establish a tipping fee for recyclable materials. Currently there is no fee, and with the completion of instituting single-stream recycling, this is something they would like to offer.

Mr. Tergis discussed the advantages to the City with single-stream recycling, and distributed a sheet (see [attached](#)) that depicts the revenue the City has received and the monies saved by increasing recycling. Mr. Tergis stated that the City shares the revenue 50/50 with Willimantic for recycled material when it is priced at \$45/ton or more. Recently, the City has received about \$15/ton as its share of revenue. In response to questions from Committee members,

- The City will not have to hire additional employees.
- This program will allow the 4 trash haulers that operate in Stamford to offer this to their customers. (For residents who have private trash pickup, this could potentially save them money by reducing twice weekly trash pickup to weekly.)

- This enables apartment buildings and businesses to participate in single stream recycling.
- The City has received numerous calls from private companies who are interested in single stream.
- There has been a 33% increase in the amount of recycling

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Coppola, Adams, Gabriele, Merritt, Raduazzo and Taylor in favor).

2. O28.007	APPROVAL; of an amendment to the design contract with Stantec Consulting Services for the Cold Spring Road bridge.	COMMITTEE APPROVED 6-0-0
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Mr. Casolo explained:

- This is an amendment to the existing design contract for the Cold Spring Road Bridge.
- They will be putting out the construction bid in July.
- This amending is for construction administration of the project.
- They estimate it will take about 330 days to complete the project. If the project is completed more quickly, the City will only pay for the oversight services that are performed. Stantec will perform day-day, hour-hour supervision of the construction.
- The project is funded 30% by the State DOT and 70% by the City.
- Construction administration services are acquired for all bridge projects, and is recommended by CONN DOT.
- The amount of the amendment will be \$271,000, and the rates are about 6% lower than those for the Farms Road Bridge. The total cost is about 10% less than what CONN Dot expects.
- The bridge was originally built in 1935, and no significant work has been done on it since then. This is a rehabilitation project rather than a complete re-build. The bridge is currently rated as “poor-serious.”
- The bridge will not be completely closed during renovations.

Mr. Casolo explained that the Board of Finance held the item with the intention of taking it up in a subcommittee meeting. The subcommittee meeting was cancelled, and the Board informally has received the answers to its questions and will vote on the contract at its June 10th meeting.

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Item was approved by a vote of 6-0-0 (Reps. Coppola, Adams, Gabriele, Merritt, Raduazzo and Taylor in favor).

Co-Chair Zelinsky chaired the remainder of the meeting at this point.

Mr. Orgera stated that this matter is intended to be an informal discussion on these trash systems. There is nothing to vote on. Mr. Tergis stated:

- Stamford has diverted about 20% of all household waste into the recycling stream, going from 13-14% to about 20%. Nationwide studies have shown that the best anyone can expect is 25-28%.
- In order to get to the next level, you have to go to "pay as you throw."
- You take the disposal costs out of the tax base, calculate how much a bag of trash costs to dispose of, and sell the bags for that rate.
- As a side benefit, local merchants realize increased sales as residents will frequent local businesses in order to acquire trash bags.
- With "pay as you throw," recycling rates have gone to 40%, with a few going to between 50-70%.
- "Pay as you throw" also increases re-use and donations as people try to find other ways to avoid creating trash.
- A draft [study](#) was distributed along with some two newsletters ([Spring 2009](#) and [Summer 2008](#)) and on this program (see attached).
- The average household has 1,000 lbs. per person of trash per year. With "pay as you throw," it is reduced to around 500 lbs. This is where the tremendous savings come in reducing haulaway charges.
- This provides for residents to pay for only the trash they generate. Currently, a single person is contributing toward the trash disposal of large households and those that don't participate in recycling.
- There are issues with enforcement and illegal trash disposal, but typically after a 2-month roll-out period with heightened enforcement, these problems are resolved.
- In response to a question from Mr. Zelinsky, an average cost per bag is \$1.25 to \$2.00, but varies depending on the town.
- It would take them about 6 months to roll out a program like this.

Mr. Coppola stated that he thought it would be impossible to deal with the illegal disposal of trash that this would generate. He also felt that even if the costs of trash removal were removed from the tax base, eventually taxes will go up and people will be left having to pay the same taxes and for trash removal. He added he is not inclined to tell the public that their taxes are being cut (while at the same time they may not actually see the cut due to routine inflation), and ask them to go out and spend money to have their trash disposed of.

Mr. Raduazzo was concerned that there will be people who do not purchase the bags but yet have trash piling up creating a nuisance and a hazard.

Mr. Adams stated that the single-stream recycling has been a success, and that now is not the time to try another new project but to continually improve on the success of single-stream recycling.

Co-Chair Zelinsky stated that he would like to have them come back with some firm dollar figures, in writing, that the Committee can then review. At that time, the Committee may consider establishing a subcommittee to look into this further.

4. O28.005 REVIEW; matter of city purchasing of older trucks. **REPORT MADE**

Rep. Gabriele began by reviewing a series of email exchanges he had with Messrs. Tergis, Scacco and Orgera, related to a request for information on the late 2008 purchase of six Mack trucks. These trucks were to be used for snow plowing, leaf removal and bulky waste pickup. Rep. Gabriele stated that his information requests had not been responded to timely or adequately.

Messrs. Tergis, Scacco and Orgera provided a package of material to all committee members that was, in their opinion, responsive to Rep. Gabriele's information request. Mr. Gabriele reviewed some of the detail in the package and made further information requests. Mr. Gabriele's concerns centered around the method by which these 6 trucks were selected, repairs that were required, who performed the repairs, whether the City possessed adequate title to the trucks and what work, if any, East Coast Towing performed on the trucks.

Operations Department personnel explained that in late 2008, the City eliminated private snow plows and conducted an inventory of its equipment. Mr. Orgera stated that he did not have an adequate number of trucks, came before the Operations Committee and discussed this, and then went about purchasing the six trucks. Mr. Scacco stated he looked at over 100 trucks at 5-6 dealers, and selected six aluminum used trucks for approximately \$180,000 (a single new truck costs about \$180,000). There was a 30-day warranty, and warranty work was performed to his satisfaction. The trucks have been registered and insured and are still in use.

Co-Chair Zelinsky stated that the meeting should not be a question-answer session between Mr. Gabriele and the Operations Department. Co-Chair Coppola asked what the end goal was in the discussion.

Mr. Fasoli, who previously identified himself as a member of the public who came to observe the meeting, asked the Chair for permission to make a statement. Mr. Fasoli stated he is a former vehicle maintenance mechanic as well as Secretary of Local 82. He stated that the invoices that he printed out were different than those presented this evening, and added that the City does not have clear title to the trucks. He further stated that he has been re-assigned to the Scofieldtown Yard pending the resolution of a complaint he filed with the Connecticut Human Rights Commission. Co-Chair Zelinsky asked if Mr. Fasoli had problems with Messrs. Scacco, Tergis or Orgera and whether that was the impetus for his attending tonight's meeting. Mr. Fasoli responded that he did, in fact, have

problems with his supervisors, they had charged him with certain “things,” and this is what prompted his human rights complaint.

Co-Chair Zelinsky stated that since this is a legal matter, it is not something that should be handled in the Operations Committee. Co-Chair Zelinsky called for a conclusion to the meeting.

Rep. Gabriele asked if the Chair would issue a letter to the Board of Finance asking for an audit of the purchase of the trucks and the surrounding repair issues. Co-Chair Zelinsky responded that he would speak to the President of the Board regarding this request.

Co-Chair Coppola stated that Mr. Fasoli was disingenuous at best when he stated at the onset of the meeting that he was merely an observer. Mr. Coppola added that the Committee should have known the specifics of this item at the outset of the meeting, and this item should not have been on the agenda as it is a matter for the Corporation Counsel’s office. Co-Chair Coppola stated that he would not have participated in the discussion of this item if he was aware of these facts.

Rep. Raduazzo stated that he was in agreement with Mr. Coppola, and he, too, knew nothing about this matter, that it is a legal matter, and the Corporation Counsel should be involved with this, not the Operations Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Zelinsky, Co-Chair