

HMDAC Meeting - Minutes

August 25, 2010, 7:00 pm – 2378 Lansdowne Place

Attending: Mike Baldwin (Chair), Ginger Bryant, Joyce Estes, Paul Norberg, Bob Schussel, Richard Tirrell.

1. As of July 1 the City should have contracted with a landscaping company to maintain the Hiddenbrooke landscaping for the year 2010-11, renewable annually for up to 5 years. For various reasons the City was slow in handling this process. They failed to meet various deadlines, and still have not selected a contractor, despite the bids having been in for more some 3 months. These delays have not been explained to us but we have been told that this matter will be resolved shortly. They will be presented to the September 24 Council meeting, requesting approval for a new contract starting November 1. We have not seen the details of the bids but we have been told that the new contract will be at a significantly lower cost than last year, thereby saving HMD money. Meanwhile the previous company D&H will continue to maintain the landscaping on a monthly basis for the first third of the financial year at inflated cost to HMD. The committee is unhappy about the slowness of the entire process and the lack of communication by City personnel.
2. Despite the delays, the 2010-11 HMD budget was approved by the City Council and the LMD staff are proposing various rehabilitation projects. Members of the committee will meet with them to draw up a list of priorities. Unspent funds from last year's budget were encumbered for this year and transferred to reserves, together with various surplus funds and other amounts. These funds should be sufficient to allow for some significant projects to go ahead. The Committee proposes that the major focus should be on high visibility areas, such as the Parkway, with a selection of smaller projects for lower traffic areas. It has been agreed that a message should be sent out on HB News inviting residents to highlight areas that need attention and proposing potential improvements in individual neighborhoods. There is support on the committee for installing more benches in locations favored by walkers.
3. Bob Schussel reported that the City is continuing to work on plans for a major upgrade to the utility corridor and St John's Mine Road. Significant erosion occurred 5 years ago and continues to worsen, requiring that this work be carried out soon, with a target of next summer. The work will be carried out with HMD reserve funds. Bob has been attending the planning meetings and is trying to insure that the costs are controlled and all expenditure is appropriate.
4. Due to what are generally regarded as excessive overheads charged by the City, the committee has considered whether it is feasible and desirable to move away from control by the City. A subcommittee led by Eli Cronbach has been investigating the possibilities. As yet no legal advice has been obtained and no decisions have been made.
5. Richard Tirrell reported on planned repairs and maintenance of the Welcome Center, including replacement/upgrading of the flooring and door. Such work is covered by the budget. This received support from the committee. Similarly Joyce Estes reported on the work of the Sign Committee. The planned sign and possible locations for it were supported by the HMDAC.
6. The committee requested that HPOA reappoints all HMDAC members whose periods of office are currently expiring.