

Street Committee Minutes

Honorable Council
City of Newark, Ohio
May 18, 2020

The Street Committee met on YouTube streaming via Zoom on Monday, May 18, 2020 with these members in attendance:

Sean Fennell - Chair
Johnathan Lang – Vice Chair
Dee Hall
Jeff Rath
Mark Labutis
Jeremy Blake
Doug Marmie

Mr. Fennell - We are here to discuss the street paving plan. Mr. Morehead if you could give us an overview then we'll open it up for discussion.

Mr. Morehead - We had 3 bidders on our project this year and the low bidder was the Shelly Company. We awarded the project about a week ago and the project should get started in the 2nd or 3rd week of June. I sent out 3 maps and a list of streets to be paved. One map shows those streets, the other map shows the streets that were paved over the past 10 years and the other one shows the streets paved over the past 20 years. This year's map has a lot of local streets on it. The cost is 1.3 to 1.4 million dollars.

Mr. Rath – I'm glad we're able to get started in June.

Mr. Morehead - We had money in the budget in January from the state gas tax collections, so it was easy to get it out earlier.

Mr. Blake – Can you explain how your office decides which streets are next on the paving list?

Mr. Morehead – Funding is the first consideration. If we have ODOT funding it pushes it into the next 3 years. I evaluate all the streets every year. We take into consideration all the phone calls with requests and complaints, I wait until the freeze/thaw season is over and then re-evaluate and the worst streets are the ones that get done first. If there are 3 streets in a neighborhood we are doing and there's a 4th street that is only maybe a year away we will go ahead and add that one in. If the gas tax funding stays at the level it is, it's going to take us 4-6 years to catch up on the local streets. After I started paring it all down, I had about 3.8 to 3.9 million dollars of streets that needed paving. So we still have about 2.5 to 3 million dollars of streets that are still in need of paving.

Mr. Blake – When you say local funding, what all is included in that?

Mr. Morehead – It's gas tax money, license plate tax money and any capital improvements money.

Mr. Blake – How much of the license plate tax money are we estimating?

Mr. Morehead – I think we started with \$200,000 this year, I also spend that money on advancing the ODOT projects in the future years. So that money also pays for design work on bridge replacements and road projects. I can't depend on capital improvements each year, because I never know what that's going to be. The estimated collections for this year for gas taxes are just over \$1 million. We have \$350,000 coming out of capital improvements this year. I don't have those figures right in front of me and then another \$200,000 out of license plate permissive tax.

Mr. Lang – How many total miles of roads are we responsible for as a city?

Mr. Morehead – There are about 220 centerline miles of road. Lane miles are a better measurement. There are about 490 miles of lane roads.

Mr. Lang – Roughly about how many miles of road are included in this 1.4 million dollar project?

Mr. Morehead – I haven't added that up.

Mr. Lang – I just wanted to put into perspective how much it could cost to pave all of our roads we are responsible for.

Mr. Morehead – This are probably 30-40 lane miles in this project just as a guess compared to future years.

Mr. Lang – I was just trying to put into perspective how many miles of road you think we would need to pave each year to keep up with regular maintenance.

Mr. Morehead – In a simple calculation, at 200 centerline miles of roads, if you wanted to pave the roads every 10 years, you would have to pave 22 miles of roads each year. Our pavement is lasting 15-20 years on residential streets and 10-15 years on higher traffic streets. Most of the streets on the current list were last paved in the early 1990's. Some on the list may have been 1997-1998. It just shows that in the past we haven't been funding enough to keep up. It'll be interesting to see in the next 4-5 years if we can catch up. Hopefully asphalt prices will stay stable.

Ms. Hall – Will you still be able to consider emergency alleyways and pothole repair?

Mr. Morehead – The Street Department does patching of potholes and alleyways every day. Definitely they will be considered.

Mr. Harris – Do we have any streets left over from last year that we did not get paved, and if so, how many?

Mr. Morehead – Yes, about \$2 million worth.

Mr. Rath – A few years ago we did a road study. At that time it was stated it would take \$1.3 million a year to repair those roads and it would take 8-10 years to accomplish. Can you talk about that study?

Mr. Morehead – I think that was around 2012. It actually said that to be able to catch up we should be spending about \$2.2 million a year and to hold steady was at about \$1.5 million a year. We haven't been able to keep up that pace funding wise. When I do evaluations I look at the same criteria they did for that study. If we get caught up, it might be nice to have another study done and determine the industry standard for a city of our size.

Mr. Rath – How have prices changed from the time of that study compared to today?

Mr. Morehead – Prices have gone up 15 – 20 percent since that study. Our prices this year are as good or better than last year's pricing. The decrease in petroleum prices has helped us this year.

Mr. Blake – In 2014 we were saying a single lane arterial road was \$190,000 approximately and collector roads were \$68,000 and residential streets were \$30,000. What would those numbers be for today?

Mr. Morehead – I don't break it down that way because I don't have time to do all of those calculations. I would say you could add about 20 percent onto each of those numbers for a today cost.

Mr. Marmie – We have money in our budget for this year for paving, so is there a possibility of a fall paving bid?

Mr. Morehead – All the funding has gone towards this project. We'll look at the gas tax dollars at the end of the year. Usually all the projects are out for bid in January or February.

Mr. Marmie – I thought we had \$1.5 - \$1.6 million for paving this year.

Mr. Morehead – Yes. This project is at \$1.4 million and in addition we are cooperating with Heath on paving Blue Jay Road which is about \$25,000-\$30,000 and also Harris Ave. and that's \$108,000.

President Ellington – This gas tax money we are getting is already locked in, it's not going to disappear if the State has to balance their budget, is it?

Mr. Morehead – I don't have an answer for that. It could be an issue in the future if the gas tax dollars are down, due to people driving less because of the pandemic.

President Ellington – I thought I remembered that it was something that was earmarked for us and that they could not take away.

Mayor – When Governor DeWine came into office he realized something needed to be done to get dollars for infrastructure. So, when they passed the legislation for the extra tax it was contained in the legislation that money would automatically go to locals. So, they didn't for it specifically for the locals, but we were a recipient of the move that provided money for the state. So, it's locked into legislation, but that legislation can be changed by the legislators. About a month ago, the Governor said that gas consumption was down by about 40 percent. We're just going to have to see how this plays out. Less consumption results in less excise tax. So, it's in legislation, which can be changed and as far as the dollar amount, it depends on consumption.

Mr. Marmie – There is only \$350,000 coming from capital improvements, of which \$150,000 we took from the unappropriated balance to put towards this. I think we need to maximize the use of the gas tax dollars to catch us up and not to just take over our paving budget.

Mr. Blake – You mentioned partnerships with Heath, are there going to be any bike path partnerships or anything similar?

Mr. Morehead – I know Director Rhodes has talked with Parks District about paving on a couple of bike paths, but I don't know the finalized decisions. That's the only other project I'm aware of right now.

Director Rhodes – We've been working with the Licking Park District and they've made a commitment out of their funds of \$25,000 if we can match it with \$25,000 towards the pass. But, we have 3 additional wash outs on the bike path headed towards Granville and by Cherry Bend. We have preliminary estimates on those at \$109,000, so Richard from the Park District is going to talk to his board and see how much of that they can pay. Then we will prioritize. We should have that done within the next couple weeks.

Mr. Fennell – Mr. Morehead, we appreciate your discussion and with that this concludes the Street Committee meeting.

Sean Fennell, Chair