

The City Commission workshop meeting was held on July 13, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. in the Commission Chambers at the Municipal Administration Building. The meeting was called to order by Mayor L. Jack Van Sickle.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mike Carter; Terrye Y. Howell; John Paul Rogers; Jonathan Thornhill; Mayor L. Jack Van Sickle.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None.

CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT: Judith H. Delmar, City Manager; Albert C. Galloway, Jr., City Attorney; Jacquie Hawkins, Deputy City Clerk.

Agenda Item 1. Roll Call

All City Commissioners were present.

Agenda Item 2. Lift Station No. 16 – Service Area Study (C Street Vicinity Sewer Improvements)

Tom Moran, Public Works Director, said this issue came before the City Commission in October or November 2009 and the City was now evaluating the problem and recommending some solutions. Envisors Engineers had been asked to prepare this presentation to include alternatives, cost estimates, and possible funding sources.

Beth Evans, principal and vice-president of Envisors Engineers, introduced project manager Roger Homann who gave a PowerPoint preliminary engineering presentation regarding the service area study for Lift Station No. 16. Mr. Homann explained the project area, summarized the evaluation of existing sewer network conditions that contributed to Lift Station No. 16 located northwest of downtown Lake Wales, identified deficiencies of the existing system, and proposed corrective alternatives.

The following are the alternatives and probable costs proposed by Envisors Engineers:

Alternative 1 Replacement of gravity system \$2.6 Million

- Replace the entire existing system with PVC pipe by utilizing a combination of existing and parallel sewer alignments;
- Modify/replace manhole structures as needed; and
- Construct new Lift Station #16 wet well.

Alternative 2 Replacement of gravity system – partial \$1.6 Million

- Replace major system collector lines with PVC pipe utilizing a combination of existing and parallel sewer alignments;
- Modify/replace manhole structures as needed; and
- Construct new Lift Station #16 west well.

Alternative 3 Low pressure collection – partial \$1.7 Million

- Install small pumping stations for some homes in the eastern project area (approximately 136 homes);
- Construct small diameter, low pressure force mains within the existing rights-of-way;

- Replace major collector lines with PVC pipe in western and southern project areas; and
- Construct new Lift Station #16 wet well.

Alternative 4 Vacuum pump collection – complete \$2.9 Million

- Install a vacuum pumping system parallel to the existing gravity system; and
- Modify service connections

Alternative 5 Intermediate lift stations N/A

- Replace a portion of the upstream segments of the sewer system with PVC pipe utilizing a combination of existing and parallel sewer alignments;
- Modify/replace manhole structures as needed; and
- Construct a new lift station on the east side of the project area to try and minimize the amount of downstream sewers that would need to be constructed at excessive depths.

Mr. Homann recommended Alternative 1, which he said could be done in two phases or possibly three. He addressed City Commission concerns and questions.

Mayor Van Sickle recommended Alternative 1 and said that he would like to do the project all at once instead of in phases. The issue would be the funding. He said he does not know how successful we would be on getting CDBG grants though we have gotten them in the past. The process takes time and it is getting to the point where CDBG money is drying up. The City cannot rely on that.

Commissioner Rogers said it was embarrassing to open up the hometown newspaper and see a lady standing in her living room with sewage running through it. He said that was not a good selling point in trying to attract new businesses or new residents to the community. He said the problem has to be fixed and that he recommends Alternative 1 because a gravity system would be a lot cheaper than using pumps in the long-run. Although he was concerned about the money, he said this was a health hazard to the community and something needed to be done now. He recommended taking immediate action as economically as possible.

Commissioner Thornhill said something has to be done now, especially when there is sewage flowing in someone's yard. He asked if the [2004] hurricanes first brought up the problems. Ms. Delmar said the hurricanes brought it to the forefront of everybody's attention but it had been a problem for many years. He said it was a health issue and he did not want a band-aid fix because residents deserved having the job done right so there will not be another problem five years down the road. He recommended Alternative 1 and said that Envisors Engineers did a good job on the report.

Commissioner Howell said she appreciated the detailed report and asked the following questions:

- She said the report indicated that the lift station, which was in her neighbourhood, was adequate but she wanted to know if adding new things to it would affect it adversely. Mr. Homann explained that there would not be any additional flow put on Lift Station 16. He added that the generator at the lift station would keep the system from backing up if there was a power outage, though there could be a little less flow because there would be less infiltration. With the existing clay pipes, if another storm brings a lot of storm water into them, there will be even less water going into the lift station. Commissioner Howell said the pipes in her neighbourhood had been dug up in March and PVC pipes

were put everywhere last week because of tree roots going into them. She asked if it had been the same group of people. Ms. Delmar said it was Killebrew putting in asbestos waterlines.

- She asked if a manhole would still have to be added if the space between them was just a little more than the 500 feet. Mr. Homann said the main reason for replacing manholes is because they were not deep enough. He said he thought we could probably get by without replacing those that were not adequately spaced if spacing was the only problem, but to fix the problem right there would need to be more manholes.
- She said she agreed with the recommendation for Alternative 1 because she was for fixing it right. She asked if digging deeper would tear up some of the recently paved roads, or if they would be going under the roads. Ms. Delmar said in some cases they might have to cut into the roads, but that they would be repaired.
- She asked for confirmation that the residents in that area would have to agree to the project if all the pipes are going to be replaced. Mr. Moran said yes.
- She asked if there were other grants besides CDBG that help cities fix things that were done years ago. Ms. Delmar said there were grants available, but not because of age but because it presents a public health risk. She said that though they were looking into other grants, there was no guarantee we would get them. If we start the project we need to have the funding in place. So, if we do get grants it could restore any money that we needed to borrow or it could be used for other purposes on this project. She said she had talked to Andy Easton, the City's Grant Administrator, who said that CDBG had received a lot of additional funding and they would be able to offer a lot of grants. Mr. Easton recommended timing the project so we are shovel-ready by the December grant application cycle. If by then we know the cost and we are ready to go, it would put us in a pretty good position to get a \$750,000 grant. If we time our construction on Phase 1 we can hold out for the \$250,000 maximum match grant, which would give us more points on the grant application as well, and is what we did in the past. Commissioner Howell asked if it was a one time grant or if we could apply for each of the three phases. Ms. Delmar said there may be other grant opportunities afterwards, but once we receive the grant, the need-score goes down a bit to give other cities a chance to get money. None of it is a guarantee because there are a lot of variables such as how much money they have, how many cities apply, and how many cities are shovel-ready. We currently have about \$956,000 for this project; the \$250,000 that was approved for the engineering; the \$200,000 in bond proceeds for the alley work between Stuart and Park Avenues that was discussed being moved to this project, which is being recommended in the next budget amendment; the \$89,000 in left over bond proceeds for the downtown improvements that was done, which is also being recommended in the next budget amendment; and the \$417,000 from the Twin Lakes project that was closed down by the Commission last week.

Commissioner Carter asked the following questions:

- He asked if they were referring to December of this year for them to be shovel-ready and Mr. Moran said yes.
- He asked for confirmation that the primary purpose for manholes is to access for maintenance purposes, and if there was a stipulation that you had to have so many manholes. Mr. Homann said yes.

- He asked if this was sewer water only and had nothing to do with rainwater. Mr. Homann said it should be.
- He asked if we knew the condition of the clay pipes and Mr. Homann said a TV study could be done to determine that.
- He said he agreed with the other Commissioners that this project needed to be done but asked if Alternative 1 was the best long-term solution as far as equipment and Mr. Homann said it was and that this option would need very little maintenance. Ms. Delmar pointed out for the record that this project will not improve the circumstances in Greenbriar, the incident that showed up in the newspaper that Commissioner Rogers referred to. She added that we have old clay pipes all over the City.
- He said according to the map there are only a few structures and facilities that are slightly outside the perimeter of the project such as Frazier fields. He asked if this would be an opportunity to look outside that perimeter to fix situations that might be in need of repair. Mr. Homann said we are only looking at Lift Station 16 drainage but it was possible to move the flow from another area to this system.
- He asked Mr. Homann if it was the City's intention to have Envisors Engineers stay with this project from this point going forward. Mr. Homann said yes.

Mayor Van Sickle had the following comments and questions:

- He said it looks like the economy is going downward again so this should be an opportune time for construction because of lower prices. Grants are great if you can get them but they may not be available so our challenge will be figuring out where the funds will come from. We would be in great shape if we can get all three phases done, which is what we should do because we have other pressing sewer problems such as the sewer plant that is operating at 60% efficiency and we are in the process of looking for loans for that.
- He said we need to get a schedule set up and a time-line of when we can do this, have the project shovel-ready, and proceed with that effort. Ms. Delmar said there are some projects by their nature that can wait until the grants come in before we ever start the project, but a project like this that has immediate health concerns can't wait. We will apply for the grants but can't count on them so we have to have the money.
- He asked if we were to spend a million dollars before getting a grant, could that money be replaced with the grant once received. Ms. Delmar said that would be the goal but we have to be careful because with some grant agencies timing was crucial. Money spent before a grant is awarded sometimes does not count as a grant match. We need to have a plan, know what grants we will apply for, and what their funding cycles are. We can do some of the work and reserve a portion of the project that will be our match for a particular grant and just set up our construction schedule so that can be done. Mayor Van Sickle said we need to go ahead with this project because we have another sewer project right behind it and money is tight.
- He asked City Attorney Chuck Galloway if there would be legal issues that might stop the projects because the easements were not deeded. Mr. Galloway said yes. The desire is that property owners where the existing pipes go, and who will therefore benefit

from the project, will be willing to grant the easement. If there are owners that refuse to do that, then the City would have to get the court to grant the prescriptive easement because the pipes have been in the ground for more than 20 years. Ms. Delmar added that this was not the same as deeding the property to the City. The property would still be owned by the individual property owner. The easements will just allow the City to put pipes there.

- He asked for confirmation that \$1,000 per house was in the budget for hook-up fees. Ms. Delmar confirmed and said there would be no cost to the individual homeowner. The Mayor said it was a win-win situation and the City's number one project.

Commissioner Howell asked the following questions:

- She asked if people who have septic tanks in the area can connect to the sewer pipe. Ms. Delmar said they should be able to connect because the service will be available now. People with septic tanks are those whose lines were too shallow for them to hook-up before or because connections were not available in that area at the time. Public Works Director Tom Moran asked if there were still people with septic tanks in that area and Pastor Cleare said he heard there were a few, though he could not verify which residents had them.
- She asked if better pipes would lower water bills and Ms. Delmar said probably not. Mr. Moran said it would improve their environment and it will not stink. Ms. Delmar added that if the capacity of the plant was increased, it would increase the capacity to sell, which could possibly decrease rates. That would be an indirect benefit.
- She asked if sewer hook-ups would increase the water pressure and Mr. Moran said the water system and the sewer system were two different things so anything done to one would not affect the other. Ms. Delmar added that the water would flow out of the houses better and the Mayor added that it would also stay out of the houses.

Commissioner Rogers said he wanted to make the Commissioners aware that there are problems with the sewer plant and something would have to be done in the near future. He said he planned to schedule a tour of the facility. Mr. Moran also offered the tour to any of the other Commissioners who wished to participate. Pastor Cleare asked if citizens could also be included in the tour. Mr. Moran asked if that would cause a legal problem and Ms. Delmar said there would be no more legal concerns with citizens as there would be with Commissioners so if any citizens were interested they could also arrange for a tour.

Pastor Cleare questioned the estimated \$1,000 per household for covered hook-up fees because he knew at his own house the angle of the line would have to be changed, a new line installed, and they would have to jack up the house to go underneath it, which he contended would cost a lot more than \$1,000. Mr. Homann said that was just a number that was put in there and there would be homes that would need a lot less. Ms. Delmar said in the budget we have a \$215,000 line item for contingency, which should cover it.

The Mayor said Alternative 1 was the direction the Commission was giving staff for this project.

Agenda Item 3. Presentation by Pastor James Cleare regarding "City SPIRIT".

Pastor James Cleare, Allen Temple AME Church, gave an overview of the "City Spirit" pilot

program that was held on Saturday, May 22, 2010. He said that the City Commissioners who were present realized that recreation was in the top five of each group present. However, recreation is at the bottom of the list in Lake Wales. This is not fair to our children or their future.

Mayor Van Sickle said he understood that recreation was #3 as far as a cost to the City. Ms. Delmar said yes, but that includes parks as well. The recreation facility line item is about a half of a million dollars in this current budget. Pastor Cleare said that programmatically, recreation is at the bottom of the list. The City has some beautiful parks but that is not the same as recreation. We offer nothing for our children and because of that we can never spend enough money on policing young people when they are dissatisfied with the physical situation.

Mayor Van Sickle asked Pastor Cleare if he was going to talk about the other items that were discussed at "City Spirit" such as communication; jobs; better education etc. Pastor Cleare said we could talk about all those things, but it would just be talk. He wanted to change talk into action. Recreation is something we need to focus on and do because it gives hope to the community.

Albert Hawkins, resident, said he volunteers at the B Street Center trying to help the poor, the needy, and under educated. He gave his view of "City Spirit" and asked the City to make recreation a top priority and do something about it because it is a quality of life issue. Mr. Hawkins explained the problems that people are having in trying to use various school gymnasiums for community activities. He asked the City to intercede on their behalf in getting access to them.

Commissioner Carter asked if school gymnasiums were available for public use and Pastor Cleare said the process to be able to use the high school and Roosevelt Academy was almost impossible. Commissioner Carter said he did not think the Commission had any control or influence over the use of those gymnasiums but they could try to make contact. Ms. Delmar asked Mr. Hawkins and Pastor Cleare to meet with her after the meeting to explain the specific problems they were confronted with so staff can try to set up a meeting with the facility's representatives.

Mayor Van Sickle said it was his understanding that the Charter Schools have their own management and that the County gave them an allotted amount of dollars for the schools, so the Charter School organization should be within Lake Wales. Pastor Cleare said it is within Lake Wales but the principal has not made the process easy. Mayor Van Sickle said that perhaps Mr. Jackson could pave the way for better access. Pastor Cleare said that Mr. Jackson seemed to have his attention on other matters.

Commissioner Carter said he agreed with Pastor Cleare that recreation is a quality of life issue. He said it was definitely one of the engines for economic development in Lake Wales and it needed to be given a high priority. He said there was an immediate need for a recreation director and the City needed to work on a written, practical, five-year plan of what we are going to do with our recreation department.

Pastor Cleare said that Ken Duell who maintains Frazier fields told him that if the third field was included in the contract, then some of the smaller tournaments that usually go to Auburndale or Lakeland would come to Lake Wales. He added that the young man from Lake Wales who made it to the NBA told him if the City made a commitment, he would make a commitment.

Ms. Delmar asked if the Kirkland Gymnasium was open, and was told it was. Commissioner

Carter told Pastor Cleare that an evaluation was being done on the gym to find out what repairs needed to be done.

Commissioner Thornhill said he had looked into getting an internship from one of the local colleges for a recreation director but some issues were involved. He said it wasn't like the City was not trying to improve recreation but it basically comes down to funds. Maybe we will have to be more creative in securing them but with this sewer project and the cuts in the budget we have to be very careful. He said he had been ill and had not been able to attend the "City Spirit" event but that he had been caught up by the other Commissioners. He thought the City did a great job with improving the education system and they are working on the recreation issue.

Commissioner Rogers said everyone would like a better Lake Wales but the question is affordability. The City Manager is the one who knows where we stand on the budget right now and she is working very hard to balance everything out and get the most for the money. We are at a critical point and we have to be very creative to keep water, sewer, fire and police protection, and roads going. It is the first priority for the City. Lake Wales already has a lot of recreational facilities such as the Library, the parks, football fields, soccer field, and the baseball fields. Recreation is the third highest on the agenda so saying that the City is not putting money into recreation is not correct. Pastor Cleare said it is not as much a priority as it should be. He commented that you can never hire enough police or put enough police cars on the road when people are disenfranchised and have nothing to do.

Mayor Van Sickle said the City faced many challenges and he agreed with what was discussed at the "City Spirit" meeting regarding jobs and better education because if the City can't get its citizens trained and educated it has a problem. He announced that there will be a referendum in November to increase the sales tax by a half-cent for public transportation because there won't be federal funding after this year. He said public transportation was important so people can get to educational institutions and to their jobs. There are a lot of ways that people are trying to improve this area. He added that there are no recreational facilities in the north end of the City where he lives.

The Mayor opened the meeting for public comment. There were no comments from the public.

Commissioner Carter explained that there was a Florida League of Cities Conference coming up and that Ms. Delmar said it was the best training for new Commissioners so he asked if the other Commissioners thought this would be money well spent. Ms. Delmar explained that she had not renewed membership for in International City Manager's Association, which is a \$1,300 membership savings that can be moved into the training and education budget for the Commission. Also, the projector replacement did not cost as much as we had budgeted, so \$700 was saved there. Those savings would fully pay the registration and lodging for two Commissioners to attend the conference. She said this does not necessarily require Commission approval, just a consensus that we want to send somebody. The deadline for registration is next Friday, so we cannot wait until the next meeting to make a decision. The Mayor said that he thought training for Commissioners was important. Commissioner Thornhill, as the representative for the Ridge League of Cities, and Commissioner Carter volunteered to attend.

Mayor Van Sickle said that much of the \$300 a month the Lake Wales' Commissioners receive for their services is used for the purchase of gas for city or county business and he thought it would be appropriate to have that reimbursed. He said he knew that, just to keep pace with the current budget and to have the same income as last year, the millage rate would have to go up

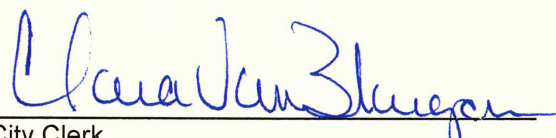
to 8.3. Keeping the millage rate where it is will result in a large decrease in income, which will be a challenge for the City Manager. But, we need to think about putting a few dollars away so that taking care of City business does not have to always come out of the commissioners' pockets.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.



Mayor/Commissioner

ATTEST:



City Clerk