



MINUTES

October 27, 2021

SECOND MONTHLY MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL CITY OPERATIONS CENTER | 305 WILLIAMS ST. | 4:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Barbara G. Volk and Council Members: Mayor Pro Tem Jerry Smith, Jeff Miller, Dr. Jennifer Hensley, and Lyndsey Simpson

Staff Present: City Manager John F. Connet, Assistant City Manager Brian Pahle, City Attorney Angela Beeker, City Clerk Angela Reece, Communications Manager Allison Justus, and others

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Volk called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. A quorum was established with all members in attendance.

2. **PRESENTATIONS**

A. Housing Assistance Corporation Presentation – Ashlynn McCoy, Executive Director

Housing Assistance Corporation Executive Director Ashlynn McCoy presented the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency Award to the City and expressed thanks and appreciation for Council support to make the Oklawaha Village Apartment Project a success. Director McCoy stated the award is judged based on overall design, sustainability, contribution to the community, public and community support and other features. City Manager John Connet stated it is important for the public to acknowledge the City Council's dedication to this project.

Director McCoy further provided an update regarding Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC) over the last year discussing the four programs they offer such as their home repair program, housing counseling, home ownership, and multifamily apartment complexes. Director McCoy stated over the last 33 years, HAC has built over 200 homes and 370 apartment units and said in 2020 HAC completed over 386 home repairs, assisted 220 clients with housing counseling, and housed over 650 persons in their apartment complexes. Director McCoy reviewed the methods of obtaining property for housing within Henderson County and stated HAC has been working internally to develop a fund to purchase property and said HAC is looking for partners to invest in the fund. Director McCoy proposed all municipalities within the County and other interested parties to contribute to a fund that will be used and reinvested exclusively in affordable housing designed to assist residents who earn up to 120 percent of the median area income. Director McCoy stated HAC's goal is to raise \$400,000 to start the fund with a combined annual contribution of \$100,00 from partners.

Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley clarified even with the City Council approving developments, the city is nowhere near the numbers necessary for the need.

Council Member Jerry Smith confirmed HAC has presented this request to all the municipalities in the county and said it would benefit everyone to have this type of housing within the county.

City Manager John Connet reminded everyone that the city is working with HAC through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program to rehabilitate four homes as part of the Seventh Avenue District grant.

B. Lead and Copper Rule Compliance Support Presentation – Gracie Erwin, Environmental Compliance Coordinator

Environmental Compliance Coordinator Gracie Erwin provided a brief history of the establishment of the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) under the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1991 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in order to minimize exposure to lead in drinking water with a final rule compliance date of the LCRR to December 16th, 2021. Ms. Erwin stated this regulation requires compliance from any and all water purveyors nationwide and said the rule sets the compliance deadline for LCRR to October 16th, 2024, to ensure all utilities have a full three years as set by Safe Drinking Water Act to take necessary actions for regulatory compliance.

Ms. Erwin stated the most common source of lead in drinking water is sourced from lead pipes, and brass or bronze faucets and fixtures and said the new LCR provides stricter regulations on lead in drinking water, with an end goal of removing all sources of lead from drinking water systems. Ms. Erwin stated the most relevant improvements under this rule include utilizing science-based standards of practice to identify sources of lead in drinking water; establishing more strict triggering levels to initiate early mitigation; complete lead service line replacement; initial lead testing in schools and childcare facilities; and requiring the establishment of a lead service line inventory which must be publicly available for all utilities that serve more than 50,000 people. Ms. Erwin stated Under the LCRR (Lead and Copper Revised Rule), all drinking water systems are required to submit a Lead Service Line (LSL) inventory or demonstrate the absence of LSL within the first three years of the rules publication (October 16th, 2024) and said this inventory will then be utilized to develop an LSL replacement plan for all systems with known or possible LSL's. She clarified the LSL inventory must include all connections, regardless of ownership, which means both the public and privately owned segments must be included or include proof of absence of LSL. Ms. Erwin discussed the challenges of this requirement stating LSLs cannot be easily seen or touched to confirm what is located below ground and said finding records of privately owned infrastructure presents additional challenges. Ms. Erwin stated staff believes the best approach to establishing an LSL inventory is to begin as soon as possible by utilizing the support of an engineering firm to create the inventory and proposed to partner once again with Hazen and Sawyer, an engineering firm, to support staff in this effort. Ms. Erwin stated Hazen and Sawyer has provided a proposal to assist the city with compliance for the LSL inventory as required by the LCRR.

Council Member Dr. Jennifer Hensley inquired regarding the city's responsibility when finding lead services lines on private property. Ms. Erwin stated in the event lead service lines are found, the city would have to notify the homeowner and report this annually on the inventory. She stated the city is required to replace 3% of city owned lines annually and said if the customer replaces their line, then the city has 45 days to replace its line. There is no other financial responsibility of the city to replace private lines. Ms. Erwin further clarified staff does not anticipate finding large amounts of lead due to the age of the city's infrastructure. Mayor Barbara Volk confirmed the city currently sample tests 34 sites annually and reminded everyone the results are published annually in the water quality report which is published on the City's website.

C. Wastewater Treatment Facility Master Plan – Adam Steurer, Utilities Engineer

Zach Trammel with McKim & Creed Engineering discussed the Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) Master Plan with Council. Mr. Trammel stated the plan is necessary to assess needs, address aging infrastructure and capacity limits, and to satisfy regulatory requirements. Mr. Trammel discussed the plan approach as follows:

- Review previous engineering reports and flow projections
- Assess condition of existing facilities
- Evaluate capacity of existing treatment processes and major equipment
- Evaluate alternatives for replacement/rehabilitation, improvement, and expansion needs
- Provide a capital improvement plan to ensure wastewater treatment needs are met over the next 20 years

Mr. Trammel discussed the need for immediate improvements and costs as outlined below:

- Replace the Ultraviolet Disinfection System. The estimated total project cost is \$2,200,000
- Rehabilitate and Repair the Aeration Basin. The estimated total project cost is \$2,000,000

Mr. Trammel discussed the near-term improvements and costs as outlined below:

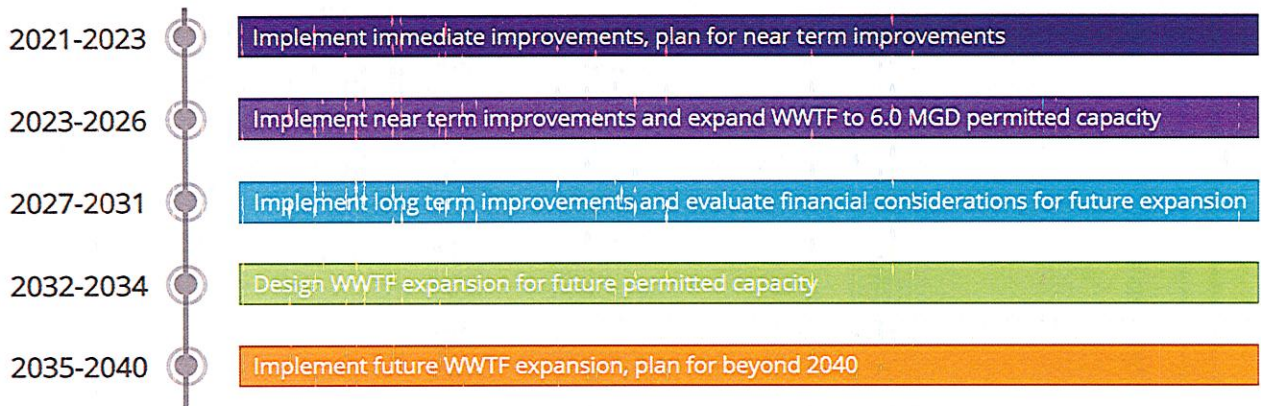
- 6.0 MGD (million gallons per day) Expansion which includes Headworks Improvements & Flow Equalization. The estimated total project cost is \$27,000,000
- Biosolids Treatment Improvements. The estimated total project cost is \$17,000,000
- Tertiary Filter No. 2 Replacement. The estimated total project cost is \$2,200,000
- Blower Building Improvements. The estimated total project cost is \$2,300,000

Mr. Trammel discussed the long-term improvements and costs as outlined below:

- Biological Process Conversion. The estimated total project cost is \$1,700,000

- Sludge Dewatering Belt Filter Press Replacement. The estimated total project cost is \$1,800,000
- Future Expansion to 7.8 MGD. The estimated total project cost is \$26,000,000

Mr. Trammel provided the estimated implementation timeline as depicted below:



City Manager John Connet asked Mr. Trammel to discuss costs related to this plan compared with building additional facilities to assist with capacity. Mr. Trammel stated maintaining the existing facility and building a new smaller facility to assist with capacity would cost an additional \$20M over the next twenty years in addition to the current recommended plan and said completely replacing the existing facility would cost an additional \$30 to \$50M. City Council Members discussed the current waste disposal method and Mr. Trammel reminded everyone that if the City continues to dispose of waste in the current manner the costs are projected to increase to at least \$600,000 in the next year due to landfill fees increasing and said the need to transition to a thermal drying system would eliminate this cost.

Manager Connet recalled prior policy decisions directing staff to build capital improvement projects into the rate structure and said as the city continues to experience growth it may be prudent to consider system development charges to offset the burden on rate payers and to generate revenue to fund the necessary wastewater projects. Manager Connet acknowledged this approach may not be popular with the business community but said he feels it is appropriate to acknowledge given the costs of these projects. Manager Connet stated staff will use the plan to prioritize the CIP and will be discussing with Council further during the budgeting process. Manager Connet reminded everyone the Ultraviolet Disinfection System project has begun and can possibly be funded with ARP funds. Council Members agreed maintenance was critical to sound infrastructure and reminded the public this plan is not set in stone as the County may come online with a plant in the future.

Upon further discussions regarding infiltration and inflow, Utilities Director Lee Smith recommended that any connections to the City's system should be built to city standards. Council Members supported the recommendation and the City Attorney advised she would prepare a draft ordinance and bring back for future discussion.

D. Hendersonville Water & Sewer Strategic Plan – Drew Finley, Assistant to the Utilities Director

Due to time constraints this item was not considered. It will be revisited at a future meeting to allow adequate time to process.

3. ADJOURN

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:55 p.m. upon unanimous assent of the Council.


Barbara G. Volk, Mayor

ATTEST:


Angela L. Reece, City Clerk