

City Hall
Westwego, Louisiana
Special Session

Monday, August 27, 2018

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego met in Special Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 27, 2018, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.

Mayor Peoples delayed the start of the meeting to allow time for Council Member Green to arrive.

There were present:

Mayor Joe Peoples
District 1 Council Member Glenn Green, Sr.
District 2 Council Member Johnny S. Nobles, Jr.
District 3 Council Member Lisa H. Valence
District 4 Council Member Matthew J. Rivere
District 5 Council Member Johnnie Lynn Thibodeaux
Chief of Police, Dwayne J. Munch, Sr.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Peoples called the meeting to order and asked everyone to stand.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Joe Peoples led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

AMEND THE AGENDA

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, seconded by Council Member Green, to amend the agenda to discuss a request for an Occupational License.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

ADDRESS THE CITY COUNCIL

FRANCISCO CASTILLO – 577 VICTORY DRIVE

Mr. Castillo addressed the City Council to request a Home Occupational License for his Air Conditioning and Heating Company mail and phone use only.

MOVED by Council Member Nobles, seconded by Council Member Valence, to grant a Home Occupational License to Francisco Castillo.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

WESTWEGO WATER PLANT PROJECT

Project Engineer Oscar Boudreaux, with Environmental Engineering Services, Inc., Consulting Engineer Mo Saleh, with Professional Engineering and Environmental Consultants, Inc., City Attorney Joel Levy, and City CPA Jim Butler were present for the discussion of the Westwego Water Plant.

Mr. Saleh explained that for the past few months he has been coordinating between Mr. Boudreaux, the contractor, and the Mayor's Office concerning the Water Plant. Mr. Saleh stated that in April there was a meeting to discuss what must be done for the contractor to complete his work and get the Water Plant operating. Mr. Saleh explained that the issues with the water were the chemicals, an existing valve that needed to be located, and the clarifiers. Many of these issues have been resolved however, there are four (4) clarifiers and only clarifier #3 and #4 are working. The low water level in the Mississippi River is preventing the clarifiers from working properly. A discussion followed.

Mr. Saleh further explained that the goal of the City of Westwego is to get the Contractor's contract completed and the satisfaction of the Engineer's design application to the City. A list of items to be completed was prepared and given to the contractor. The contractor was able to address some of the items however some items cannot be addressed unless the clarifiers are running. A discussion followed.

Mr. Saleh stated that it will take approximately two months to get the clarifiers working properly and additional month running the test before we can find out how the system is working.

Council Member Rivere asked Mr. Saleh about clarifiers #1 and #2, which are not working. Mr. Saleh discussed the condition of the clarifiers and the approximate price of \$200,000.00 to \$300,000.00 per clarifier to get them in working order. A discussion followed.

Mr. Boudreaux handed out a summary of work and documentation since the water project started.

Mr. Boudreaux stated that the Water Plant Project started April 3, 2017 and the completion date was supposed to be February 7, 2018. Mr. Boudreaux discussed the problems with the clarifiers and the problems that delayed the scheduled completion of the Water Plant. Mr. Boudreaux stated that since June 14, 2018 they have not been able to get the clarifiers running, and that the contractor feels that a change order is needed. The contractor is requesting 438 days to get the work completed.

Mr. Boudreaux stated that the plant can be brought up to standards for \$2.5 million. Mr. Boudreaux feels there are operators who can get the Water Plant up and running in a very short time. He has an experienced operator at \$75.00 per hour, who can get the clarifiers up and running in two ten-hour days with bentonite clay and an inductor. Mayor Peoples asked for a price for the time, equipment, cost of clay and the chemicals. Mr. Boudreaux will have the operator submit a proposal for this. Mayor Peoples stated this has to go through Facility Planning for approval. A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples asked Mr. Boudreaux for his recommendation on the number of days for the change order. Mr. Boudreaux stated a total of 245 calendar days is recommended from Environmental Engineering Services. A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated that the last invoice showed it is 97% completed, however it does not show a substantially completed list. Mr. Boudreaux said they cannot provide a substantially completed list at this time. Mayor Peoples must give Facility Planning a full report after this meeting. A discussion followed.

Mr. Saleh discussed what is needed to complete the contract, and the certified operators and maintenance personnel that are needed to operate the plant. Council Member Nobles addressed his concerns about the plant operators using the bentonite clay to keep the plant running. Mr. Boudreaux stated once the plant is running they will be educated on the process of keeping the plant running. He stated there is a possibility we could lose the mud blanket (in the clarifiers), but a stronger possibility the City Operators will be able to keep the system running with the bentonite clay. A discussion followed.

Mayor Peoples stated the Water Plant was able to run three million gallons per day (3 mgd) before it closed and after spending \$2.3 million plus it will still run only 3 mgd under full operation. Mr. Boudreaux explained this plant will not be running at its maximum because it will only be running two of the four clarifiers. A discussion followed.

Council Member Rivere asked Mr. Boudreaux what is left to complete. Mr. Boudreaux stated there is three (3) percent left until completion. Mr. Saleh explained that we have a contract with the contractor and the City has a contract with the engineer. In order to close out the contracts they must run a test at the Water Plant and assure everything is working properly. Once that process is completed which will include teaching the operators within this 30 day process and the actual chemical test is done the engineer will certify that the contractor's work is complete. The Engineer will then recommend final acceptance, a letter will then be submitted to DHH stating the plant is producing water. At that time the City is finished with their contract, however for us to get to that point we must get the clarifiers running. During the 30 days of testing we do not have to have certified operators; once the water goes into the homes you must have Class III certified operators. Mr. Saleh recommended we have four Class III certified operators and one maintenance operator who should also be Class III certified.

Mr. Saleh discussed the Westwego Water Plant Cost Analysis that PEEC prepared. The analysis goes from 2010 to 2018; one chart representing the cost of the water produced at the City of Westwego Water Plant with a deficit of \$635,000.00 per year, and one chart representing buying water from Jefferson Parish and closing the Westwego Water Plant with a deficit of \$410,000.00 per year. A discussion followed.

City CPA Jim Butler spoke on behalf of the budget. Mr. Butler stated the numbers Mr. Saleh stated are correct, but that they are estimates. There was a further discussion of costs.

Council Member Rivere asked how much the city has left in the Capital Outlay Account. Mr. Butler stated the original project was \$3.4 million of which Facility Planning receives \$10,000.00, approximately \$482,000.00 was for the transfer pumps, the contract that was awarded for the renovations was \$2,395,300.00 plus the one change order of \$16,941.00, the engineering of the plant was \$200,215.00 and a survey costing approximately \$2,800.00. After paying these expenses there will be a surplus in the Capital Outlay Account of \$290,000.00.

Council Member Valence asked the City Council be given a figure of what it is costing to run the Water Plant once it is up and running.

A discussion of the change order followed. Mr. Saleh recommended we send the change order to Facility Planning before the City Council votes on it. Mr. Boudreaux asks that the City Council approve the change order today contingent on Facility Planning concurrence. City Attorney Levy recommended we wait on the approval of Facility Planning. Mr. Saleh suggested that the Mayor call Facility Planning in the morning (Wednesday, August 28) to review the change order and have another Special Session if they concur. Mr. Saleh feels that we need to proceed with caution because we are legally bound if we sign the change order. Council Member Green stated that he would like more time to review the change order and not vote on it tonight. Mr. Butler, City CPA stated the standard procedure on all change orders is to have Facility Planning review the change order (and concur) before it is approved by the City Council.

Council Member Rivere asked Mr. Boudreaux why the City of Westwego agreed to this contract knowing we would have to spend an additional \$2.2 million to complete this project. Mr. Boudreaux said the governing authority was aware of this before signing the contract. Mr. Butler stated that the renovations were based on the money they had available at the time. A discussion followed.

Mr. Boudreaux spoke concerning the money that is owed to the contractor and Environmental Engineering. Mayor Peoples stated Facility Planning will review the change order and give us their opinion. The Mayor will present the City Council with the findings of Facility Planning and hold a Special Session if needed. A discussion followed.

Mr. Boudreaux stated that Clarifier #1 is inoperable and that the valve needs to be replaced. The Mayor asked that they obtain a proposal for replacement of the valve for Clarifier # 1.

Council Member Rivere thanked all who cleared their schedules to come to this Special Session and stated that he felt this was a very productive meeting.

MOVED, and seconded by All Council Members, to adjourn meeting at 8:00 p.m., Monday, August 27, 2018.

APPROVED: Yeas: Green, Nobles, Valence, Rivere, Thibodeaux

Joe Peoples, Mayor

Lisa Tapia, City Clerk

The Mayor and City Council of the City of Westwego will meet in Regular Session at 6:00 p.m., Monday, September 10, 2018, in the Council Room at City Hall, 1100 Fourth Street, Westwego, Louisiana.
