

TOWN OF JEROME

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MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE JEROME TOWN COUNCIL
CONDUCTED VIA ZOOM
MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2021 AT 2:00 PM

<p>ITEM #1: 2:01 (0:16)</p>	<p>CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL</p> <p>Mayor/Chairperson to call meeting to order.</p> <p><i>Mayor Dillenberg called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.</i></p> <p>Town Clerk to call and record the roll.</p> <p><i>Town Manager/Clerk Candace Gallagher called the roll. Present were Mayor Dillenberg, Vice Mayor Mandy Worth, and councilmembers Jane Moore, Sage Harvey, and Alex Barber. Also present were Mike Krebs and Taylor Pierce of PACE, Henry MacVittie of Contract Wastewater Operations, Public Works Director Marty Boland, and Deputy Town Clerk Rosa Cays.</i></p>
<p>ITEM #2: 2:02</p>	<p>WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT</p> <p>Council will review engineering reports prepared by PACE Engineering with respect to possible upgrades at the town's wastewater treatment facility.</p> <p><i>Mayor Dillenberg made a few comments about the opportunity before Council and the Town of Jerome.</i></p> <p><i>Mike Krebs of PACE Engineering outlined the information included in the engineering report (included as an addendum to these minutes). He noted that Council did not want to consider potential alternate sites for the treatment plant, and that PACE had thought that moving the plant might cost less than keeping it where it is. He listed the three basic areas of direct costs: 1) the access road—\$1.5 million; 2) the half-mile-long collection line from Douglas Road to the plant—\$1.5 million; and 3) the treatment plant itself—\$3 million, for \$6 million total.</i></p> <p><i>Mayor Dillenberg asked if Mr. Krebs had any ideas regarding where the money could come from.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Krebs said he did, but that what he wanted to focus on is what the town wants. He said the town will need a letter of conditions from the USDA, who will want to look at current sewer rates, median income, population, etc., and that the monthly sewer rate should be around \$45 per EDU (family unit), which will determine the grant/loan ratio from the USDA. Mr. Krebs said that our existing consent order will help Jerome with the USDA, and that the grant could possibly pay 50 to 75 percent of the cost at an interest rate of 1.25 percent. He added that the USDA will require the town to have a short-lived asset reserve to accumulate funds to replace pumps, and a debt reserve.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Gallagher asked what was next regarding the USDA grant. Mr. Krebs explained the next steps, and that once the town has met their requirements, the USDA will submit to Jerome a letter of conditions, about eight pages long, that will need to be signed. He said it would not bind the town to anything at this point and that he would further break down the costs of building the treatment plant.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Krebs answered Councilmember Moore's question about a timeframe and said that the application should be submitted by the end of October.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Moore said the town would need at least a \$1 million loan and asked if this would have to go to the voters for a bond. Mr. Krebs said the town could set up a Municipal Property Corporation (MPC) which would negate the requirement for an election; that the town attorney could assist with this, the Council could choose who would be on the board, and that a bond would not be necessary. He also said USDA may be able to help.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Moore asked why it would be cost prohibitive to repair the existing treatment plant. Discussion first turned to submission deadlines and page 29 of the PACE presentation in the agenda packet. Mr. Pierce said that the deadlines are not set in stone; the town just needs to show progress to ADEQ and stick with the schedule. Mr. Krebs said that the USDA has been doing groundwork and that Jerome could be funded before Thanksgiving if all paperwork is submitted in October.</i></p> <p><i>Ms. Gallagher asked if official Council approval was needed, and Mr. Krebs replied that it is not. He said the Council could approve the PER, basically for the record, then the project could go forward.</i></p> <p><i>Mr. Pierce got back to Ms. Moore's question about repairing the existing plant. He said that to repair the plant would not address the nitrate issue and would involve additional infrastructure that would be less cost effective because it would require more concrete than if a new plant were built with a smaller footprint.</i></p>

	<p>Ms. Moore asked about the trickling filter. Mr. Pierce said they could build a new one that would be the same size, possibly larger. Mr. Krebs said that ADEQ’s requirement for the effluent will be upgraded and explained how building a new trickling filter was more complicated and that other components would need to be replaced or installed.</p> <p>Henry MacVittie of Contract Wastewater Operations joined the meeting at 2:30 p.m.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce explained the permit situation regarding replacement of the trickling filter.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked if replacing the trickling filter would correct the ammonia and nitrate levels. Mr. Pierce said he was sure it would not. Discussion ensued, then turned to Alternative 1—Trickling Filters with Post Denitrification Reactor (page 20 of the PACE presentation). Mr. Pierce explained why it was not the best option.</p> <p>Mr. Krebs said ADEQ will look at a 20-year life cycle, and that Jerome would need to balance capital costs with operational costs. He said Alternative 2 had the lowest overall lifecycle cost.</p> <p>Councilmember Harvey brought to everyone’s attention page 27, Table 2, which showed the present worth summary for each alternative.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked for clarification on tables showing costs in the packet provided by PACE. Discussion ensued. Mr. Pierce later explained that Table 13 on page 22 was the cost of the treatment plant only, and that Table 29 on page 32 reflected all costs.</p> <p>Ms. Moore then asked about traffic from sludge removal. Mr. Pierce guessed it would be one truck per week based on other similar plants. He said he spoke with Mr. MacVittie about reducing the volume of sludge and how it could be done.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked about the noise in the buildings to provide aeration to the basins. Mr. Pierce explained how this less passive system worked, and that only the 10- to 15-horsepower blower made noise, which he recommended be put in a shed and that PACE could provide sound dampers.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked what Jerome would do in 20 years. Mr. Pierce said it would likely be time for an upgraded plant.</p> <p>Ms. Harvey said that the noise from a 15-horsepower blower was nothing compared to noise from the cement plant.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce said that PACE was looking at as many low-impact, low-energy options as they could.</p> <p>Mayor Dillenberg said this a big project for Jerome and that access to funding will determine the outcome.</p> <p>Ms. Moore said the population is only 440 but thousands of people come to Jerome and asked if this would have any influence in the grant application. Mr. Krebs said it did not have influence and compared Jerome to Quartzsite, which was recently awarded a \$10 million project, with 80 percent paid through grants. A brief discussion began about other relative statistics such as median average income.</p> <p>Ms. Harvey referred to page 3 of the PACE packet and said Jerome’s population is down from what it has been. Mr. Krebs said this could affect USDA grant eligibility if the population declines. Ms. Gallagher said that the current population per the 2020 census is around 460, so it is actually slightly higher than in 2010.</p> <p>Mayor Dillenberg asked what the next step would be. Mr. Krebs said they’ve received comments from ADEQ on the preliminary engineering report and are waiting for official comments from the USDA. PACE will then address the comments and finalize the report, which needs to be submitted by the town.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked if the footprint for Alternative 2 is smaller than Alternative 1. Mr. Pierce said that it is. Ms. Moore then asked if concrete was the only option for the basins; Mr. Krebs replied that steel was also an option but more expensive, and that ADEQ will want something that would be guaranteed not to leak.</p> <p>Mr. Pierce said the town’s point of compliance was after the wetlands. He said if the plant is upgraded, it would be beneficial to move the point of compliance upstream. The wetlands would then not be part of the permit but could be maintained, or they could be used for sludge drying beds—or they can remain part of the permit if the town wants to keep them.</p> <p>Ms. Moore asked if something could be grown there instead. Mr. Pierce said it could, and if the town took this route, it might want to consider storage for irrigation control.</p>
<p>ITEM #3: 2:57 (55:53)</p>	<p>ZONING ADMINISTRATOR POSITION</p> <p>Council will discuss options for filling the position of Zoning Administrator/ Planner/Historic Preservation Officer/Code Enforcement Officer.</p> <p>Mayor Dillenberg said that the salary was low compared to other places in Yavapai County and that historic preservation should be separate from zoning issues. He said each position could work two days per week.</p> <p>Ms. Gallagher noted that Jerome’s wages aren’t competitive in any position. It was noted that part-time positions would not receive benefits. Mayor Dillenberg said this would save the town money and that he didn’t see either position requiring full time.</p> <p>Vice Mayor Worth agreed that the position could be split but that there was also the code enforcement aspect of the position. This would require more than 20 hours a week, not to mention all the meetings they would be attending. She said a job without benefits would be difficult to fill, although a historic preservation officer could likely be part time.</p>

Ms. Gallagher asked the Council for clarification on the position description and said that there had not been much response to the ad. She said one frustration past zoning administrators have experienced is that the position entails little planning and a great deal of code enforcement. In newer postings, she changed the title to zoning code enforcement officer.

Councilmember Barber said the revised title seemed more realistic and that they would have to establish a separate title for the historic preservation officer. She said Jerome cannot be compared to other municipalities considering the vast difference in population, and used Cottonwood as an example.

Vice Mayor Worth suggested that code enforcement be prominent in the job posting as well as the need to attend meetings and oversee boards. She suggested the ad be placed on governmentjobs.com and with the League website postings.

Ms. Moore said she liked the idea of separating the duties and that in addition, the zoning administrator needs to be able to read architectural plans and understand the ordinance; and that the historic preservation officer could work when needed—and perhaps be “borrowed” from a nearby municipality.

Ms. Gallagher asked if an ad should be placed for the historic preservation officer. Ms. Harvey requested Council discuss the description for the historic preservation officer before an ad is placed. Ms. Moore also suggested listing the positions with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

ITEM #4:
3:12 (1:10:25)

EXECUTIVE SESSION: PERSONNEL

Council will convene in executive session pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.03 (A)(1) to consider employment, assignment or appointment options for filling the positions of Town Manager and Town Clerk following the eventual retirement of the current Town Manager/Clerk.

Motion to move into executive session at 3:12 p.m.

COUNCILMEMBER	MOVED	SECONDED	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
BARBER			X			
DILLENBERG			X			
HARVEY	X		X			
MOORE		X	X			
WORTH			X			

Council returned to open session at 3:46 p.m.

(1:11:26) Ms. Gallagher said that the restructuring of the town manager/clerk position would be discussed further at the regular Council meeting on October 12.

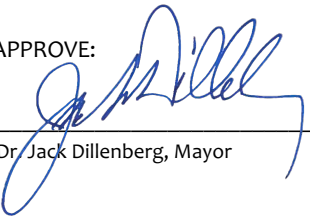
ITEM #5:

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 3:47 p.m.

COUNCILMEMBER	MOVED	SECONDED	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
BARBER			X			
DILLENBERG			X			
HARVEY	X		X			
MOORE			X			
WORTH		X	X			

APPROVE:



Dr. Jack Dillenberg, Mayor

ATTEST:



Candace B. Gallagher, CMC, Town Manager/Clerk

Date: 11-10-2021
