

Study Session 1

Mayor Jones introduced Ted Pooler from Huibregtse, Louman Associates and Todd LaRoche, Lead Operator at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to discuss the dewatering and drying improvements to the Treatment Plant.

Ted Pooler stated his purpose is to bring the Council up to date on changes planned at the Plant and discuss additional elements that have come up during the design phase and costs for those elements. He briefly reviewed the original improvements proposed:

1. Construct a clarifier.
2. Construct a concrete masonry sludge pumping building.
3. Construct a 250,000-gallon aerated sludge holding tank.
4. Provide steel frame building to house the sludge dewatering and sludge drying.
5. Install a centrifuge and polymer feed system for sludge dewatering.
6. Install a heated sludge dryer to produce Class A biosolids for beneficial reuse.
7. Provide conveyors to transport dewatered sludge from the centrifuge to the dryer and Class A biosolids away from the dryer to the covered storage area.
8. Make the following other miscellaneous improvements for sludge dewatering and drying:
 - Site paving and drainage improvements
 - Extension of City water supply to the site (1,560 LF of 10" and 200 LF of 8")
 - Improvements to the site entrance road (bituminous surface treatment)
 - Extension of sludge supply piping to the site (750 LF of 6")
 - Miscellaneous yard piping improvements
9. Replace the sludge-loading pump at main treatment plant and modify piping.
10. Install effluent pump facility at main treatment plant, and piping from the main plant to the biosolids treatment facility, to provide reuse water and reduce demand on domestic water supply.

He introduced additional project elements that are being considered:

1. Additional Storage Area
2. Main WWTP Electrical Service - new service needed to replace aging and outdated equipment.
3. Clean up waste debris between industrial pretreatment facility and old sludge drying beds.
4. Add "Algae Sweep" mechanisms to clarifiers at main WWTP.

He referred to the drawing of the site plan. He noted they desire to provide the Plant with additional storage, because the Old Fire Station no longer available, so Community Days is now using part of the Pre-Treatment facility that was previously used for storage. They propose adding another bay at the east end of the Biosolids Treatment Facility. He referred to diagram S-1 showing this cost effective method of adding storage for equipment and supplies. He estimated the cost of enlarging the building for storage will run from \$65-75,000.

He referred to B-1, the plan view of the proposed building, and drew the Council's attention to the right hand storage bay, office, restroom and electrical room.

Councilman Schmid asked if the restroom would be unisex. He suggested if the City gets to the point where we have female employees, we might want to provide separate restroom facilities for men and women.

Mr. Pooler stated this is an industrial facility, so there is no requirement to designate separate restrooms.

Councilman Schmid stated if we hire a woman to work there, it might become an issue. He suggested it would be better to plan for that contingency now rather than having to jury-rig something else later.

Councilwoman Nichols asked about additional cost.

Councilman Schmid stated if we build one, we need to plan for lockers, showers, etc.

Mayor Jones suggested it would be a lot simpler to provide lock for the door.

Mr. Pooler stated he would reconfirm the requirements with the code enforcement people.

Council Member Schmid suggested going right into the storage area.

Ted Pooler reviewed the elements of the proposed facility as shown in diagram B-1. He moved on to the second additional project element – electrical service for the main WWTP facility. He said the main plant electrical system is old and is starting to wear out. He stated they've had some failures that could have taken out the entire power service to the main plant. There are currently two generators in case of power outage, but the north generator is so old we can't get parts for it. He stated the big generator is in good shape, so they propose to rewire everything to the big one. He estimated the cost at \$250-290,000, noting this will also control the monitoring system at the plant, which will keep track of people and activities at both sites.

He stated the area behind the treatment plant has become a dumping ground for construction waste through the years. The proposal is to clean that area while the City already has heavy equipment in town working on the Crusher Canyon Project. He stated the estimated cost is \$50-75,000.

Mr. Pooler stated item 4 is to add Algae Sweep mechanisms, noting that while the treatment plant does a great job of cleaning effluent, algae can grow there. He stated this mechanism is available to scrub the clarifier and improve effluent quality by reducing the amount of fouling that occurs in the UV disinfectant system. He stated this will reduce the potential for permit violations and improve the operation of UV equipment.

He stated these additional elements are estimated at \$400-470,000, and he proposed paying that for out of the sewer reserve fund.

Council Member Schmidt asked if any of this expansion has become necessary because of the growth of the City.

Mr. Pooler responded it does not reflect growth, rather it gives the City more options for disposal.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet stated it makes sense ecologically and keeps us from being dependent on Yakima County disposal. He noted Class A pathogens can be used by the Training Center.

Ted Pooler stated the Wastewater Treatment Plant is only using about half of its capacity. He noted he has increased the projected cost on the headwork screen, because they can't make that work hydraulically so will need to buy a different kind of screen. He referred to Pages 2 and 3 showing funding. He stated the 2006 ending fund balance was \$4,122,536 so the actual beginning fund balance in 2006 is \$120,000 higher than the \$4 million that's shown. He stated they've already proposed to pull out about \$1.2 million leaving an ending fund balance of \$2,946,570, so if they raised the \$1.2 million to \$1.9 million, that would allow us to keep about \$2 million in the Sewer Reserve Fund, and that has always been the goal. He noted we have to do the electrical improvements, but adding storage is an option, cleaning up debris is another option, the algae sweep mechanism makes sense, but that could also be considered an option.

Mayor Jones said the algae sweep makes sense.

Council Member Schmid asked how many Public Works Trust Fund loans we have for sewer projects. It was generally agreed that there are only two loans for sewer.

Ted Pooler stated loan 2 is at ½% interest, and loan 1 is at 1½%.

Councilman Schmid stated he would like to see total of water, sewer and streets loans and the interest percentages.

Mayor Jones thanked Mr. Pooler for his presentation.

Study Session 2

Councilman Overby stated he brought up the issue of meeting times for the Council because he thought there might be a better way to communicate with the community-at-large and for them to communicate with us. He stated the Council Meeting itself may not be the best way to accomplish that communication, suggested the Council discuss some other ways in which they might encourage that dialogue. He noted Selah is one of the few cities that still has a daytime Council Meeting.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet stated we used to have meetings at 7pm that would often run until 11 o'clock. He noted we have had 30% increase in participation since moving meetings to daytime.

Councilman Allen Schmid stated no time is best for everyone. He said participation with youth has always been important in the community of Selah, and Council Members with kids should be encouraged to support their kids. He further stated since the high school has gone to requirement of having kids attend a Council Meeting, we've had great participation, and he wondered it that would cease. He stated he served on the Planning Commission for eleven years, and their meetings were at 7:00pm until the last year or so with very few citizens attending those meetings unless the person was directly involved with item before the Commission. He stated he likes the 4 o'clock meeting time. He asked if we should go to 9pm when student activities are over, stating he doesn't know the answer because retired people like him can attend meetings whenever they are called. He stated people who are committed to knowing what is going on and give up time to be involved will do it.

Council Member Denise Nichols noted her experience is different from Councilman Schmid's, because in her twelve years on the Selah School Board she saw that meeting in the evenings

was not a hindrance and did not hold kids back from observing the meeting. She stated her observation that since Yakima has gone to later meetings, people get crankier the longer they last. She suggested perhaps there could be a compromise.

Council Member Herb Schmidt stated communication is extremely important in any community, noting Councilman Paul Overby has brought up an interesting option of communication not connected with a Council Meeting. He suggested Council Member forums be devised, perhaps a bi-monthly meeting where 2-3 Council Members could hold informational forums for citizen input or to explain what is happening on certain issues. He said there are probably some creative ways in which we could communicate.

Councilwoman Nichols asked what the staff costs would be for going to evening meetings.

City Supervisor Frank Sweet stated the majority of Staff is exempt from overtime. He noted Councilman Overby is correct in that it isn't so much what is happening in a meeting, rather what is being communicated. He said it might make some sense to have a community forum.

Fire Chief Davis stated most of us hired on knowing it requires long hours, so if the job requires evening meetings, we come. He noted turning around and coming back is difficult for his volunteers after they've gone home and relaxed.

Councilman Overby agreed, suggesting perhaps 5:30 be considered rather than 7:00.

Mayor Jones stated he's been in this business for 19 years, and he prefers the 4 o'clock meetings compared to other options. He stated anyone not on the agenda can say their piece, and then they leave. He noted the entertainment factor of meetings is .05, and in his recollection the only person who made it a point to attend regularly was Grace Maltzberger who now is in a nursing facility. He asked if the City has received any applications for Planning Commission. There were none. He stated people are going to do the thing they are interested in.

Council Member Schmidt interjected that when he came aboard as a Council Member he brought up this same issue, the difference being that Council Member Overby was listened to.

Councilman Overby stated the Council Meeting is not the place to find out what's going on in the community. He said perhaps a community forum is the best option.

Mayor Jones stated we held an Emergency Management meeting at the Civic Center and only seven people were there. He suggested if Council Members want to communicate with the public, they should go to the grocery store.

Frank Sweet said he was asked about the Fire Chief retiring. He said he explained that some positions had been changed in the Fire Department for the purpose of training.

Council Member Scott Smeback said people do need someone to ask about what's going on, but for him it amounts to balancing person and community needs. He used the analogy of scheduling doctor or dentist appointments, and suggested one should do the same thing for council or school board or any community meeting. He stated in 1997 they were working on the Growth Management Act, and no one was here.

Mayor Jones asked Councilwoman Nichols if the City of Yakima gives her leave to serve on the Selah Council.

She responded she works extra to make up the time.

Councilman Overby said he uses vacation time to attend meetings.

Mayor Jones stated his belief that their employers should grant them some kind of civic leave. He declared a five-minute break before the Council Meeting.