

CITY OF GILBERT
MINUTES OF SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Mayor Kutsi called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Present: Mayor Kutsi, Councilors Skalko, Pontinen and Liimatta.

Absent: Councilor Bol.

Present: City Engineer Jamnick, Public Works Operations Director Lautigar and Tom Dye, of Stantec

This Special Meeting was called to give authorization to Stantec to submit the Draft Waste Water Treatment Plant Facilities Study to the MN Pollution Control Agency and Chief Techar is requesting a modification to the Police Vehicle being purchased.

Chief Techar was unable to attend and asked that his request be removed from the agenda.

Motion by Skalko second by Liimatta to approve the agenda. All approved.

Tom Dye, Stantec Associate, gave an overview of the Facility Plan on how to deal with the City of Gilbert's Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet the new mercury limits and to operate for the next 20 years.

- 3 options:
 - 1) Continue what is being done, but upgrade the facility. Replace media filters with a finer grain media, and upgrade the treatment system that is ahead of the filters. The bio-solids sludge system would continue as it is today, but would need to haul in the winter, no excess storage. (Approximately \$6 million)
 - 2) Upgrade filters & facility, but add sludge storage capacity and continue treatment as what is now in place. (Approximately \$6 million)
 - 3) Implement a membrane bio-reactive process, which is similar to how it is done now, but instead of filters there would be membranes used to strain suspended solids. (Approximately \$7.6 million)
 - 4) Also looked at pumping to Virginia or Eveleth. Eveleth already has filters in place and are meeting the mercury requirements. They would have to expand to take on Gilbert. So no benefit to Eveleth to regionalize. Virginia would charge a connection fee in excess of \$2 million. Gilbert would be 15 – 20% of their flow, then there would be pumps and a system to get it to Virginia, also not cost effective.
- 3 main issues
 - Age of equipment (some is over 30 years old)
 - Peak flows – can't handle high flows when snow melts or high rain fall
 - Proposed mercury limits, 1.3 parts/trillion, for the City of Gilbert. Great Lakes Initiative was the impetus for the new mercury standards. Mercury is treated by removing as many solids as possible.

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Stantec's recommendation is to go with option #3, which has a higher capital cost, but has more potential for grant money because of the mercury mitigation component. Mercury has a \$4 million price tag alone. Grant money from the MPCA could fund up to 50% of eligible costs.

Tom Dye suggested to submit facility plan, to get an idea of the grant money that could be received. There is no commitment to proceed at this level. It gets Gilbert in line. There is a point system, the higher the points the more likely grant money could be received. He thinks 90 points is what Gilbert could get, which is really high (good news), which will help rankings for funding.

Have to submit by Friday, March 6, 2015.

Facility safety is another issue that needs to be addressed. The operator (or main) building does not meet code for ventilation, not a safe place for personnel to be.

A plan has to be submitted by 2016, but to get funding information it is beneficial to file now.

The impact to the utility customer is estimated at about \$20/month, even with grant money in place.

There is a very small amount of mercury that ends up being removed after this process is in place, but these are limits that come down from the EPA and it is for all of the Great Lakes Basin area.

Discussed the sulfide issue impacting discharging into waters that grow/harvest wild rice. Municipal side is different than the mines.

The MVR (membrane) system would eliminate four existing processes at the current plant. MVR would be a new structure, and could lower plant to a Class B.

Lab could not be done in house because standards for labs have changed in the last 10 years. Labs used to have to be certified by the MN Dept. of Health, now the MPCA has taken over for labs that are doing their own testing. The MPCA will help the entity get the lab certified. This would be implemented when the new system is put in place.

Mayor Kutsi stated that he talked with the City of Eveleth and the feedback was very positive regarding Stantec.

To upgrade existing facility without mercury requirement it could cost approximately \$3.5 - \$4 million.

All options include installation of an equalization basin of 1.7 million gallons, "pond" to take care of high flow.

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The city will still need to meet discharge limits during construction.

There would be two seasons of construction to implement a new/upgraded system.

Pilot test will need to be done to see if the MVR system actually works. This will cost approximately \$30,000 to do. This should be done this summer, 2 – 3 months. This could be a reimbursed cost through a loan.

Motion by Skalko second by Pontinen to submit the Gilbert Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan to the MPCA. All approved.

Motion by Skalko second by Liimatta to set a public hearing for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 14, 2015. All approved.

Motion by Skalko second by Pontinen to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Robert Kutsi, Mayor

ATTEST:

Debra Sakrison, City Clerk