



Town of Belleair

901 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Belleair, FL 33756

Meeting Minutes Special Meeting

Thursday, November 5, 2020

4:30 PM

Town Hall

Town Commission - R.O. Discussion I

Zoom Webinar ID: 831 4837 7107

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COMMISSIONER ROLL CALL

- Present** 4 - Deputy Mayor Karla Rettstatt, Commissioner Michael Wilkinson, Commissioner Tom Shelly, and Commissioner Tom Kurey
- Absent** 1 - Mayor Gary H. Katica

CITIZENS COMMENTS

None to be heard

GENERAL AGENDA

[20-0270](#)

Discussion of Draft Reverse Osmosis Preliminary Engineering Report and Water Rate Study

JP Murphy-Town Manager-provided overview of meeting agenda; same format will be held next week; discussed QR code for access to full report; overviewed current water system, discussing number of customers and filtration process; recurring revenue is \$1.6 million. Purpose of meeting is to address long term water concerns; total dissolved solids; chloride removal; options are RO or Pinellas County.

Mr. Murphy further discussed secondary standards.

Phil Locke-McKim and Creed, Engineer-Discussed regulations and water quality; discussed well evaluations, groundwater supply needs, proposed RO plant, pilot testing, and staff needs; described filtration process; provided capital cost estimate of approximately \$11.8.

Mr. Murphy spoke on SWFMUD cooperative funding for injection well; will not drill well if not moving forward with RO.

Mr. Locke discussed the phased implementation plan compared to all at once construction; phased would be done in 2 phases.

Mr. Murphy spoke on infrastructure board discussions; board in favor of not phasing due to long term cost savings not really there.

Mr. Locke continued presentation detailing cost summary and annual operating &

maintenance costs based on approach; recommends Town decide by end of year, plant would need to be online by first quarter 2024 to be in compliance; noted design and construction timelines, and need for pilot study period.

Nick Smith-Raftelis, Rate Study Consultant-Presented rate study overview and process; rate study assumptions relating to minimal customer growth, operating expenses, two low-interest State Revolving Fund (SRF) loans to fund capital plan; SRF payments begin upon project completion; preliminary rate adjustments; current rate comparisons with other utilities; Belleair is below average rates; presented rate comparisons with Pinellas County.

Jim White-resident-questioned volume; Mr. Smith stated rate charts based on single family residential assumptions; Mr. Murphy described billing structure for condo units.

Deputy Mayor Rettstatt questioned if Pinellas County will revise structure in future. Mr. Murphy discussed most recent analysis for next 3-4 years, however it is an unknown if changes to volumetric billing will be made.

Deputy Mayor Rettstatt questioned if Town has any control of quality/taste of water should switch to Pinellas County occur; Mr. Murphy stated residents would have to appeal to Pinellas County for changes; galvanized pipes need to be replaced and quickly if we move to Pinellas County for them to provide the same water quality as to all other customers; RO scenario would allow Town to control all factors, pipe replacement can be done over time.

Resident spoke on selling assets to Pinellas County; Mr. Murphy stated not a sale, we'd actually pay Pinellas County to take over system. Resident spoke on water system being an important asset, concerns with giving up resource.

Mr. Murphy stated Pinellas County doesn't generate water, would not have any pumping capacity; aquifer is controlled through SWFWMD and Town has permit to draw water; if generations system goes, no one else has rights to well field, but Pinellas County can't draw as they go through Tampa Bay Water. Would be giving up permit and would likely not get it back.

Mr. Murphy provided a map showing where water comes from; Tampa Bay water sources.

Fred Hemerick-resident- questioned if homeowners need to make any changes in homes to accommodate; Mr. Murphy stated all government water standards will be met, a homeowner can modify for taste if they want.

Lil Cromer-resident-questioned cost needed for converting to Pinellas County. Mr. Murphy stated transfer costs 6-years-ago was \$700,000 but does not have a quote for today; systems largely in place would have some demolition costs.

Mr. Murphy showed rate samples for an all at once RO system.

Commissioner Kurey spoke on amount of reserves needed upfront. Mr. Smith discussed upfront reserve costs in detail.

Mr. Murphy presented a comparison of solutions by discussing benefits and challenges of reverse osmosis; discussed customer service level; town has automated meter reading technology; county does bi-monthly billing; interconnect currently in place

(Pinellas County is a backup) so transition would be simple; system transfer will require payment to Pinellas County; loss of autonomy of owning system; unknown costs of plant demolition; loss of employees; reduction in revenue to general fund.

Presentation was open for any questions.

Fred Hemerick-resident-water treatment plant operator; spoke in support of RO; corrosion control; spoke on benefit to pilot study; spoke on chemical options.

Mr. Locke spoke on lead and copper concerns; City of Clearwater coupon pilot study; spoke on process of chloramine vs free chlorine disinfecting; challenges Clearwater is facing with one of their deep injection wells.

Commissioner Wilkinson questioned what happens to our infrastructure & plant should we switch to the County; Mr. Murphy stated some would go away; plant would be demolished leaving pipes as needed; storage tanks would go.

Commissioner Shelly commented on tiered water pricing system; inquired as to why County was not required; Mr. Murphy did not have an answer as to who the County was not required; provided additional comment on tiered system.

Mr. Murphy spoke on irrigation demands and well field; wells recover overnight; spoke on mineral mix in water regarding taste.

Discussion ensued regarding treatment needs for County water.

Mr. White spoke on importance of having local control of water; supports RO system; commended the presentation.

Mr. Murphy presented method of calculation for multi-family units.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Shelly moved to adjourn. Seconded by Commissioner Wilkinson.

Aye: 4 - Deputy Mayor Rettstatt, Commissioner Wilkinson, Commissioner Shelly, and Commissioner Kurey

Absent: 1 - Mayor Katica

TOWN CLERK

APPROVED:

DEPUTY MAYOR