

MINUTES OF THE WORKSHOP MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE, FLORIDA, HELD AT CITY HALL, JANUARY 18, 2011 AT 4:30 P.M.

The following Commissioners were present: Mayor Magidson, Commissioners Buzzett, Gingell, Stephens and Johnson. City Manager Charlie Weston, City Attorney Tom Gibson and City Clerk Jim Anderson were also present.

Mr. Weston noted that we currently have approx. 930 grinder pumps throughout our sewer system and no maintenance fee.

We have two options to consider: Have the City or customer maintain the grinder pumps. The problem with the customer maintaining is they may try to cut cost of repairs potentially jeopardizing the system.

Mr. Weston noted that the pumps have a two year warranty with a life span of approx. five years. The expensive parts of the pumps are the pump itself \$800, Diaphragm \$150 and the Electrical Panel \$350.

Mr. Grantland indicated that in 2010 we replaced twelve pumps, twenty diaphragms and had seven electrical issues for a total of approx. \$22K. When the pumps get a little age on them we will have some maintenance issues.

Commissioner Johnson asked, "Is anyone currently paying a maintenance fee?"

Mr. Weston responded, "No."

Approx. \$40k will pay for repairs for fifty pumps. Staff recommendation is to charge each of the 930 customers a three dollar a month maintenance fee.

Mr. Grantland noted that we also have approx. ten to twelve Duplex Grinder Pumps that service commercial and multi-family properties. The cost of a new duplex is approx. \$10K.

Commissioner Johnson asked, "Legally, who is responsible? The Grinder Pump is on private property."

Mr. Grantland noted that, "On the Gravity System that is true."

Mr. Weston indicated what we will have is people in the system that will jury rig and compromise the system. He feels that we will be best suited to have a fee and let the City maintain it.

Commissioner Stephens asked, "How can it compromise the system?"

Mr. Grantland responded, "It's a low pressure system and each pump has a scower rate. The main could be clogged up."

Commissioner Stephens asked, "Why can't we have a service fee?"

Commissioner Buzzett noted realistically, a lot of folks will be out of business if their system was to fail. For a couple of dollars a month we can maintain the Grinder Pumps.

Commissioner Johnson indicated that if we are trying to have 930 customers sign a maintenance agreement it will be a long process.

Mr. Weston noted that it would be an Ordinance and it would not elevate a customer for cost based on negligence.

Commissioner Stephens asked, "Are the customers notified of the fees for negligence?"

Mr. Weston responded, "The customer is notified personally by Mr. Grantland of the fee."

Mayor Magidson indicated that we have people on the system that don't have grinder pumps and they are subsidizing the ones that do.

Commissioner Johnson asked, "What is staff's recommendation?"

Mr. Weston responded, "A three dollar a month Maintenance Fee."

Commissioner Johnson indicated that three dollars a month is too low.

Mr. Grantland noted that the future cost of maintaining the Grinder Pumps is an unknown.

Commissioner Johnson could go along with a four or five dollar a month fee to create a reserve.

Commissioners Stephens and Buzzett agree the fee should be more than three dollars.

Commissioner Johnson noted that, hopefully, we won't have to change the fee amount next year and will be creating a reserve.

Commissioner Stephens feels that maintaining the Grinder Pumps without a fee is costing the City money.

Commissioner Johnson would like the money to be in a separate fund.

Mr. Weston noted that staff will fence the money.

Commissioner Gingell asked, "Does the Bridge at Bay St. Joe have a Grinder Pump."

Mr. Weston responded, "No."

Mayor Magidson indicated that he could not vote for a five dollar a month Grinder Pump Fee.

Attorney Gibson noted that it will take about two months to implement a new Ordinance.

Mayor Magidson indicated that we have to do something.

Commissioner Buzzett noted that the Grinder Pump Fee will not affect anyone in the City Limits.

Mr. Grantland indicated that it would affect about forty customers in the City Limits that have Grinder Pumps.

Sewer Availability Letter:

Mr. Weston noted that there is a State Statute that requires people to tie into sewer within one year of it becoming available. The City has made sewer available and the County Health Department should enforce the Statute. The City will send out a letter with a graphic showing where sewer is available encouraging everyone to hook-up to the City Sewer. The Health Department will apply the letter for enforcement. It is Mr. Weston's understanding that the County currently doesn't force anyone to utilize the City Sewer System.

Commissioner Gingell asked, "Is the Health Department sanctioning septic systems at the Cape?"

Mr. Weston responded, "That is my understanding. Sewer is available in White City, Highland View, St. Joe Beach, along C-30 on Cape San Blas and within the City Limits."

Mr. Weston noted that staff is in the process of drafting the letter.

Service Ready Fee:

Commissioner Buzzett noted that maintenance is required on every line in our Water and Sewer Systems. A service ready fee if approved would be mandatory for all vacant lots and houses. Our current base rate for residential water is \$20.84 and \$24.16 for residential sewer.

Commissioner Johnson doesn't think we can sell it and could cause major problems. This is something that should have been done in the beginning of the water and sewer expansion.

Commissioner Buzzett agrees, but wanted to place the topic on the table for discussion because we could use the revenue.

Mr. Weston noted that we probably have approx. 3,000 properties that could be subject to a service ready fee. He also asked about jurisdiction of the fee City v/s County residents.

Attorney Gibson doesn't have an answer, because the courts have gone both ways on this topic.

Mr. Weston indicated that the collections process would be tough and liens would have to be filed.

Mr. Weston also noted that we currently don't have an afterhour's service fee. Staff will review our options and bring it back to the Commission for review.

Overnight Parking:

Mr. Weston indicated that staff has been asked to review our options on for oversized parking, after hours, on City Property. We need to take a long term look at parking.

Attorney Gibson noted that, in the Mixed Use District, the City has requirements for parking and/or must contribute to public parking.

Mr. Weston suggested that any changes should be something that we can live with for a number of years. We could consider the size of the vehicle, number of axles and/or number of hours.

Commissioner Johnson feels that each parking area should be looked at individually.

Commissioner Buzzett noted that parking has a lot of moving parts to consider.

Commissioner Gingell asked, "What if someone camps out in our parking lot overnight?" RV's should be in an RV Park. Some vehicles are just too big. Maybe we should limit the size.

Mr. Weston indicated that we can color code the city and tailor each parking lot. Enforcement will be the big issue.

Commissioner Gingell would like to find somewhere for RV's to park.

Commissioner Buzzett pointed out that currently, if you have a delivery vehicle, there is no where to park. We need to be user friendly.

Attorney Gibson asked, "Is the problem bad enough that we need to review it?"

Mayor Magidson noted that we have had this discussion before.

Commissioner Gingell has had complaints about the parking lot next to Dr. Joe Hendrix's old office. IF we could identify a location for that person to move to, a lot of people would be happy.

Mr. Weston doesn't know what our alternatives are.

Commissioner Gingell asked, "Do we have somewhere to accommodate the commercial vehicles?"

Mayor Magidson responded, "When the town was laid out these types of vehicles didn't exist."

Commissioner Gingell would like to address RV overnight Parking.


Mayor Magidson noted that we would need to pass an Ordinance.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:49 P.M.

Approved this 15th day of February 2011.



Mayor Magidson



Jim Anderson, City Clerk