
CITY OF PORT LAVACA

CITY COUNCIL MEETING: APRIL 12, 2021

DATE: 4.09.2021

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM:  JODY WEAVER, INTERIM CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: STATUS OF BRUSH DISPOSAL AT THE HARBOR OR REFUGE

At the Port Commission meeting on Monday, the Port Commission voted to recommend to City Council to move forward with the purchase of the proposed Air Burner to burn the brush at the Harbor of Refuge.

I spoke again with the vendor and he confirmed that the lead time for delivery once the unit is ordered is 12-14 weeks. The vendor was able to give me someone to contact at TCEQ to get preliminary information on what (if any) improvements we would need to make to a site at the Harbor of Refuge to locate the burner there for at least the first year or so. I am waiting to hear back.

Wayne is meeting with Vern Lyssy today actually to start a serious dialogue on the potential of establishing a recycle center along with the brush staging and Air burning out at the County's recycle center site on Rosenbaum Road.

Prior to purchase we need to determine which is the best option: electric or diesel powered. We have been discussing electric, but there is no 3-phase service at the Harbor of Refuge site, so we need to look at the cost to get it there. We could consider using a generator, but wouldn't want to do that for an extended period of time.

We are looking into whether there is any potential odor associated with the air burner and received the following information so far: The short answer is there is very little odor of wood burning coming from the air curtain burners. Open burning relates to approximately 70% + opacity, while air curtain burners must operate under the EPA guidelines of 10% or less opacity. There is a direct relation between emissions and odor. The EPA regulates the distances from a neighboring house or commercial structure to be a minimum of 300 ft. That is the distance in which noise and odor levels are considered to be negligible.

So with the 300 ft buffer required to get a TCEQ permit, the odor issue should be negligible.

Wayne is looking at the cost for equipment that will be needed to pickup and load the Air burner, and establishing a plan of operations - thinking through additional personnel that may be needed etc.

The Port Commissioners were under the impression that the lead time was much longer than 3-4 months when they made their motion on Monday to recommend to Council to move forward with the purchase at this time. I suggest that we give Wayne and myself a bit more time to get more of our questions answered and bring a complete plan of operation proposal to the Council at a workshop in the very near future. Based upon the preliminary information I have from TCEQ, it appears that the permit application is pretty straight forward and required a public comment period, which is most likely 30 days, but I haven't confirmed that as of yet. TCEQ states that complete applications with no issues are usually issued within.