



AGENDA MEMO

Business of the City Council City of Sweeny, Texas

Meeting Date	01.16.2024	Agenda Item	
Approved by City Manager	Yes	Presenter(s)	Lindsay Koskiniemi, City Manager Tex Bell, Public Works Director
Reviewed by City Attorney	No	Department	Crime Control and Prevention District (CCPD)
Subject	Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024 Q1 Leadership Report – Office of the City Manager, Public Works.		
Attachments	None		
Financial Information	Expenditure Required:	N/A	
	Amount Budgeted:	N/A	
	Account Number:		
	Additional Appropriation Required:		
	Additional Account Number:		

Executive Summary

This update includes activities for the Office of the City Manager and for the Public Works Department the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 – 2024, for October, November, and December of 2023 and is segregated by department.

WATER UTILITY:

City officials have actively been discussing the quality of the City’s water for the past year in response to an uptick in “dirty water” calls City staff began receiving in February 2023. At the time, the industrial water softeners and brine system were found to be inoperable. At the time, the City was not treating the water with polyphosphate, a substance used to sequester naturally occurring elements such as iron and manganese.

The City is completely on ground water, which is high in manganese, a substance that is obvious in coloration without polyphosphate treatment. Sweeny is part of the Gulf Coast Aquifer, which has pockets of higher manganese content (dot graph below).



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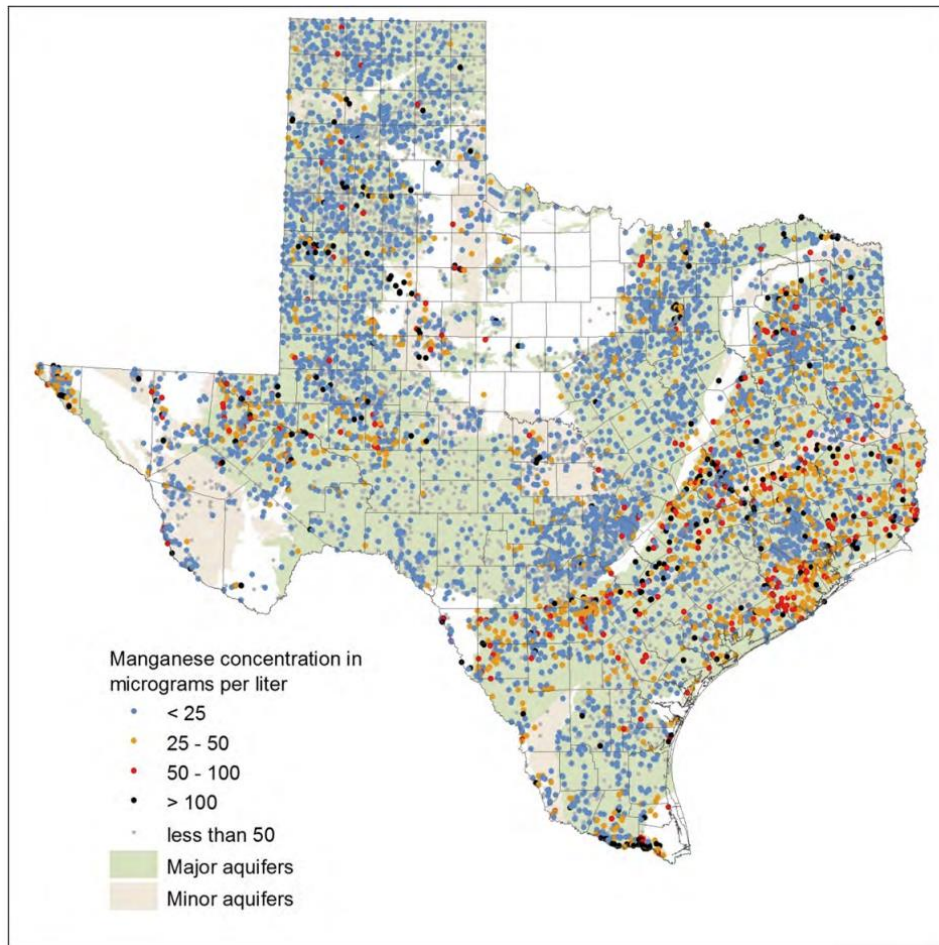


Figure 24. Manganese concentrations in Texas groundwater. Colored symbols indicate detected concentrations within indicated ranges. Smaller gray symbols and associated less than values indicate non-detects below the indicated detection limit concentration. Prepared by BEG for TWDB contract #1004831125, with data from TWDB, 2011.

https://www.twdb.texas.gov/publications/reports/contracted_reports/doc/1004831125.pdf

Since early last year, the City obtained clearance from Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to treat the water with a blended polyphosphate called Napco 300. What we have observed is that the water will be clear for a while, and then we may have unanticipated dirty water calls. Brown water can happen when a water “hammer” occurs – meaning a surge of pressure typically caused when a valve is shut too fast resulting in “descaling” of build up inside the line. Water discoloration can also occur when a major water leak repair was done without isolating the flow for the repair.

Over the past year Public Works has responded to hundreds of water leaks and have found that a majority of waterlines, especially in subdivisions constructed between 1940 – 1980, have metal waterlines. These water lines have been observed to have decades’ worth of build up on the inside. While the steel composition of the lines was probably the standard at the time the homes were constructed, steel lines do not conform to today’s standards. In addition, water trunk lines along Ashley Wilson Rd., Second St., Hackberry St., Kent St., Camella St., and Azalea St. have all been replaced with C-900 lines and many of these lines have been upsized. With increased flow of newer lines, there is a strong possibility that this is adding to the descaling of smaller lines further along the distribution system.



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In working with water quality professionals and the City engineer, we have reasonably concluded that the most effective manner in which to rid the water distribution system of brown coloration is to implement a manganese filtration system and replace all metal lines. Creation and implementation of a manganese filtration system is costly. While we do not have concrete figures for these projects, Water of Texas will present a cost proposal to create a manganese filtration pilot – a regulatory requirement to have and operate a manganese filtration system, and Strand Associates (the City engineer) will present a cost estimate for water project that includes:

- Replacement of Main Street trunk line (was originally included in the 2019 Water Project).
- Replacement of metal lines delineated into 6 project areas on a color-grouped city-wide map.
- Assessing what's a better fit – manganese filtration or rehabbing the industrial water softeners.



Section removed from Pecan St. waterline when staff repaired a major leak at Pecan & 4th St. in August 2023.

Because a project of this scale will be costly and possibly take several years to complete, the cost estimates will be useful in discussing a General Obligation bond to address the water quality concerns for the May 2025 election.

In addition to approximately 100 water leaks repaired by Public Works staff in Q1, the City underwent a deep-dive TCEQ inspection in November 2023. All issues noted in the inspection have been remediated. Staff weatherized much of the water plant piping by painting the pipes with industrial, marine grade paint.

Hydrant flushing at dead-ends throughout the system is still being conducted on a monthly basis and as needed in response to resident complaints.

Currently working on the following water department projects:

- Getting bids to add 1 booster pump
- Getting bids to replace pump and piping in Well 1
- Repainting Water Plant building (in-house)
- Completed close-out of waterline replacement project – Stockman Ave.
- Staff actively working on completing the TCEQ Lead & Copper Survey inventory (draft due June 2024, final due Oct 2024).



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Water Capital Projects and Grants:

Last year, the City was conditionally awarded a \$1.5m Community Block Development – Mitigation grant for the replacement of approximately 1 mile of waterline to support the addition of 8 fire hydrants on the west side that spans Magnolia, N. MLK, and a portion of Sycamore, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and a part of 6th. A proposed project limits map is provided. The City anticipated to be funded for this project in early 2024, however, we are awaiting an update from the County.

In Q1, the City submitted a grant application for \$180,500 for a Community Development and Revitalization grant through the Texas General Land Office for the replacement of the waterline along Pecan Street from 1st St to 5th St. Staff conducted the total household income and demographic survey required for consideration, as this is a grant with higher priority given to low to moderate income areas. The results of the survey and the environmental needs all met the grant application criteria, so staff remains optimistic the Sweeny will be selected. The application will be heard by Brazoria County Commissioners Court in January 2024.

PROPOSED PROJECT AREA MAP



BLUE LINE = EXISTING 6" WATER LINE
GREEN LINE = ADDITIONAL 6" WATER LINE NEEDED
PURPLE LINE = PROJECT AREA

KEY:
● ADDITIONAL FIRE HYDRANT PROPOSED
● EXISTING FIRE HYDRANT
● FIRE OCCURRED



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WASTEWATER:

In May 2023, staff discovered the Wastewater plant was not being properly operated and made necessary changes to restore the plant. In doing so, we found that the return pumps were not performing to the task, and Council authorized the replacement of 1 Gorman Rupp return pump. The new pump was installed in November 2023, and shortly thereafter, staff discovered that the newly installed pump was not the pump that was agreed upon and ordered with the selected vendor. While incorrect, the pump worked relatively well, and the plant was able to rebuild the “bugs” in the digestive ecosystem within the one online clarifier.

The vendor has since notified city staff that the correct pump has been located and will be replaced in the next few weeks. No specific replacement date has been determined.

The purchase of a secondary return pump was authorized by City Council in December 2023. That pump will be installed in early February 2024.

Sewer Projects Completed and In-Progress:

- GLO project (No. 22-082-007-D205 – Next steps and estimated dates:
 - 100% design completion & approval - JAN 2024
 - Run bid advertisements – FEB 2024
 - Bid opening – end of FEB 2024
 - Award – early MAR 2024
 - Preconstruction meeting – mid-MAR 2024
 - Groundbreaking – depends on selected contractor availability and engineer recommendation – estimated APR – JUN 2024.
- Assessing Lift Station capacities and pumps – Found 2 pumps do not operate. Lift Station 524 only has 1 pump.
- Looking for a generator service provider for all generator – lift stations and other City facilities. 3 LS generators not starting.
- Working with Inframark to convert to a bleach-fed effluent treatment system as opposed to Chlorine. Bleach is safer and cheaper.
- Working with Strand Associates and Inframark on a cost-effective sludge removal process.
- Currently recruiting for a Wastewater Operator. Interviews scheduled in January 2024.
- Staff to repaint the Wastewater Plant building in Q2.
- PW staff member J. Simmons to begin Wastewater Operator training.

GAS UTILITY:

The City entered a contract with Altamira for pipeline compliance management services. The City will perform all operations of the natural gas distribution system, and Altamira will provide professional oversight of the regulatory compliance component and work to develop a geographical interface system (GIS) for the gas system. As part of Altamira’s scope of work, they will update the 2018 risk assessment for development of a steel service line replacement plan. A mandate was issued in 2011 in replace all steel service lines within 10 years. The City will work with Altamira and the City engineer to develop a scope of up to 20% annual incremental steel service line replacement over the next 5 years.



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DRAINAGE:

On January 9th, the Brazoria County Commissioner's Court approved a City-generated request for an interlocal agreement with Brazoria County to replace a large culvert across McKinney Street at Old Ocean to provide better drainage on Old Ocean. John Richers, W. Brazoria County Drainage District #11 (WBCDD#11) will have a stump in conflict with the outfall ditch ground down. The County will provide the labor, and the City is purchasing the materials. We do not have a scheduled date at this time.

City Manager requested help from the County as well as WBCDD#11 for ditch improvements along Ashley Wilson Rd. at Texas Avenue and terminating at the railroad tracks, which leaves the city's limits but still affects the City drainage system. Mr. Richers had members from the office of Randy Stroud, P.E. shoot grade to assess a potential project. A preliminary assessment of the ditch proposes that the culvert at the driveway apron to the pasture south of Ashley Wilson Rd. may be tilted so that the flow is not working optimally.

With the recent approval of the purchase of the new sewer jetter that has the pressure to clean out blocked culverts, staff has made a huge push begin clearing culverts that have accumulated mud and debris. In preparation for heavy rainfall, a full staff was called in on a Sunday to proactively clean culverts and prepare for the storm.

Staff rented a skid steer and grapple bucket for the week of January 22, 2024 and will be working to address overgrown vegetation that impedes drainage.

STAFFING AND TRAINING:

- T. Bell promoted to Public Works Director in October 2023.
- In October 2023, L. Koskiniemi completed the Basic Economic Development course through Texas Economic Development Council – training that is required to certify as an economic developer in the State of Texas.
- L. Koskiniemi CGFO certification renewed until November 2026.
- S. Welman earned a Class D Water Operator license and is awaiting a date to test for his Class C Water Operator License.
- 2 new crew members hired in Public Works.
- 1 new Public Works position created – Public Works Office Manager – interviews conducted and offer extended.
- C. Davidson in gas operator training.
- J. Simmons to begin Wastewater Operator training FEB 2024.

FINANCE / TREASURY MANAGEMENT:

Staff is currently working with Mr. Tom Masters to prepare for the annual financial audit scheduled to begin at the end of January 2024.

Staff wrote and published a Request for Proposal (RFP) for an Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP). Proposals are due in February, and we anticipate taking the request for a new accounting system to City Council at the February 2024 meeting.



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The current accounting system is unable to support fund accounting tasks such as creating encumbrances that earmark funds for purchases. Encumbrances are necessary to perform fiscal year-end reconciliations and to determine what payments are outstanding at the end of the year. Currently, the City’s accounting system, Sage 50, only supports some areas of the finance department but no budget, treasury / investment, payroll, or several other tasks that would be under the umbrella of an ERP. In an ERP all programs would be done in the same system and would not be fragmented as they currently are.

- Accounts Payable – Sage 50
- Accounts Receivable – Sage 50 (manual entry)
- Utility Billing – Utility Data Systems
- Code Enforcement - MyGov
- Municipal Court -InCode
- Permitting and Inspections – MyGov
- Budgeting – no existing program – Excel spreadsheet
- Treasury / Investment – no program – manual reconciliations.
- Bank Reconciliations – not supported by Sage 50 – manual reconciliations.
- Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) – No supported by edition of Sage 50 currently in use.
- Electronic check signatures – not supported by Sage 50
- Payroll – Currently using ADP, which does not support splitting funds for employees funding in more than one fund. Those entries are manual.
- Encumbering funds – not included with current system.

A cursory review of existing program costs for FY23 shows a total of \$36,321.58 spent. The yearly estimate for the ERP is \$28,000, so that would present over an \$8k annual savings. Keep in mind the up-front cost of \$56,000 includes implementation, training, and the Year 1 cost. All years after Year 1 would be \$28k.

EXISTING PROGRAMS AND COSTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 FY 2022 - 2023		
<u>PROGRAM</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>ANNUAL COST</u>
MYGOV	PERMITTING, INSPECTIONS, CODE ENFORCEMENT	17,680.00
SAGE 50	FINANCIAL ACCOUNTING SYSTEM	2,653.00
ADP	PAYROLL	4,400.00
TYLER (POLICE)	CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM	2,949.15
TYLER (COURT)	CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM - COURT FINES	4,085.23
UDS	UTILITY DATA SYSTEM - UTILITY BILLING	4,554.20
		\$ 36,321.58

The Quarterly Investment Report for FY24 Q1 is provided on this agenda. Total investment revenue for Q1 was \$85,866, of which \$78,365 is the City’s earnings.



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The Sidewalk Fund earned \$38,280 in Q1. With the investment earnings rate, it is likely that the City will earn the difference to pay the loan origination fee and the 2023 loan in its entirety by March 2024. The first principal payment in the amount of \$375,171.25 is due June 01, 2024.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS PROGRAM:

City Manager working with City engineer, Department Heads, Drainage District #11, Brazoria County, and other stakeholders to develop a multi-year capital improvement projects (CIP) program with cost opinions, funding sources, arranged by project priority for Council's consideration before the City's begins the annual budget preparation process for Fiscal Year 2024 – 2025.

Recommended Action

No recommended action.