



# AGENDA MEMO

## Business of the City Council City of Sweeny, Texas

<b>Meeting Date</b>	10.24.2023	<b>Agenda Item</b>	
<b>Approved by City Manager</b>	Yes	<b>Presenter(s)</b>	Lindsay Koskiniemi
<b>Reviewed by City Attorney</b>	No	<b>Department</b>	Administration – Office of the City Manager
<b>Subject</b>	Discussion and possible action on the Fourth Quarter City Manager Update for Fiscal Year 2022 – 2023, spanning July, August, and September		
<b>Attachments</b>			
<b>Financial Information</b>	Expenditure Required:	N/A	
	Amount Budgeted:	N/A	
	Account Number:		
	Additional Appropriation Required:		
	Additional Account Number:		

### Executive Summary

At the City Council on September 19, 2023, the Council took action to direct the City Manager to focus on key issues that include: 1) water quality, 2) repairs to the wastewater treatment plant to bring the plant into sustainable compliance, and 3) mowing within City rights-of-way to proactively manage drainage.

While not instructed as a “Top 3” focus (“Top” conveying project priority, as decided by Council majority vote), the Council directed the City Manager to research how to increase street lighting in areas that include Eleanor Street & 6<sup>th</sup> Street, possibly adding 2 more street lights near the Bulldog Café, addressing non-operational streetlights managed by TNMP along Main Street, and fixing the decorative lamp posts along Main Street that are managed by the City.

Research on water wells within the City limits was among requested tasks.

These projects, in addition to regular and non-routine duties, have received my attention as outlined below.

**Water Quality:**

City Manager has met with Michael Claybourn with Water of Texas and the City’s engineer (9/7/2023, 9/12/2023, 9/14/2023, and 9/29/2023; another walk of the water plant with staff, city engineer and M. Claybourn on 10/16/2023) to discuss water clarity options the City can take to reduce coloration issues related to naturally occurring metallic components within the ground water that feed into the distribution system. These options will be discussed in greater detail in a later item on this agenda with a presentation by M. Claybourn with Water of Texas.

At the September 19, 2023 City Council meeting, the Council authorized \$50,000 to be moved from Enterprise Fund balance (Budget Amendment to be discussed and formally acted on in a separate agenda item) for the provision of waterline replacement at the discretion of management’s determination of priority. The water line composed of galvanized metal held together by over a



# AGENDA MEMO

## Business of the City Council

### City of Sweeny, Texas

dozen clamps along Stockman Street, measuring approximately 400 linear feet in length and situated in a norther-western to south-eastern direction, is in the queue for replacement. Staff obtained quotes and found the \$19k quote from Matula and Matula to be the best quote to perform the waterline replacement on Stockman. This project will begin on October 12, 2023. The City's Project Manager will provide an update to City Council at the time of the meeting on October 24, 2023.

Another high-priority line that must be replaced is the portion of the waterline along Pecan Street between 5<sup>th</sup> Street and 1<sup>st</sup> Street. This line is also composed of galvanized steel, is internally corroded, and patched together with several clamps. Staff responded to a break on this line at the intersection of 4<sup>th</sup> St. and Pecan St. in August. The repair was not fully made, and the need to replace this line is apparent. City Manager is seeking a CDBG grant through Brazoria County to replace this portion of line. The estimated cost to replace 4 blocks of waterline is around \$80,000 to \$100,000.

To complete the grant application, a total household income survey must be conducted to determine if the affected area qualifies for funding as a low-to-moderate income area. Langford Community Management Services has been requested to assist in the grant writing and application process, as staff members do not have the capacity to perform a project income household income survey.

The waterline spanning the streets of W. 6<sup>th</sup> St from Magnolia to Sycamore and from W 6<sup>th</sup> St. to 3<sup>rd</sup> St. are on track for replacement through a Mitigation grant that was conditionally awarded to Sweeny. Brazoria County sent requests for additional information that CM responded to in July 2023. This project is scheduled to be funded after January 2024 and will replace approximately one mile of 2" metal waterline with 6" PVC line to support 8 additional fire hydrants.

Staff received an auto flusher demonstration from Ferguson in September. Staff is uncertain if these are needed, although approved by City Council for purchase.

#### **Wastewater Treatment Plant:**

The sewer plant clarifiers are each fed by two pumps called return activated sludge pumps. Currently, the City remains operating on one clarifier. In April 2023, management became alerted to the fact that the sewer plant was "dead," meaning the self-sustaining ecosystem within the clarifiers was dead. In other terms, the "bugs," or, the good bacteria, was no longer alive and feeding on the bad bacteria. Staff discovered that the return pumps were not functioning, and the lines were blocked with heavy sludge. The return pumps feed the waste into the clarifiers to begin treatment. During the internal investigation at the sewer plant, we also found the chlorine contact chamber was not feeding into the system.

Clarifier 1 was de-watered and the sludge removed in May 2023. Clarifier 2 remains in the same shape and needs to be de-watered and have the sludge removed. The chlorine contact chamber feed remains non-operational. The system is currently being fed through a time-released bleach chamber. Staff has a meeting with the City engineer, Inframark, and a vendor to discuss the possibility of converting to a bleach fed system and getting away from Chlorine in the interest of cost savings and product availability. Currently compressed bleach is available through a sole source provider.

The RAS pumps to Clarifier 1 became ragged up and stopped working. We received a quote to rehab both pumps for several thousands of dollars, however, Council approved the replacement



# AGENDA MEMO

## Business of the City Council

### City of Sweeny, Texas

of both pumps, as the broken pumps are best suited to work with head pressure because they are submersible class pumps. Alvin Contracting secured a 6" Gorman Rupp pump. The cost of the pumps and the piping work is approximately \$25k. Alvin Contracting has been paid a 50% deposit to begin work. The remainder will be paid after the work is finished. Staff is currently researching the most cost-effective solution to replacing the secondary pump on Clarifier 1, and we believe a 4" pump may work in conjunction with the new 6" pump. A 4" pump will certainly be less expensive. Staff is building a roadway along the drying beds around Clarifier 1 to access the RAS pump site in preparation for installing the new pumps.

#### **Mowing and Drainage:**

**Drainage** - On 9/8/2023, Public Works and City Management met with West Brazoria Drainage District #11 to discuss a request from the City to get assistance with mowing along Ashley Wilson Rd and to have the ditches dug deeper along Ashley Wilson Road near the eastern city limit and past the city's limit near Camellia, Azalea, Forest Park Ct., and the River Oak Apartments). Staff and WBCDD also looked at the area near McKinney Street off 2<sup>nd</sup> Street at the intersection of Old Ocean Avenue.

WBCDD shared preliminary engineering plans of a culvert installation project that includes digging a deeper ditch and cutting into a tree stump along McKinney to increase drainage flow. Management made a request to the Brazoria County Engineering Department for an interlocal agreement to do the project and met with BC Engineering and WBCDD#11 on 9/29/2023. The City will purchase the material, and the County will perform the work. This project will reduce bird bathing along Old Ocean and increase the flow of run off out of the City via Avenue A.

Council approved staff to rent an industrial sewer jetter for one month. Staff rented a Kinloch jetter and has cleaned culverts throughout town with a concentration on jetting the west side. Management has created a list of all of the city streets and has divided the city into 6 zones. The 6-zone spreadsheet of city streets can be used to document sewer jetting, waterline replacement, and inventory of lines for the Lead and Copper Revision Rule which requires the composition of all city water service lines to be inventoried by 10/16/2024. Videos of the rented sewer jetter in operation will be shared in a later agenda item to discuss the possible purchase of a new sewer jetter.

**Mowing** - In the month of August 2023, Public Works mowed the ditch on both sides of Crosson Ct. The milkweed had grown to nearly 10 feet tall, and the job took 4 men and a full day of work to remove. After removal of the overgrowth, the area was treated with herbicide.

Mowing has been problematic for staff especially during the drought when aged water lines are subject to shifting and breaking under pressure. Water line repairs always take priority over mowing; therefore, it is easy to get behind on mowing. Areas of tall grass that adversely affect the city's drainage include the ends of town along Ashley Wilson Rd. and areas along Stevenson Slough. Management contacted AYA Mowing and scheduled mowing in ditches along AWR not in front of residential lots (except for one enforcement mowing at an abandoned house in front of Stewart's grocery store), along the slough from behind the car wash to behind Byrd Brothers. The areas were mowed on 10/10/2023 after the rain stopped.

Management created a city mowing map and invited vendors to submit proposals. One submittal has been received, and we intend to award a contract for mowing applying herbicide to the designated areas to the lowest bidder this month.



# AGENDA MEMO

## Business of the City Council

### City of Sweeny, Texas

Link to mowing map:

<https://earth.google.com/earth/d/1gfSdQP6e0RQY9GWnWmHaEiOsqpmd6Le?usp=sharing>

#### **Street Lighting:**

After the September City Council meeting, the police department tagged all streetlights and decorative lamp posts along Main Street that were not working. Management coordinated with TNMP to replace burned out streetlights. 9 streetlights were replaced on 9/22/2023 by TNMP. The decorative lamp posts on Main Street are owned and managed by the City of Sweeny. The bulbs in all of the lamps were replaced in Fall of 2022. 10 lamps were replaced in September, and after replacing the bulbs, 4 remain non-operational. An electrician is currently working on assessing the wiring to give the City a quote to make the repair. The goal is to have all lampposts working in time for the holidays.

Management contacted TNMP in September to request a lighting need assessment at Eleanor St. & 6<sup>th</sup> St., around Bulldog Café, and other areas along Main Street that appear dim at night such as the area around Beals Bubbles. TNMP's design team has received the request, and city staff is awaiting an update from TNMP.

#### **Water Wells:**

Over the summer, the City had several inquiries from the public concerning the viability of homeowners drilling water wells on their property within the City's limits. Incorrectly, the City told the public drilling independent water wells within the city's limits in proximity to a public water system was prohibited by TCEQ. Management contacted the Field Operations Coordinator at the Brazoria County Groundwater Conservation District who stated Texas Water Code chapter 30 under the Rule of Capture provides property owners have the right to the minerals and naturally occurring resources on their land. Cities have the option to adopt ordinances for a permitting fee, and the well is required to be at least fifty (50) feet from any septic or sewer system. To summarize, the City may adopt a permitting fee to allow for personal water wells within the City's limits, and the property owner must adhere to the County's well drilling regulations.

#### **Other Items:**

- Completed the Film Friendly certification.
- Met with B-Tel for pricing and scoping of City of Sweeny phone and internet service.
- Scoping possibility of finding savings on utilities and repurposing an existing building to serve as new animal shelter with TexasRebuild.
- Hurricane response and emergency management drill in August.
- Passed FY24 budget and property tax rate.
- RFP for debris management.
- RFP for emergency management generator installation at Community Center (grant funded 75/25).
- Submitted Transportation Alternatives project to TxDOT for consideration (anticipated notification in Nov 2023).
- Participated in Texas Water Development Board workshop in Huntsville (July 2023)
- Training project manager.
- Conducted a nationwide Public Works Director recruitment.



# **AGENDA MEMO**

Business of the City Council  
City of Sweeny, Texas

## **Recommended Action**

No recommended action.