



MINUTES OF THE **SPECIAL MEETING** OF THE
SOLVANG CITY COUNCIL

Council Chambers
1644 Oak Street
Solvang, CA 93463

April 15, 2019
Monday
5:30 pm

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Toussaint called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Mayor Toussaint, Council Members Clarke, Djernaes, Johnson, and Waite

STAFF: David Gassaway, City Manager; Dave Fleishman, City Attorney; Matt van der Linden, Public Works Director; Nathan Giacinto, Wastewater Supervisor; Paul Matsukas, Wastewater Lead Operator; Nick Rivera, Wastewater Operator; and Lisa S. Martin, City Clerk

REGULAR AGENDA

1. **WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADE ALTERNATIVES**

Staff report by Matt van der Linden, Public Works Director, and presentation by Andy Komer, PACE Engineering.

Council Member Djernaes asked if option 1 would accommodate sewage from double the amount of tourists per year that we get currently.

Matt van der Linden replied that with a 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD) plant, we would have more than enough capacity for 15–30 years and could even accommodate Los Olivos.

Mayor Toussaint added that it is unlikely that the State of California will ease up on environmental and other permit requirements and may even require cities to produce recycled water within a few years. He would hate to spend this amount of money and possibly be still paying off a loan for an upgrade that may, in the near future, be unable to meet new regulations, and have to start all over and pay all over again for another upgrade in order to comply.

Council Member Waite urged the Council not to limit the city as far as the ability to produce recycled water, and suggested that she preferred the membrane (MBR) technology.

Mayor Toussaint invited Jeff Hodge of the Santa Ynez Community Services District to speak.

Mr. Hodge spoke in favor of the MBR option. More money up front but better deals with ammonia and phosphorus, or any other future regulatory requirement for removal.

Public Works Director van der Linden added that our existing basins are adequate for MBR up to 2 MGD, but we could install membrane to operate at only 1.5 MGD, which could reduce the cost of the project.

Discussion as to the life cycle of the membranes (approximately 10 years). The membrane market is competitive and is keeping the costs down, so replacement is only about 5% of the project cost.

Discussion regarding the option of solar operation of the plant. Matt van der Linden explained that in the grant application he did include solar on the roof of the new operations building, and went on to relay to the Council that our grant application is currently in a very good position as projects with multiple agency benefits and sustainable aspects score higher.

Mayor Toussaint mentioned that there are a lot more grant opportunities with MBR and the ability to produce potable water and additionally, the MBR option seems to be the simplest and requires the least amount of land. The Council should consider the potential grants when considering the impact to ratepayers.

Mayor Toussaint opened the item to public comment at 7:55 p.m.

Karen Jones, Santa Ynez Community Services District Board President

- Favors MBR as it puts the city in a better position in the long run
- Likes that the Council is considering the ratepayers

The item was closed to public comment at 7:57 p.m.

Council Member Johnson inquired of the consultant whether most agencies that have undergone recent WWTP upgrades have gone with the MBR. Mr. Komer responded affirmatively.

Council Member Johnson stated that in his opinion MBR was the way to go, although it would be better if we could sell the recycled water. The State will be coming out with more regulations, so we should plan for that now. The only thing to decide is how to pay for it.

Council Member Clarke indicated he favors MBR and mentioned grants and long-term financing along with bonding to pay for the improvements so that there is little impact to the ratepayers, since most of the need is due to the high tourism rate.

Council Member Waite commented that this is a necessary improvement that will increase the quality of life of our residents. We don't get anything for free, some of the costs will need to be borne by the users. With that said, MBR is the way to go.

Mayor Toussaint noted that he would like a workshop to discuss financing without massive cost to the residents, but favors the purchase of the larger piece of land now and creation of a more environmentally friendly operation of the plant, including solar.

Motion made by Council Member Clarke to direct staff to proceed with planning for a 1.5 MGD plant upgrade and acquisition of 2.23 acres of land.

Amended Motion made by Council Member Djernaes to include a 2.0 MGD option. Amended motion accepted by Council Member Clarke. Seconded by Council Member Waite, and carried with a roll call vote of 5-0.

2. **ADJOURNMENT:** Mayor Toussaint adjourned the City Council meeting at 8:15 p.m.



Lisa S. Martin, City Clerk