

MINUTES OF SPECIAL
CITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD
MARCH 16, 2022

The City Council of Olmos Park, Texas held a special meeting on March 16, 2022 commencing at 5:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Ronald Hornberger presided and Council members present were Juliana Dusek, Erin Harrison, Kenyon McDonald, Sharon Plant and Deanna Rickabaugh. Staff present was City Manager, Celia DeLeon; and City Secretary, Kyndra Munoz. Also present was City Engineer, David Givler, Hank and Carol Cornelius, 107 E. Hermosa; and Megan Rodriguez, San Antonio Express News.

Mayor Hornberger called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m. and determined a quorum was present.

Citizens to be heard: This time is provided for citizens to address the Council on issues and concerns. No action can or will be taken on issues raised under this portion of the meeting. Please state your name and address for the record and limit your remarks to a period not to exceed three minutes.

There were no citizens to be heard.

Councilwoman Dusek joined the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Discussion and possible action regarding engineer sanitary televising report and financing or bond issuance options for costs of potential storm sewer, sanitary sewer, and street projects.

Mayor Hornberger stated looking at the opening report, on page 5 for priorities and recommendations. What about the streets, or is this in place here and there is no move to the streets? How long will it take to complete the work on each of the highest and lowest priority items? On page 9 regarding project costs, I am interested in the timeline and how quickly these must be addressed for both the highest and lowest priority items. This feeds into how this is going to be funded. This does not need to be answered right now, but at some we need to address this.

Councilwoman Plant stated we have a lot of sewer mains that are located in resident's front or backyards. If we were to do repairs and there is damage to the landscaping, would the City be responsible for this?

Councilwoman Rickabaugh stated if it is located in our easement, we would not be responsible.

Mayor Hornberger stated I would assume these are all located in an easement or an alley way that the owned by the City. If it is a utility easement, I believe Councilwoman Rickabaugh is correct.

Councilwoman Dusek stated something that will affect cost is how we go into this. From my experience, I had to go into this by hand digging to prevent any damage to my fence and trees. While remodeling, we realized our lateral sewage line was clay and our plumber suggested to fix it now. When scoping they discovered the pipe had separated. Some owners will have clay pipes and we need to be careful not to break them when we start digging up. If we do this, I would not be surprised if some homeowners would be interested in fixing their clay pipes at the same time.

Councilwoman Harrison asked because of our City ordinance, will we require our City to scope a certain amount of feet into the homeowner's lateral line to show the pipe is not damaged prior to construction and putting in a new sewer line?

Mayor Hornberger stated that is a good observation. I think this is an issue on how the contract requirements are written and how we ask for bids to complete this work.

David Givler, Givler Engineering stated this brings up a good point. In some cases, it will be better to install a new sewer in the street than it will be to repair the sewer in the rear property lines.

Mayor Hornberger stated if we install a new sewer in the street we are going to tear up the streets. We want to address the sewer as our priority rather than the streets. If we move the laterals from the homes to connect into the main at the front of the streets, this was estimated at a cost of \$10 million.

David Givler stated if you put a main in the street and as long as the main behind the homes continue to operate, you allow residents to continue to use this and at their own timing, allow them to put in their own lateral. We are seeing the system deteriorate because of age, but a lot of the problems aren't creating an emergency overnight. You can phase some of this out in way by placing the new main in now, but not make all of the connections to it yet because the old line in the back is still working. You can leave some time to either allow people to make their own connections to the new main or to phase it at a later time when the City has the funding to do this.

Councilwoman Harrison asked what is the lifespan for the PVC pipes we would be using on this?

David Givler stated it has a lifespan of 50 years.

Mayor Hornberger stated regarding the PVC pipe litigation that happened a number of years ago concerning improper installation and the separating of pipes, has this been resolved in the industry standard of installation?

David Givler stated yes, I think the technology is very well understood now and contractors know how to install these pipes properly. We also have great technology for inspection. We do pre-project inspections then have the contractor follow up with post-project inspections to make sure everything is connected properly.

Councilwoman Harrison stated the polypropylene is already installed on Hillside and Paloma. It looks like there is already sagging, roots and pipe showing but none of our pipes are old enough for there be a failure yet.

David Givler stated this is from one of the reports that came from our inspection contractor. What is listed here is the lining material that is on the inside of the old pipe. We have a hybrid situation with old pipes that have about a 20-year-old lining inside.

Councilwoman Plant stated the sewer system has been talked about since 1995. I spoke to a former Council Member who was a part of a committee that met with engineers and did a lot of research. He also met with the City of San Antonio who only goes in and fixes the sewer when it breaks. This is my thinking and I do not see us redoing the entire sewer system at once.

David Givler stated the City of San Antonio has consent orders against this by the EPA because of some of their failures. A lot of the repairs occurring are only because the federal government stepped in and enforced them.

Councilwoman Rickabaugh stated you gave us the option to tackle this sections at a time with high and low priority items. We do not have to go in and repair the whole sewer system.

Councilwoman Plant asked what is the cost for the sewer main?

David Givler stated in October we looked at replacing the system and relocation which was about \$45-53 million and this was before inflation.

Councilwoman Dusek asked are these prices for big projects or by pieces? The reason I wanted to do a large chunk at one time is because it is cheaper. I feel we waste so money doing it little by little.

David Givler stated we had 2 parts of redoing the whole system which is the \$45-53 million. \$12-14 million was the actual replacements of sanitary sewer mains in the streets and maybe \$10 million for costs associated with the repairs. If you took the same amount of money and plowed that into replacing your mains that are already in the streets, you can replace all of those and have brand new ones for the same cost that we would use to pursue all repairs that are all over the City. This does not include pricing to repair the streets and a lot of the problems aren't in the street. The relocation of pulling the lines from the rear properties out to the streets was somewhere between \$33-39 million.

Councilwoman Plant stated today, our sewer main does not need to be replaced? Is that correct?

David Givler stated that is correct. From the high priority items there were areas that we could not even get through because the problems were so bad. We can't always tell the cause of this but sometimes contractors think sewer lines are a great way to get rid of dirt. Usually, when you get rocks and soil it is because of a cave in. The soil will wash down the line to a treatment plant and the rocks stay behind to eventually accumulate and cause blockage.

Councilwoman Rickabaugh stated I think it would be a good idea to look into a tax note for tackling the high priority items. I still think it is pretty cheap to borrow and we can stretch it out over 7 years. We still have the \$250,000 of the annual budget that we have been accumulating and might be able to get into some of the low priority items.

Mayor Hornberger stated the higher priority costs are expected to fall in the range of \$530,000 to \$670,000. The lower priority costs are expected to fall in the range of \$6.8 to \$8.6 million and are probably okay being stretched over a long period of time. We need to think about whether or not we should arrange doing this in such a way that it makes sense to do a tax note, have the money ready, start this project and carry it through as fast as we can.

Councilwoman Plant stated with the tax note, I believe the project has to be completed within a certain amount of time.

Mayor Hornberger stated this has been in the back of my mind and is something we need to look into. I seem to remember the project had to be started and be progressive.

Councilwoman Dusek asked how long are the high priority items expected to take?

David Givler stated the construction schedule is expected to be 6 months.

Councilwoman Harrison stated I would like to know what the tax note will look like passed onto the taxpayers and how paying this off in 7 years will affect our residents. We are at the lowest tax rates we have ever been at because we just finished paying off our debt.

Councilwoman Rickabaugh stated for our tax rate, we have M&O and I&S. The I&S has not gone away with yet, but it will this year if we don't consider debt.

Mayor Hornberger stated the question for Christopher Alison will be what size tax note can we afford that has to be paid off in 7 years.

Councilwoman Plant stated when you incur debt and have something that will affect taxes, my understanding is this has to be voted on by the residents.

Celia DeLeon stated we will meet on Monday, March 28, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. for a workshop session to answer these questions and discuss financial options with David Givler, Financial Advisor Christopher Alison and our bond counsel.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 5:54 p.m.

Ronald Hornberger
Mayor

ATTEST:

Kyndra Munoz
City Secretary