

Special Council Meeting
March 31, 2003

The Freeport City Council met for a special meeting at 7:00pm on March 31, 2003.

Members Present: Mayor J.M. Marse, Council members, Earl King, Scott Brannon, Mike Helton, Jean Arrant, and Janice McLean. City Attorney Adkinson and City Clerk Diane Riley

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and Councilman Helton gave the invocation.

Mayor Marse stated the purpose of the special meeting was to review sewer tap availability, land development code administration, and the employee handbook.

Employee handbook was discussed first. Attorney Adkinson supplied examples of on-call formats from DeFuniak Springs, Regional Utility, and Chelco. He also stated that the overtime rate was calculated only after a 40 hour week was completed.

The LDC was discussed secondly. Engineer Peters welcomes someone else to do the administrative part of the LDC and he would continue to do the technical review. Charles feels that Paul Miller of WFRPC would be a very good candidate for this position, because he wrote the LDC and was most familiar with the information. Mr. Miller shall present a cost estimate of services that WFRPC could provide. The Council recognized the need and will consider their options.

Charles began discussion with history of developments and the need to expand the sewer system. Reserving capacity for large developments, while conserving taps for smaller development is a concern. Building additional wastewater plants in the outer areas away from the west end of town is something that maybe the Council needs to address. Increase the size of the existing plant. Charles is trying to contact Joe May on different types of systems. If we doubled the plant capacity it would increase tap availability by about 1500. Extensive discussion on spray fields ensued. Attorney Adkinson asked Councilman King if he would be interested in providing spray field areas, so this could be an option to consider. Time limit on the reserved taps is something that needs to be addressed. It is unreasonable for the City to allow a developer to hold taps for an extended period, since this ties up the capacity of the plant. Suggestions of time limits may be 12, 24 or 36 months and then making the owner pay a minimum bill. Raising the cost of impact fees surfaced. Determining the amount of taps right at this moment appears to be the bottom line at this time. Council requested Charles to explore the options of selling taps, without present availability, but would have availability at a later date. Also, the Council wants Charles to find out what would be the cost of upgrading the plant. He felt it would take approximately 3 years for building an addition to the present plant. The City needs capital to expand and pre-selling tap may be our only option. The ordinance needs to be updated on cost of fees. DEP will be contacted to find out what needs to be done to upgrade. Clerk Riley asked if it taps could be sold even if they are not available. Attorney Adkinson stated we only need to sell what is available.

Motion to adjourn by Councilwoman Arrant.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

J.M. Marse, Mayor

Diane Riley, City Clerk

Janice McLean, President of Council