

CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL SESSION MINUTES

December 10, 2019

The City Council of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in special session at 6:27 p.m. in the Municipal Building Conference Room on the 10th day of December, 2019, and notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street 48 hours prior to the beginning of the meeting.

PRESENT: Councilmembers Bierman, Hall, Petrone, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Holman

ABSENT: Mayor Clark

TARDY: Councilmembers Carter* and Scott*

* Councilmember Carter arrived at 5:34 p.m.

* Councilmember Scott arrived at 5:40 p.m.

Item 1, being:

CHANGE ORDER NO. ONE TO CONTRACT K-1819-44: BY AND BETWEEN THE NORMAN UTILITIES AUTHORITY AND LAYNE CHRISTENSEN COMPANY INCREASING THE CONTRACT AMOUNT BY \$1,607,970.36 FOR A REVISED CONTRACT AMOUNT OF \$6,322,392.08 AND INCREASING THE CONTRACT TIME BY 160 CALENDAR DAYS FOR THE 2018 GROUNDWATER WELLFIELD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT.

Mr. Chris Mattingly, Capital Projects Engineer, said when the 2060 Water Supply Plan was adopted by City Council, the interim solution in that plan was to add 2 million gallons per day of well water and the 2018 Wellfield Development Project was created for this purpose. He said it was anticipated with the 2015 rate increase that ten (10) water wells would be added and the funding for the wells and water lines was budgeted. He said many of the wells would be located in northeast Norman near Lake Thunderbird.

Mr. Mattingly said after receiving request for proposals, some of the consultants wanted the City to look into horizontal drilling technology, so two projects were set up, one that would drill six (6) vertical wells instead of ten (10) and the other to do one horizontal well to replace the four (4) wells. He said the horizontal wells are three (3) times more expensive but they would yield three (3) to eight (8) times more water. Councilmember Bierman asked Mr. Mattingly if he could explain horizontal drilling for the Councilmembers who were not on Council when the explanation was given. Mr. Mattingly said a vertical well is drilled straight down through the sand layer and screening is installed to allow the water to flow through the sand layer and fall down into the pipe so it can be pumped out. He said with a horizontal well, the drilling rig is aimed at the sand layer with the intention of staying in the sand layer allowing more surface area to touch the sand and allowing more water to fall into the well. He said staff worked with the consultant, Garver, L.L.C., and after investigation felt it was too risky to drill a horizontal well. He said the main reason was that it was unknown how it could affect some of their other wells in the area.

Councilmember Wilson said in the last discussion about horizontal drilling, the possibility of going into some of the older wells that contained arsenic was discussed. Mr. Mattingly said this is something that Staff will look at in the future. He said there are several sand zones and the strategy is to drill down just before they reach the area where the arsenic is and install screening without touching the area with arsenic.

Councilmember Wilson asked if abandoned oil wells could be used for water wells. Mr. Mattingly said he would be afraid of accidental contamination of the drinking water.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Mattingly said the original contract with Layne Christensen Company to drill six (6) water wells was approved on November 17, 2018, in the amount of \$4,714,421.72. He said Change Order No. One increasing the contract by \$1,607,970.36 will provide three (3) more wells and adds 160 days to the contract. He said the normal yield for a well is 200 gallons per minute. He said it was originally anticipated that ten (10) wells would be needed but after drilling two (2) test holes that were in the 300 gallons per minute range, it was decided only three wells would be needed. He said if the three wells do not provide enough water, an additional well can be added to the contract at a later date. He said the money for the wells was borrowed from the Water Resources Board at 3.2 percent interest and at this point there is \$6,000,000 unencumbered to drill the wells and install the water lines.

Mayor Pro Tem Holman asked how the City goes about getting the well sites. Mr. Mattingly said the well sites have already been secured. Mayor Pro Tem Holman asked if the City took anyone's property from them and Mr. Mattingly said no; however, the process of obtaining the sites took longer than anticipated so the project that was anticipated to be completed in July 2020 has been extended to November 2020. He said most of the property owners provided the property to the City of Norman by easement; however, some property was obtained by warranty deed for tax reasons.

Councilmember Wilson said she just wanted to state for the record that the City was not going to obtain water from residential wells. Mr. Mattingly said that every fifth well is drilled, a set of three monitoring wells are also drilled. These wells are drilled to prove to the homeowner that their water is not being used. He said when the monitoring well is pumped, the water levels are checked to make sure the shallow water never drops. Councilmember Wilson asked if the Water Resources Board checked these monitoring wells and what happens if someone does lose their well. Mr. Mattingly said water reports are turned in every year to the Water Resources Board and it has never happened in Norman.

Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager, said the taxpayers were promised 2 million gallons per day of groundwater and once that is accomplished, horizontal wells will be explored further.

Mr. Mattingly said he has obtained eleven (11) sites and they will be ready for any future wells that are needed because a well replacement program will be needed for some of the wells that are near end of life.

Councilmember Petrone asked if an existing horizontal well can be changed into a vertical well. Mr. Mattingly said if a horizontal well was drilled, there would still be a vertical hole which could be salvageable. He said some of the older wells have steel casings that will rust or crack.

Mayor Pro Tem Holman asked where these wells feed into and Mr. Mattingly said they go into the water system.

Councilmember Wilson asked if there was new technology that could possibly make these wells last longer. Mr. Mattingly said the life of the wells will remain the same. Councilmember Wilson asked if it was the water or the mechanics that determine the life of the well. Mr. Mattingly said the metal in the ground shifts as the ground shifts.

Councilmember Bierman asked if 2 million gallons per day would replace what is now being purchased from Oklahoma City. Mr. Mattingly said yes. Councilmember Bierman said she hates to rely on another entity for water.

Councilmember Wilson said she understands there is a careful balance of tax revenue from home sales, being an affordable community, and having an affordable house. She said we also want to outpace our infrastructure and it seems like we are supporting new development on our current water customers' backs with a possible rate increase next year. She would like some input about what we may be doing along the lines of increasing connection fees.

Item 1, continued:

Mr. Ken Komiske, Director of Utilities, said these wells and the project have been paid for by the rates from 2015 and that was the last increase. He said the next step such as treatment or blending will require more money. He said there is a balance between new wells and new customers. He said the cost of the wells plus the piping will give us a better idea of what a new well costs and how many people it can serve to see if our connection fees are in line with where they should be.

Councilmember Petrone asked if this meant that Council will not know what this data looks like until December 2020 when the wells are completed. Mr. Komiske said Staff is working on it now and by July, staff should have a good understanding of what an average well including the pipelines would cost. Councilmember Petrone asked which Committee would be working on the connection fees and Mr. Komiske said it should start with the Finance Committee.

Councilmember Bierman asked when the connection fees were last changed and how much were they raised. Mr. Komiske said the fees were changed in 2016 and the cost was approximately \$800 before the change and it increased to \$1,000; however, it was increased gradually over a three-year period and it is based on the size of the meter. Councilmember Bierman said Council should look at connection fees while looking at a rate increase.

Councilmember Scott asked if the connection fees were only on new development or existing homes that have been added onto. Mr. Mattingly said on existing homes, customers get a credit on the meter size they had, and then charged extra for the larger meter.

Councilmember Wilson asked if the rates could be changed administratively or do we require a vote of the people. Mr. Komiske said the voters have to approve it.

* * * * *

Item 2, being:

CONSIDERATION OF ADJOURNING INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION AS AUTHORIZED BY OKLAHOMA STATUTES, TITLE 25 §307(B)(3) TO DISCUSS THE ACQUISITION OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 36TH AVENUE N.W. BETWEEN TECUMSEH ROAD AND INDIAN HILLS ROAD AND ROCK CREEK ROAD BETWEEN 36TH AVENUE N.W. AND GRANDVIEW AVENUE.

Councilmember Wilson moved that the Special Session be adjourned out of and an Executive Session be convened into in order to discuss the acquisition of real property, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Bierman; and the question being upon adjourning out of the Special Session and convening into an Executive Session in order to discuss the acquisition of real property, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS:	Councilmembers Bierman, Carter, Hall, Petrone, Scanlon, Scott, Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem Holman
NAYES:	None

The Mayor Pro Tem declared the motion carried and the Special Session adjourned out of; and an Executive Session was convened into in order to discuss the acquisition of real property.

The City Council convened into Executive Session at 6:05 p.m. Mr. Darrel Pyle, City Manager; Ms. Beth Muckala, Assistant City Attorney; Mr. Rick Knighton, Assistant City Attorney; and Mr. Shawn O'Leary, Director of Public Works, were in attendance at the Executive Session.

Item 2, continued:

Thereupon, Councilmember Scott moved that the Special Session be reconvened, which motion was duly seconded by Councilmember Wilson; and the question being upon reconvening the Special Session, a vote was taken with the following result:

YEAS: Councilmembers Bierman, Carter,
Hall, Petrone, Scanlon, Scott, Wilson,
Mayor Pro Tem Holman

NAYES: None

The Mayor declared the motion carried and the Special Session was reconvened at 6:31 p.m.

The Mayor said the acquisition of real property located at 36th Avenue N.W. between Tecumseh Road and Indian Hills Road and Rock Creek Road between 36th Avenue N.W. and Grandview Avenue were discussed in Executive Session. No action was taken and no votes were cast.

* * * * *

ADJOURNMENT

The Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:32 p.m.

* * * * *

ATTEST:

City Clerk

Mayor