

# FIFE CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

Fife City Hall  
Council Chambers

Date: March 20, 2007  
Time: 7:00 p.m.

## CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards called the Fife City Council special study session to order at 7:03 p.m. with the following Councilmembers present: Godwin, Johnson (7:40 p.m.), Edwards, Kelley, Cerqui, de Booy, and Roscoe.

Staff: Worthington, Reinbold, Farris, Marcotte, Jacoby, Blount, Smith, Reuter, Gill, and Recording Secretary Cheri Lindgren.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Councilmember Godwin led the pledge of allegiance.

## STUDY SESSION

### Water Comprehensive Plan – Source Alternatives

Director Blount briefed the Council on potential future sources of water to meet the City's growth needs. He introduced Jeff Dillard with RH2 Consultants.

**Jeff Dillard, RH2 Consultants**, reported RH2 Consultants submitted a draft Water Comprehensive Plan to staff for review with the exception of two major items:

- Policy direction from the Council about water supply alternatives to include within the draft plan.
- Completion of a financial study.

Mr. Dillard said once a preferred water supply alternative is identified, the consultants will work to refine the rate and connection charge impacts. Lakewood Water District (LWD) is still compiling pricing models for wholesale customers.

An updated "City of Fife Long Term Water Supply Options, March 2007" report was distributed. The report provides an initial screening level assessment of three potential long-term water supply options that could meet the needs of Fife.

Mr. Dillard reviewed the options:

- **Option 1: Purchase additional water from Tacoma Water.**  
Purchasing an additional block of water from Tacoma Public Utilities (TPU) would be straightforward. The terms, conditions, and rate structures are familiar to Fife and should remain identical for the most

part within the existing wholesale agreement between Tacoma and Fife.

- **Option 2: Purchase water from Lakewood Water District.**  
LWD proposes to sell well water to any member of the Water Cooperative of Pierce County. The district is currently working to develop commodity rates. Lakewood could be more competitive because its treatment costs are less than Tacoma's.
- **Option 3: Transfer Fife water rights to a new well.**  
Fife has adequate water rights associated with five wells that no longer have production capacity to reliably produce water. The City would need to transfer the rights to one or two other wells. Mr. Dillard described the transfer process, identified other parties that are involved, and outlined the following risks:
  - Typically 100% of the water rights are not transferred;
  - Finding a location in the ground that will produce a meaningful amount of water; and
  - The plan proposal covers a 24-year period. Tacoma is offering water in perpetuity. The LWD is offering water on a 20-year renewable contract. The City's well is only as good as it lasts.

Mr. Dillard reviewed a "Chart 2, Total Cost Comparison for Each Fife Supply Option" document. He clarified why the existing customer share of costs is greater when compared to new customers.

Councilmember Godwin said that drinking water will eventually become a commodity. Fife should retain its water rights and pursue drilling deep wells that produce water so it isn't dependent on another provider for the City's drinking water needs. He said he doesn't particularly care for the taste of Tacoma's water.

Mayor Kelley echoed similar comments. Fife should work to develop its own wellfield over the next several years. The City should continue to buy water from Tacoma and have a connection with Puyallup for emergencies as another option.

Councilmember Cerqui also agreed the City should drill wells. He said he prefers a strategy that combines City wells and purchasing water from Tacoma.

Councilmember de Booy said she supports the City retaining its existing relationship with TPU. Fife's water supply could be supplemented with

**Fife City Council Study Session Minutes**

**March 20, 2007**

**Page 3 of 9**

existing and/or new wells.

Councilmember Roscoe indicated that she likes the concept of transferring current water rights to other producing wells. It's good from a business perspective that the City develops some independence when it comes to water.

City Manager Worthington asked about the costs associated with drilling a 1,000-foot well. Mr. Dillard said it costs between \$50,000 and \$100,000 depending on the diameter. Fife currently has a well that is approximately 700 feet deep.

Discussion ensued about risks associated with the supply options available to the City, specifically water quality risks, known contaminants, potential treatment costs, and necessary upfront costs.

The Council and staff discussed LWD's groundwater water source.

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards expressed support for reviewing alternatives recognizing that purchasing water from Tacoma is the easiest solution.

City Manager Worthington outlined the positives of purchasing water from Tacoma, such as water storage and fire flow. Director Blount added the City could spend another \$5 million to purchase a site and tank to store water.

Councilmember Godwin expressed concerns about an option where the City solely continues to purchase water from Tacoma. One court decision concerning water flow or a dry summer could impact Tacoma's ability to provide Fife with drinking water. Adequate flow and Fife's ability to purchase an additional block of water at a reasonable cost could be at risk. Fife should not rely on Tacoma or Lakewood for all of the City's drinking water needs.

Mr. Dillard conveyed that the consultants will identify Option #3 as the City's preferred alternative. Working with the Department of Ecology (DOE) to transfer existing water rights to a new well, or wells, will take some time, in addition to locating a site, drilling the well, and installing the pumps.

Discussion ensued about the status of existing wells on City property.

Director Blount explained RH2 will draft the Water Comprehensive Plan demonstrating the City is willing to spend resources to investigate a well option. Staff will bring the draft to the Council for adoption. The plan

## **Fife City Council Study Session Minutes**

**March 20, 2007**

**Page 4 of 9**

will include a budget and the required tasks for implementation.

The Council expressed general agreement with staff's proposal.

*Councilmember Johnson arrived.*

### **Gathering Place Update**

Director Smith briefed the Council on recent Gathering Place Master Plan activities and anticipated future activities. The Task Force met on March 16, 2007. Additional ideas and concepts emerged from the meeting.

Councilmember Godwin indicated he's looking forward to hearing from the community at the March 31, 2007 public workshop. Once the information is collected, the City can begin selecting a plan.

Councilmember Johnson reported he shared some ideas with Mayor Kelley earlier in the day that will be forwarded to the Task Force. Depending on comments from the public, options could include retaining open space, developing a stormwater treatment system, and creating additional trail connectivity.

Councilmember Cerqui said he looks forward to participating at the March 31, 2007 public forum.

Councilmember de Booy conveyed she's also interested in accommodating some retail and recreation/open space elements on the site.

In response to a question from Mayor Kelley about potential uses along 20<sup>th</sup> Street, Director Smith reported staff will present the Council with the ideas and concepts generated during the public workshop. Staff will seek guidance from the Council on the appropriate strategy to pursue.

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards said the public's 50 acres should not include retail uses, but developed in such a manner where retailers want to locate within close proximity to The Gathering Place. There is privately owned property available along 20<sup>th</sup> Street to accommodate retail activities.

The Council discussed developing a stormwater system and encouraging retail development.

### **Stormwater NPDES**

Director Blount reviewed previous milestones and briefed the Council on the status of the City's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit. Fife created a drainage utility in anticipation of the permit and applied for the permit on March 5, 2003. DOE accepted the City's application and combined it with other jurisdictions and issued a

combined general permit on January 17, 2007. The permit is effective February 16, 2007. A copy of the permit is attached to the staff report.

Director Blount referred to the standards section of the permit. Some conditions must be met within the five-year permit period. One of the most difficult requirements is that Fife shall use all known, available, and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment (AKART) to prevent and control pollution waters. Another is redevelopment of a facility that must meet current drainage standards. The two issues, in addition to others, are under appeal. Staff intends to enforce the permit conditions and move ahead on next steps for sampling plans, documenting City standards, taking a holistic approach to stormwater management, and tracking the status of the appeals.

Councilmember Godwin referred to a City of Sumner low impact housing project that uses a different water management strategy of redirecting stormwater into the ground rather than directing stormwater into a facility that eventually releases the water to the bay. He asked whether Fife is considering similar approaches. Director Blount affirmed that Fife is considering similar measures. An example is the Kelsey Lane development that is using a rain garden process. Part of Sumner's strategy includes installing under drains allowing water to drain out after it runs through the soil. Staff will encourage developers to employ similar solutions for City projects.

Director Blount noted the new standards are effective 30 months following the effective date of the permit. The City is required to develop standards and determine mandatory and/or optional requirements for different types of land uses. Staff will present the Council with a draft set of requirements for review and adoption that could include incorporating most of the state's standards. The standards become effective after adoption by the Council. Developments will not be required to retrofit facilities.

Councilmember Johnson asked which section of the permit addresses redevelopment. City Attorney Jacoby replied staff provided the Council with excerpts from the permit. Redevelopment is addressed on page 17 of 50. It is also specifically described in a separate appendix document. Councilmember Johnson asked staff to place a complete copy for reference purposes in the Council Chambers.

Councilmember Johnson inquired about a sewage treatment plant serving a mobile home park in Edgewood that discharges into Wapato Creek. Director Blount reported the wastewater plant is permitted separately and is now in compliance.

Director Blount noted Drainage Districts #21 and #23 are subject to the permit regulations. He described the advantages of having an interlocal agreement. Without an interlocal agreement, all pipes discharging to the oxbow would be separately regulated as a point of discharge and monitored separately. Fife has five years before routine sampling is required. There is an incentive to work with District #23 so Fife does not have to contend with numerous points of discharge.

Discussion ensued about whether the City has some flexibility to waive certain conditions when redevelopment is initiated. Director Blount explained the City has some flexibility to waive standards, such as building regional stormwater treatment facilities or ponds so redevelopment is not required to treat onsite. Councilmember Cerqui expressed interest in having staff investigate and evaluate other options.

Councilmember de Booy asked about the outcome in 2012 when the current five-year permit expires. City Attorney Jacoby replied the NPDES is a five-year permit. Fife will spend several years developing standards followed by implementation. In the fifth year, the City will begin the process for applying for the next permit.

Councilmember Roscoe commended staff for securing the permit. She expressed support for the City taking a proactive approach.

City Manager Worthington reported the cities of Milton and Edgewood would like to convene a tri-city meeting with Fife to talk about the NPDES Permit process and requirements.

Councilmember Godwin asked if the intent is to generate samples to test for pollutants at a variety of different locations prior to the permit irrespective of the interlocal agreement. Director Blount affirmed that it is. Councilmember Godwin suggested that sampling should begin prior to the current permit expiring. Director Blount explained that Stream Team and the Pierce County Conservation District are engaged in ongoing sampling for E-coli and other pollutants in Wapato Creek. The City is not collecting samples at this point. He described tasks staff completed including completion of physical inspections and the next steps leading up to the sampling component.

Councilmember Godwin said water quality is a concern. He said it was his understanding that testing was initiated some time ago. Stormwater management activities are destroying the bay. If management strategies do not change Puget Sound will suffer. Director Blount emphasized that the City intends to follow through with testing.

Further discussion followed about testing required by private developers. The City will move forward with testing sometime next year. The current state permit does not require testing during the five-year permit process and it also is not a condition of the current NPDES permit.

Mr. Gill described ancillary benefits emerging from the inspection of various storm ponds. The DOE is currently collecting samples from the pond on 45<sup>th</sup>, as well as other sites.

**Wapato Creek  
Restoration Plan  
Update**

Director Smith updated the Council on recent Wapato Creek restoration activities. Staff hosted an initial meeting on February 22, 2007 with major stakeholders. Councilmembers Godwin and Cerqui and Mayor Kelley attended. Insufficient flow and water quality are two of the key issues. While long-term efforts are underway, the City should do something now to provide actual benefits to the creek. Staff proposes to prepare a Request for Proposals (RFP) to recruit outside expertise to advance the restoration project and prepare a draft plan.

Director Smith reviewed draft plan components that include recommendations based on best available science (BAS), long-term strategies, and an action plan to accomplish the goals. He suggested the plan include a goal statement and additional goals or strategies.

Councilmember Godwin indicated that there are stakeholders and others willing to draft a restoration plan. He questioned why the City should hire a consultant when there are other partners the City can work with.

Mayor Kelley suggested having staff work with the Puyallup Tribe to identify studies that have already been completed prior to the City hiring a consultant. Even if the City finds it should hire a consultant, the studies will provide valuable information.

Councilmember Cerqui agreed it will be helpful to partner with the Conservation District and the Tribe. However, the RFP is not a bad idea.

Director Smith said the task is significant and will require considerable staff resources to complete.

Discussion followed about why it's important to build political support to ensure successful implementation of the restoration plan and water quality issues (dissolved oxygen levels, temperature).

Councilmember Johnson conveyed that he doesn't oppose staff initiating the RFP process.

**Fife City Council Study Session Minutes**

**March 20, 2007**

**Page 8 of 9**

Director Smith indicated staff will develop a scope of work and present it to the Council at a future meeting as well as speaking to other stakeholders to determine what additional data are available.

Mayor Pro Tem Edwards inquired about a budget for the restoration project. City Manager Worthington replied that the 2007 budget includes a \$40,000 earmark for professional services. There is no line item identified for restoration construction activities.

Director Blount explained the Tribe, DOE, and the Conservation District typically hire consultants to develop detailed plans and specifications when initiating similar restoration projects.

**COUNCILMEMBER  
COMMENTS**

Mayor Kelley invited staff and Councilmembers to view the Fife community float at the Yatsui Barn.

Councilmember Roscoe said the study session was short and productive.

Assistant City Manager Reinbold reported the Latino Community meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2007 at 6:00 p.m.

City Manager Worthington noted staff provided Councilmembers with a summary on the recent trip to Washington, D.C.

Director Reuter reminded everyone about the birthday party event for citizens who are celebrating their 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. The event begins at 5:00 p.m. on March 27, 2007 at the Fife Community Center. A grand opening celebrating the opening of the Fife Community Pool is scheduled for April 28, 2007.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Mayor Pro Tem Edwards adjourned the study session at 8:41 p.m.**

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Kory Edwards, Mayor Pro Tem

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Steve Worthington, City Manager

Prepared by Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary

**Fife City Council Study Session Minutes**  
**March 20, 2007**  
**Page 9 of 9**

Puget Sound Meeting Services