

**CITY OF ESPAÑOLA
SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP
THURSDAY, JANUARY 10, 2008 6:00 P.M.
CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
405 N. PASEO DE OÑATE ESPAÑOLA, NM**

The meeting was called to order at 6:13 p.m. with the following present:

Mayor: Joseph Maestas
Mayor Pro Tem: Alice Lucero (absent)
Councilors: Danielle Duran (absent)
Rosario "Chayo" Garcia
Alfred Herrera
Cecelia Lujan
Eddie Maestas (absent)
Helen Kain-Salazar
Dennis Tim Salazar

City Manager: Gus Cordova

City Clerk: Veronica Martinez
Lucas Gauthier

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mayor Maestas presented the agenda for approval:

**CALL TO ORDER
APPROVAL OF AGENDA
BUSINESS WITH VISITORS**

1. Molzen - Corbin and Associates Presentation on Drought Contingency PER/ Ground water alternatives

**ANNOUNCEMENTS
ADJOURNMENT**

Councilor Lujan made a motion to approve, seconded by Councilor Herrera; motion passed 5/0.

Doug Albin and Robert Fowlie of Molzen-Corbin & Associates (MCA) presented. Mr. Fowlie gave a brief history on Drought Contingency PER. He stated that it had been funded by the Bureau of Reclamation and the purpose was to determine how the city could sustain a supply of water through projected growth to meet current and future water needs. He stated that he presented in August the draft PER and the final was submitted in September. Part of the report was to figure out the planning area water needs including future annexation, but was not intended to be a "regional" study – population projections were taken from the City's 2003 Comprehensive Plan. Groundwater quality was also assessed as part of the study, to bring the water into drinking water standards compliance. The third part was to find out what was necessary to meet the future demand.

Mayor Pro Tem Lucero arrived at 6:18 p.m.

He stated that the first thing done was to determine population projections; he showed a 40-year projection timeline per the comprehensive plan of 2003. He stated that per capita, usage was determined to be 125 gallons per day per person, and was a high estimate. He demonstrated on the time line the capacity of existing wells and the needs for future ground water to meet the projected demand. The illustration was that without wells 4 and 7 the city would need three new wells over the course of 40 years. He stated that the current wells were

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capable to meet demands only because of stage 3 conservation that was in place. It was also identified that by blending wells 4 and 7, both could be put back on line and increase flow by 500 gallons per minute to the system; by bringing the two wells on line, 2029 would be the time to add a new well and another in 2040. He compared to the projected population and the actual growth, and found that the projection had not materialized in the planning area.

The PER also looked at the development of the Surface Water Treatment Plant (SWTP); if the plant was built, how it would work in conjunction with the ground water. It was determined that the wells would be needed to supplement the surface water system – the city could not eliminate the wells. If built, however, the SWTP would allow the wells to recover during the off time. It would give flexibility for use, if a well were down, for example. Four recommendations were made in the PER.

1. **Installing arsenic treatment system at Well 1.** The status of the project was 70-80% complete and was being reviewed by NMED Construction Programs Bureau and could begin construction in months.
2. **Wells 4 and 7 blending plan.** He stated that this also included the replacement of tank 4. If this project were not built, the city would have to construct a new well in 2012. If that well were constructed within the city, the hydrological study had shown that there would probably be some sort of contaminant that would require treatment, and so it was very beneficial to complete the blending plan.
3. **Wells 5 and 6 project.** The uranium level in these wells was above proposed standards; and the city would have to comply eventually, probably in 2009; having the PER is a big step since it is already the compliance plan that would be required.
4. **Modify an already-drilled well – well 9.** This well was drilled a few years ago, but was currently not in service; the hydrologist had looked at the well and determined that production could be increased by constructing horizontal wells. This would add 150-400 gpm, but contaminants, if any, were unknown. It was suggested that there should be a pilot well to test the water. The advantage was that the well was already drilled and had infrastructure close to it (tank 1, well 8). The cost to restore the well was estimated at \$936,000.

Mr. Cordova asked if the demand increased with Cuatro Villas and Chimayo. Mr. Albin stated that the unknown would be if the water treatment plant gets built in Chimayo; in that instance, two things change – the service area and the spike in population, which is not a gradual increase, but an instant increase of about 12,000. The one well gives a lot of latitude to grow in the short term.

Councilor Kain-Salazar asked about well 9 and whether it would draw water from the water table and what effect would it have on the existing surrounding wells. Marvin Martinez stated that if the infrastructure existed, people would have to tie into the system.

Mayor Maestas asked about uranium compliance and what a realistic time frame we could have for the compliance agreement. He stated that the exploratory of well 8 should be a higher priority than the uranium compliance. Mr. Fowlie stated that they didn't yet have a good idea of when there might be a deadline implemented, but estimated that the city would probably have to come up with agreement in 2009 and would have to commit to a schedule – perhaps 2010.

It was asked if blending of wells 8 and 9 could be a possibility to abate the contaminants that may be present; Mr. Fowlie stated it could.

Mayor Maestas asked which of these projects was currently funded. Mr. Fowlie stated that the Well 1 treatment was funded from the \$1M from the governor in 2007; Wells 4 and 7 blending was funded from the CDBG for \$500,000 and the city's GRT funds of \$500,000; the line work design could be done so that if the bids came in too high, the tank could be built at a later date when money was available. Mayor Maestas stated they should look more into investing the \$33,000 into well 9 and try to get by with blending if possible.

Councilor Herrera stated, regarding uranium asked if well 7 with its 22 mcl, if the city ran the potential that amount could fluctuate up or down with uranium; Mr. Fowlie stated that it was possible, but by blending with 4, the concentration was enough with mass balance equations to be below the levels. Councilor Herrera asked if a default solution for all wells could be blending. Mr. Fowlie stated it could, and that they had evaluated about 6 blending scenarios, and since all wells are not affected with the same contaminants, it was possible, with the exception of a well 5 and 6 plan since there was not enough water to bring the levels down.

Councilor Herrera asked what alternatives could or should the city be looking at, whether both surface and ground water, one over the other, a smaller plant, or wells only. He stated that the potential of the wells scenario was clear, since we were already pumping twice the current demand. Mr. Fowlie stated that there was currently more than enough capacity to meet the demand, and the population projected in the Comprehensive Plan had not materialized, but the demand could change if the city decided to serve areas outside of the current city limits.

Councilor Herrera asked if the current output included wells 4, 7 and 9. Mr. Fowlie explained that the map portrayed what it would look like when 4 and 7 come back on line and extends the need for a new well to 2029 instead of 2012. Councilor Herrera pointed out that the capacity would increase substantially, maybe tripling the current need and if we were thinking of expanding services with the well options, the capacity was pretty good.

Mr. Albin stated that \$4.4 million would bring the wells on-line, but they could bring all into compliance with just half of that; \$2 million would increase capacity by 700-800 gpm. Councilor Herrera asked about the length of the horizontal shafts proposed at well 9. Doug stated they were 50 to 60 ft long and approximately 11 ft deep, where the water table is. Councilor Herrera what the effect the water conservation had in terms of use, due to lack of enforcement, and the change in the metering system. Doug stated that 6-7 years ago the City could not produce enough water, but the city re-drilled well 6 and drilled well 8 and imposed stage 3, and turned it all around. Robert stated that in 2004, it was determined that an average of 129 g per person was used, in 2005 it was 104 gallons and 92 gallons in 2006.

Mayor Pro Tem Lucero asked what the Cuatro Villas service area population was. Doug stated that Chimayo had a population of approximately 5,000 and Cuatro Villas was about 3,800.

Mayor Maestas asked if operation and maintenance costs were included in the \$1.4 million estimate for treatment; Robert stated it was. Mayor Maestas stated that the city would be now be in the uranium producing business. Doug clarified what the mayor stated that wells 5 and 6 would produce uranium and the operation and maintenance of treatment would cost approximately \$108,000 per year. Mayor Maestas asked that the present worth be added to the initial cost. Robert explained that the project was planned for construction and that operation and maintenance was presented in the PER; the total project cost would add the operation and maintenance cost to the initial construction cost but the PER was based off of acquiring funding.

Marvin asked about a previous discussion about blending wells 4, 5, and 6. Robert stated it was not possible because at the time, there was no uranium mandate, but with the anticipated mandate, the concentrations would be too high to blend out.

Doug stated that to accurately compare the cost of \$2.7 million for the blending of wells 5 and 6, the city would have to look at drilling another well in another part of town and find out what the present worth was; it would have be less than \$2.7 million to make it worth it.

All councilors agreed to go ahead with a pilot well at well 9, as well as the comparison for the wells 5 and 6 project. Robert stated that the analysis for that had already been done and it was much more costly to drill another well: \$3.4 million inside city limits; \$3.9 million outside city limits.

Mayor Maestas asked what policy guidelines MCA had for the City; if we rolled the dice and went forward with the Surface Water Plant, it could be on-line before the uranium mandate was in effect and take wells 5 and 6 off-line. Robert stated that even having the plan to build would probably satisfy the requirement when the mandate came out.

Mayor Pro Tem Lucero stated that she didn't feel the information in the white paper was all inclusive and that the same information that they had been given in should have been included in the white paper to make the comparison more accurate.

Gus brought up that two wells should be costed out, since they are needed in the future anyway. He asked if those couldn't be an alternative to the 5/6 project or the surface water project. Robert stated he would provide the cost estimates.

Mayor Maestas stated that he preferred in-city wells.

Mayor Pro Tem Lucero made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilor Lujan. Meeting adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Passed, approved and adopted on March 25, 2008.

Transcribed by Veronica Martinez

Electronic Copy – Signatures on File