

Minutes
City of Mackay
Special Meeting of the City Council
Tuesday, May 9, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Wayne Olsen, Mayor called the meeting to order at 4:00p.m. Recited the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Wayne Olsen, Greg Blackwell, Richard Mangum, Mike Foster, Vicki Wall, and Michelle Teninty.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Jared Gunderson, Duane Jernberg and Chardon Hartley

Mayor Olsen started; I call this special meeting of the Mackay City Council to order. The purpose of this meeting is to be brought up to speed by Mr. Gunderson on all of our upcoming DEQ and Department of Water Resources. So, with that in mind, I'm just going to open it up as a general meeting, turn it over to Jared. Feel free to ask questions as you see fit.

Mr. Gunderson said the state has come up with a lot of new regulations on drinking water, and you will be seeing some wastewater regulations, so let's try the drinking water first. Right now, the big push across the whole nation is the lead and copper rules that are changing. They've changed now to where you'll be pulling five samples in one home at different increments. So, the costs are going to go up on your sampling.

The other thing that is changing is you, as a City, have got to get through, everyone who has a water meters, every connection, and document what's on the City side of the meter, and what's on the residential side of the meter, whether it's galvanized copper, and document it. Then you have to submit that to the State. That's the first phase of what they're going to do.

The second phase, they're still trying to figure out. But the direction that I've been hearing is, after all the sampling you go through, then it's going to be decided if you're going to have to go through and replace lines in town. That's one of the biggest ones. But as far as collecting the data, you have till October of next year to have all that turned in.

The director that's over that division of drinking water on the lead rule, she's basically saying right now I'm being nice. When October comes and you come to me and say, oh, we missed the date, nice is will be gone. She'll be going to enforcement. There's no leniency to it right now. They're getting very strict. They're reducing the limits, it'll be down to 15 parts per million instead of 1.3 milligrams per liter.

So they're tightening it up really tight. In our samples, I was overwhelmed briefly, because what I'm seeing in those, as far as the sampling end of it, I'm not foreseeing any problems with the City, as far as the data collection. But where the problem comes is because it's labor intensive. You will have to complete a spreadsheet, I've given access to the spreadsheet to Chardon, he's got all that information. You have to follow their spreadsheet. They've got the formulas in there that if you enter an answer, whatever pipe it is, then it'll pop up another question. We've got to answer. So, if they do come up with bad samples, they're going to make the City enforce it. So that's where I'm having heartburn with that part of it personally, because they've crossed lines

from the government side, City side, to private property. One thing that I definitely recommend is you do have the option to enter unknown, on those service lines, I would strongly urge you not to check unknown. The government will come back to say, well, that's great. Now we need you to actually verify, to dig it up. Most of these, my recommendation to your guys has been just go through your meter boxes. You can see what's on the customer side, and what's on the City side and put it down. So, you don't need to worry about what they've got in the house.

That's another gray area of the rule. It's based on a 90 percentile. Originally, they talked about when implementing the lead copper rule, if you couldn't stay within the 90 percentile, then you could look down the road, we are now down that road. You'll be looking at replacing 7% of your services every year until all identified lead pipes have been replaced.

A lot of water meters in the years up until in the 2000s had lead in the meters. That's when they changed and took the lead out of the meters. City's got lucky; we got grandfathered in. The new meters that you're acquiring, let them know that they have to be by industry standard. I'm guessing you're still sick with the same 10 sample homes you are currently using. And, that you're pulling multiple samples from that house.

And here's the other thing that's hard is you're relying on the property owner to pull those, you're really putting yourself out there to have those tainted samples, because how many homeowners are going to pull a sample, and wait five minutes? So, there lies a problem, too. I know there are bigger cities that have put sampling stations on their main lines, and just trying to basically find a loophole, they get around doing the homes, but the rule is pretty clear. You've got to do it from homes. So that's something to look forward to.

Mayor Olsen asked, So, when we say that we have a sample of certain homes right now, do we continue to do that because we've got a baseline there? Or is this the time to switch and get a new baseline?

Mr. Gunderson answered, that'll be up to the City, if they want to have a sampling plan, you can keep the same sampling plan, in my understanding during these conference calls, which is they're allowing you to keep it because it was an approved list, because you did certain homes that are required. I would not see any reason why they're not going to allow you.

I don't know where they honestly, where people think a lot of money is coming from for trying to keep up with these rules. It's just because when you guys are competing when you throw your hat in the ring for money and compete against all these larger cities who have bigger projects and they have all the legislators that are in there rallying and lobbying. From what I've been seeing It's pretty easy, their recommendations, at this point, and I'm hoping they just don't follow the pressure from the politicians and take the time to do it right.

So that's, that's another one that's coming down the line on water. This lead one is the biggest. It's the biggest push. And it's actually the fastest. If we've got to borrow money, the USDA, the State, they all come out and say your user rates are going to be this amount. Keep that in mind, there's no such thing as a freebie.

The waste water study needs an update, I would probably recommend looking at going for some grant money or something to get the current one updated, because anything that has treatment or lagoons will require an environmental study with it. And you might as well throw the environmental study in where you're so close to the river. All the federal agencies are requiring environmental studies right now. There for a while they were being nice and wanting to give out

money and they were foregoing the environmental study as if you had a study within X amount of years. So that's kind of by the wayside.

So, you guys are doing great with chlorination, but it is very hard to come by right now. And it's going to get even harder. It's just not worth it.

We have a contract here with the engineers for a seepage test. The State requires an engineer to sign off on it. So we can't bypass that one. That's just one of those fun ones. But that'll give us a seepage test complete. And then from that the next hurdle we will have in this contract, they're going to also write the letter that's in our IPDS permit. That's our discharge permit, which allows us to discharge to the river, we have to have a d-chlorination unit and we've got that in there. The engineers are just going to write a quick little narrative to DEQ that's all DEQ wants.

The State thought they'd be able to get ahead on writing these permits and get up to date. My permit was dated 2001 for the City of Rexburg. We just got issued our brand-new permit in April last month. So that gives you an idea of just how quick their actions are, going just very slowly.

The copper limit is atrocious, you can consume 1.3 milligrams of copper in drinking water, they've reduced that to 15 parts per billion now. But in wastewater to send it out to the stream, I've got to put it down to a point over one gram. The only way to do that is you put in a mechanical plant and you've got to have filtration, like you can't believe. We went into the estimates at Rexburg, and talked to some engineer's, different distributors, the filtration unit, we would need there to treat ours, we're talking about anywhere from \$3 to \$5 million. And that only gets us up to 6 million gallons a day. And so that's pretty significant. My boss actually let me run the numbers on land application. Right now the City of Rexburg is averaging three and a half million gallons a day. An area about 1500 acres, or farmers willing to take the water. Our only problem is winter storage, and we'd be looking at with the pretty good size storage.

All you need is nitrogen loading on the soils. And if you have sagebrush or alfalfa, it absorbs the nitrogen and you can just have a heyday in the winter, snowmaking and the ammonia evaporates in the atmosphere and you're good. I would recommend you have an engineer look at a land application when you update the waste water study, because no matter what there's costs. You're going to have to put a screen in this new permit, not even everybody that doesn't have screening on their lagoons, it's automatic whether you wanted it or not, you're getting it. So, you're running more power and would need another building. You will get to trash. It's got to be hauled off. So there's another expense. The other thing you've got is you will have to go through and raise the lagoons or look at a Mechanical Plant. In essence, you could be up in the \$20 million range real quick. And that's just for what is taking place now, that's not buying a lot of extra capacity for things.

I'm looking at a biomass system for the City of Rexburg. I've been waiting for some quotes. One was \$3600 bucks. The cheaper one may not be approved by EPA. So if it's approved by the EPA, I'm going to buy that one. But the other thing is when you get all these things, there isn't enough set up here to do what you need to do. But IPOD's is a little labor intensive, you do have to keep a lot of records. I wish I had better news about testing's, it's just gone up. And with these increased volumes that were being required to have, you guys are getting hit with all kinds of fee's.

Councilman Foster asked, so we'll do the seepage test and then you recommend we do another wastewater study like Keller did? Have we thought about when we're going to do that? I know

we're talking about upgrading to a UV system to the lagoons, but it kind of sounds like with all the things coming down the road may be more complex than what we want to take on and just spraying it on the ground might be the best choice. So, are we getting ahead of ourselves, treating the system?

Mr. Gunderson answered, you still have to treat it. You still have to have a certain amount of fecal reduction that I'm trying to remember the exact numbers but if I remember right for Class C, you've got to have About 100 colonies, but I would recommend just doing the UV.

Mr. Jernberg added, we've had a hard time just getting chlorine. And keeping a residual in the wintertime is tough.

Mr. Gunderson added, because when that water's cold, it requires a lot more. We did do some experimenting with evaporation. We did actually surprise DEQ a lot because from a Keller study saying how much we were putting in, there was no way that it was even going to be possible.

Councilman Foster asked, so, what was the discussion in the Keller report about needing a third cell?

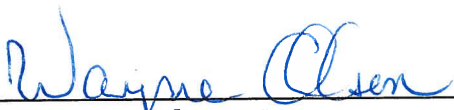
Mr. Gunderson replied, they were just mistaken, it was off the mark.

I know one thing that's going to happen just a heads up. Because you have a jetter truck, what's your cleaning schedule? So just keep that in mind you need a cleaning schedule that you're staying with, then that makes it easier if they have to cover things.

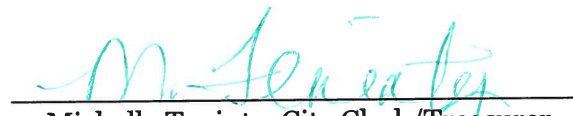
I had one engineer telling me he'd been working in sewer and water for 30 years. And he says Mackay is the only city in his working career that went out and corrected problems. When they got the wastewater study and didn't pass it on to the next council. He says, I use Mackay as a model because it can be done. Any grants would be good, you want to have your options open. Because as you grow, you want to be able to expand. And the other thing is the savings on your testing because at that point when you go up on the discharge monitoring report, we do the EMR we just write on the report that we use chlorine, we use UV and DEQ, certain dates, that's their sign off and documentation that they get every month from you. Another thing I think would probably be a good thing to look at is your connection fees. Because the pipe, the parts so you can get started.

Councilman Blackwell motioned to approve the proposal to prepare the seepage testing procedure. Councilman Mangum seconded, Motion passed.

Councilman Mangum made a motion to adjourn. Councilman Foster seconded. Motion passed, meeting adjourned at 5:33 PM.



Wayne Olsen, Mayor



Michelle Teninty, City Clerk/Treasurer