

June 16, 2014

On this the 16th day of June 2014 7:00 P.M., the City Commission of the City of Hereford, Texas, convened in a special session in the Banquet Room, in the Community Center, the meeting being open to the public and notice of said meeting having been given as prescribed by Chapter 551 of the Government Code, with the following members being present and in attendance, to-wit:

Robert D. Josserand, Mayor
 Jose A. Garza, Commissioner Place One
 Angie Alonzo, Commissioner Place Two
 Charlie Kerr, Commissioner Place Three
 Linda Cumpston, Commissioner, Place Four
 Sam Metcalf, Commissioner Place Six
 Rick L. Hanna, City Manager
 Suzanne Finch, City Secretary

Absent: Cathy Bunch, Commissioner Place Five
 Slater C. Elza, City Attorney

Lynda Work was in attendance from the media to witness the proceedings. Also in attendance were Assistant City Manager Steve Bartels, Audie Sciumbato (Attorney Underwood Law Firm), Zane Edwards (Parkhill, Smith, & Cooper), Chief Brent Harrison, Captain Kirsten Williams, Robert Jones, several City employees, and over one hundred citizens.

Mayor Josserand voiced the invocation and then called upon Commissioner Garza to lead the Pledge of Allegiance. He then called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, and introduced each item on the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING:

ITEM 1 - Hear comments regarding proposed acquisition of water rights.

Mayor Josserand stated this is a "listening session"; however there has been a lot of misinformation and he stated he wanted to correct that by giving an overview of the proposed project. He noted the project would provide approximately one hundred years of water; the purchase would be for the water rights *only* on 11,000 acres of land; nothing will be done until the quality and quantity of water can be verified; and, the price is \$36 million. Mayor Josserand reiterated the City would not be purchasing the land or mineral rights; bonds would be sold to cover the purchase on a 20-year basis as it is much cheaper interest-wise than 30-year bonds; it would add approximately \$40 to \$42 per month to everyone's water bill; the well field would be developed probably 20 years down the road at a cost of another \$20 million to \$30 million; and, more than likely the Commission would put this issue to the voters on the November ballot. He also noted some of the commissioners have some serious reservations on the proposed project and this is not a done deal. He stated their goal is to provide as much information as possible to allow the citizens to make up their own minds.

Mayor Josserand stated we have heard from several people who do not reside within the city limits and he would like to hear from some people who live in Hereford and who would be directly affected by the proposed project.

Lois Matchet spoke first and expressed concerns that by adding \$40 to the water bill some of the elderly, retirees, and those on social security could not handle the increase and inquired if any alternate plans had been considered.

Bicky inquired about a desalination plant as it would also create jobs for the community. Mayor Josserand agreed desalination is something to consider as it makes a lot of sense and so does cleaning up the grey water. She also

inquired about the possibility of the city imposing mandatory watering schedules as they do in Austin, Texas.

Margaret DeToro expressed concern about getting our children and grandchildren in debt and cited the new Hospital and Amarillo College as recent examples. She asked the Commission to look at other alternatives including conservation and selling recycled water to industrial plants.

Estelle DeLaCruz expressed her concern at the cost of water.

Father Anthony Neusch, Pastor for St. Anthony's, expressed concern about people being upset about one person making money off the water acquisition and concerns about people wanting to spread the responsibility outside of our community rather than taking care of the problem ourselves. He urged the Commission to move forward without putting the proposal to a public vote.

Walter Cruz stated he lives in the county; he thinks industries should pay their fair share for water.

David Brumley suggested pricing for water should be tied to property tax.

James Jones inquired if there were any other options rather than paying \$3200 per acre for water only.

Mr. Parsons suggested the \$40 to \$50 increase on the water bill was nothing more than an illegal tax.

Sid Shaw, Director of the Chamber of Commerce, stated without water there will be no Hereford and applauded the Commission for their efforts.

Delores Gonzales wanted to make the Commission aware of how much water the golf course uses.

Jerry Ripley stated his taxes have already doubled largely due to the new hospital.

Brenda Minchew talked about the importance of water to our community and urged those that are against the acquisition to get the information and educate themselves before it goes to a vote.

Lydia Villanueva inquired about why there was not an emergency plan in place to conserve water. Mayor Josseland stated we do have such a plan. Ms. Villanueva urged the Commission to put the plan in place.

Martha Rincon stated we need to come together as a community to develop a strategy much like what was done when the new hospital was built. She noted that although she appreciates the water assistance fund - it is only a "band aid" and inquired who would put more money into it when the funds were depleted.

Bob Maddox expressed concerns the water assistance fund would only cover approximately 1,000 people for one year. He also expressed concerns the neighbors surrounding the 11,000 acres would pump water out from underneath that area.

Elsie Lloyd suggested the water should be based on usage rather than a flat fee.

Gloria Garcia criticized the Commission for not publishing information in Spanish and for not using the Spanish-speaking commissioners to translate.

Lynda Work, editor of the Hereford Brand, stated the mayor and commissioners are not responsible for what is published in the paper - she is responsible.

Ted Ray Coleman stated he wanted to publicly thank the Commission for their forethought and boldness as without water we don't have a town and people don't truly know the value of the well until it runs dry.

Bob Hicks stated Hereford is here because of agriculture and there won't be a town if agriculture fails.

Mayor Josserand thanked everyone for coming, stated the Commission would likely bring the matter to the public for a vote in November, and wished everyone the best this summer.

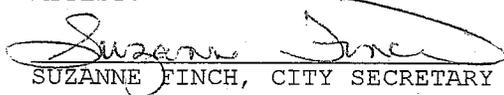
There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

APPROVED:



ROBERT D. JOSSERAND, MAYOR
CITY OF HEREFORD, TEXAS

ATTEST:



SUZANNE FINCH, CITY SECRETARY