CITY OF LAHARPE

SPECIAL MEETING

MARCH 20, 2025 AT 5:00PM

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT: OTHERS PRESENT:

Ron Knavel Mayor, Ella Mae Crowell

Cynthia Carr City Clerk, Michelle Altis

Sharlyn Thompson

Angela Barker

Call to order

Mayor Crowell called the special meeting to order at 5:00p.m. with 4 council members present.

Wesley Weishaar & Bruce Boettcher, with BG Consultants, was in attendance to give an update of the city’s sewer project. Wesley stated the city was awarded $750,000.00 from the Kansas water office grant, tonight we will go over the product budget and where the city needs to be with the sewer rate. The city has 6 lift stations, 3 of those lift stations will undergo a complete construction; new 6’ I.D. wet well, new duplex, wet well mounted pump station, provide 25 linear feet with 4” PVC force main connecting to existing. 1 station will go through the same construction but will have a duplex submersible pump station instead of a well mounted. The main pump station, by lagoons, will have new pumps and controls. All 6 lift stations will go through and electrical upgrade and will be setup all the same so that, if power is lost, the generator will work on any of them. Once the project is completed all 6 lift stations will be in KDHE compliance and should have a 20–25-year life span, what you have now are well past that life span with some structures a part of the 1976 sewer project.

Wesley shared the target for the project schedule: Design is 60% finished and should be completed and submitted to KDHE for review by April 30, 2025. KDHE will review and approve, this process normally takes 2-3 months, once approved the project will go out for bid. Looking at bidding out project, then once council approves the bid the project will be awarded and a contract will be designed, timeline for this will be from June – Sept 2025. Construction is scheduled to start December 2025 and should be completed by June 2026.

Wesley stated, once this project is completed, we will come back and discuss Phase 2 of the sewer project which will consist of the collection system, hoping to do this between 2026-2028.

The funding for the project was discussed: the city has the $1,465,000.00 loan in place through KDHE with 30% principal forgiveness of what is drawn. The loan can be used to reimburse the city funds for costs of design work, if needed. You do not pay on this loan until you use it, once you take your first draw, payment will be required within 1 year. The council discussed the invoice for design from BG in the amount of $26,145.00, mayor Crowell asked the council which fund they wanted to use to pay for it. Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to pay the invoice out of the sewer lagoon dredging fund but make sure it is replaced at a latter date. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 4-0.

Wesley talked about the KWO grant and asked the council if they would like for Southeast Kansas Regional Planning Commission (SEKRPC) to administer. Since you have SEKRPC administering the loan proceeds it might be helpful to have them administer the grant as well. Their office would cover all the reporting requirements. Mayor Crowell suggested the city go that way, we are paying them now for the help with the loan. Mayor Crowell asked Carey Spoon, with SEKRPC, if there would be additional expenses, Carey said she would look into it but didn’t think it would be much at all and could be added to the contract. Mayor Crowell suggested the city move forward with SEKRPC. Sharlyn Thompson expressed concerns of not knowing an exact dollar amount for their services on the grant. Cynthia Carr made the motion to have SEKRPC administer the KWO grant on behalf of the city. Angela Barker seconded. Motion carried 3-1 with Sharlyn Thompson opposing.

Last item, Wesley shared a user rate analysis, with the project costs and the KWO grant the city is looking at needing to use $715,000.00 of the loan with 30% forgiveness the payback amount would be around $500,500.00 with an annual interest rate at 2.14% on a 20-year loan, the city sewer charge should be around $51.70 a month by the completion of the project. Angela Barker suggested raising the sewer rate $5.00 a year for the next 5 years and that would put us at $65.00 a month for residential and $68.00 for commercial in 2030. Cynthia Carr expressed concerns of the sewer rate and asked about the charge after the first 1,000 gallons of water, where is that money and is it being considered. Mayor Crowell stated our sewer rates now are $40.00 a month with $8.00 per user going to our lagoon fund for dredging at a latter date so the money going into our sewer reserve fund is $32.00 and with the $25.00 increase we will be a little over where we need to be 4 years after project completion. The extra on the sewer charge that comes from water usage is in our working fund which we have been using to pay for parts needed to keep the lift stations going. Mayor Crowell suggested going with Angela’s idea and have Fred write the ordinance for the city to approve and adopt at the next council meeting. Sharlyn Thompson made a motion to have Fred write up an ordinance on the city sewer rates with an increase of $5.00 a year for the next 5 years. Ron Knavel seconded. Motion carried 3-1 with Cynthia Carr opposing.

Sharlyn Thompson made the motion to adjourn. Angela Barker seconded. Motion carried 4-0. Adjourned at 5:47p.m.

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City Clerk Mayor