



**MINUTES**  
**WORKSHOP CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**FEBRUARY 11, 2002 AT 6:30 P.M.**  
**CITY HALL, 116 FIRST STREET**  
**NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA**

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Pursuant to proper notice a Workshop Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held February 11, 2002 at 6:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida.

Attendance:

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mayor Richard A. Brown  
Vice Mayor Robert D. Shimp  
Councilor Jimmy Gilbert  
(arrived 6:40 p.m.)

City Manager Richard A. Linn  
City Clerk Lisa Volpe, CMC  
Supervisor of Water & Waster/Water Leon Smith

Councilor Ronald Patronik  
Councilor Harriett Pruette

Absent:  
City Attorney Christopher A. White

Call to Order/Roll Call

The Mayor called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and asked for questions from Council. Councilor Patronik asked for the most cost effective method.

City Manager Linn stated he and Jim Miller from PBS&J and the city attorney met during the prior week. They outlined in a memo the best compromise solution with the best price. He summarized the memo stating they have changed the specifications to allow the contractor to decide which method they would like to use either open cut or horizontal directional drilling. Either method would have to use High Density Polyethelene (HDPE) pipe. Poly vinyl chloride (PVC) pipe could not be used without a permit change. The qualifications would remain the same for any work completed by a contractor or subcontractor for horizontal directional drilling.

Councilor Pruette asked how the bid would be awarded if two different methods were in the bids. Mr. Linn stated the bid would be awarded based on the lowest price.

Vice Mayor Shimp asked if it would be more cost effective if the city installed sewer at the same time as the water if the city did the open trench method. He also asked if the city would have a special machine necessary to weld the new type of High Density Polyethelene (HDPE) pipe. Mr. Linn stated the city would have the new machine. He also stated the water and sewer pipes had to be 10 feet apart by state mandate, therefore it would be just as easy to do these separately.

Councilor Pruette felt the city should begin with water and attack the sewer later due to the water break problems in the recent weeks. Mr. Linn did comment that the city should begin design work on sewer as soon as the water project is underway.

Councilor Patronik asked if pipe bursting was an option. Mr. Miller said the permit would

not allow pipe bursting due to the type of pipe permitted.

Vice Mayor Shimp asked why the qualifications for directional drilling had not changed which could allow someone with no experience in the Jacksonville area to win the bid. Mr. Miller commented that the specifications were changed to let open cut bid. He stated the qualifications were necessary to be sure the company had the ability and experience to do the job. The specs were not JEA specs yet but JEA hoped to adopt them in the future and should definitely be looked at. The job would not allow for any change orders and there would be strict penalties for delays, line destructions, ingress/egress problems, liquidated damages, and a bonus if completed early. This allows the city to stop contractors who have a bad record with telecommunication companies to be able to bid.

Vice Mayor Shimp reiterated that open cut contractor could bid and penalties were for anyone doing the job but did not understand why the qualification was so strict with 200,000 feet of piping experience.

Mr. Miller stated he was going by the recommendation of many engineers all over Florida in his company. He would change the qualifications if directed by Council but did not feel comfortable changing them on his own.

Councilor Patronik suggested adding to the penalties to offset the lowering of qualifications.

Councilor Gilbert read from a letter he had previously submitted by a JEA official that stated qualifications were not necessary as written. Councilor Gilbert had objections to imposing the 200,000 feet qualification to subcontractors and felt qualifications should be imposed based on what percent of the job was being completed by directional drilling. Mr. Miller stood by his recommendation but would listen to any directive made by Council. Discussion ensued about Councilor Gilbert's recommendation.

City Manager Linn stated that John Galen, Director of Public Services, had told him the Consumptive Water Use Permit was being renewed and St. John's River Water Management was beginning to question why we kept saying we were going to do this project and why it kept being put off. Mr. Linn also stated he had spoken with the city attorney and if a consensus was made tonight then it could be advertised and an official vote be made at a special meeting preceding the workshop on February 25, 2002.

Mayor Brown opened the floor to public comments.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Gordon Gruhn, 500 Ranch Road, stated that the specification attempting to be used was not used anywhere else and would not guarantee a qualified contractor. He objected to having to qualify subcontractors thereby using a sub that he would be bidding against. He stated the information he had previously given was factual but did not guarantee a million dollar savings. JEA does not go by any specifications but they did have a qualification list with many good contractors on it. He stated that JEA did not require a permit for pipe bursting. He felt the general contractor should be able to choose which technology to use on what section and not have to use a "qualified contractor" as a subcontractor. He suggested using the added paragraph that he had suggested at the last meeting. Council engaged in discussion with Mr. Gruhn.

Tim Slater, 573 Magnolia Street, asked when Bal Harbour would be done and stated it should be given priority due to the excessive water breaks in the last year. Vice Mayor Shimp assured him it was first on the list. Councilor Pruette asked for an updated priority list in writing from Mr. Linn. Mr. Slater also asked for the sewer to

be looked into because of the problems it is causing in this neighborhood where lines are in the back yards.

Bryan Schmidt, 506 Oceanfront, passed out a resume of the contractors within the Utility Contractors Association. He asked for no one to be excluded in the bidding process and was glad for the compromise but felt a meshing of the two technologies would be the best economically speaking. He felt qualifications should not be placed on subcontractors.

Mike Woodall, John Woody Inc., 424 Pond Drive, as an open cut contractor, he felt there were some places it would be better to directionally drill. He wanted to be able to use a subcontractor of his choosing. He also questioned the liquidated damages for hitting existing pipes especially when a lot of times the city did not know where the pipes were themselves.

Grady James, Jax Utility Construction a part of the Haskell Company, 6130 Hecksher Drive, was also interested in lowering the amount of drilling required in the qualifications and felt the city would be better off by using local talent. He disagreed with having to qualify the subcontractor.

Robin Thigpen, 1445 West Church Street, stated that pipe bursting did not need a permit but did have excess interruption of service. He stated JEA does have a pre-qualifying list called 18 b&g and his company is on it. He stated AT&T cable had 11 contractors running their cable. His company uses ground radar and put in 20,000 feet of lines in this area by directional drilling. His company is always prompt in fixing anything that may be damaged during the work. His company has completed a lot of work for drilling for gas companies.

Lynda Padrta, 1113 First Street, asked what the 18 b&g list meant for JEA and what qualifications were needed. She also asked the council to be clear what the consensus was before the end of the meeting.

The council discussed some of the specifications such as contractors having to own their own equipment and blending the two technologies. They also discussed allowing subcontractors who are only doing a percentage of the job not to have the same qualifications; having qualifications for open cut contractors; residential drilling requirements; and JEA qualifications.

Vice Mayor Shimp stated that a compromise needed to be worked out by the end of the meeting.

Councilor Pruette asked for a brief recess.

#### Recess/Reconvene

Mayor Brown called a recess at 8:30 p.m. The meeting was called back to order at 8:45 p.m.

Mayor Brown stated that when he was with the telephone company he sat on the Utility Association Board. He remembers them being interested in safety and professionalism.

Vice Mayor Shimp asked Robin Thigpen how much directional drilling he had completed in the last year. Mr. Thigpen stated it was a lot but mostly gas lines. Discussion ensued about whether or not gas mains were equal in experience to water mains.

Mr. Miller stated that if the council wanted the qualifications to be changed they just needed to direct him to do so. He also stated if the qualifications were changed for subcontractors they needed to be changed for contractors.

Councilor Gilbert asked about the paragraph that the contractors asked to be inserted at a prior meeting. Mr. Miller stated it meant less experience. Councilor Gilbert asked if they could pre qualify based on percentage of the job being directional drilled. Discussion ensued on this topic. City Manager Linn stated he would be more comfortable with allowing gas line experience rather than percentage of job to determine pre-qualifications. Councilor Pruette suggested going with only open cut method. Mr. Miller said if this was going to be done then you may as well use PVC pipe and therefore you would have to re-permit. Mr. Gruhn spoke about mitigating damages. Discussion ensued about whether to raise the amount of damages or to change the specifications to allow for gas pipe experience. Discussion also centered on what licensing would be required.

Vice Mayor Shimp asked Leon Smith, Supervisor of Water and Sewer what he felt should be done. Mr. Smith stated he had no problem with any of the contractors in the audience but the council were the ones making the decision.

Councilor Pruette asked if the memo by the City Manager and Mr. Miller would allow the contractors in the audience to bid. They stated it would allow them to bid open cut.

The council discussed using licensing as a pre-qualification or using JEA lists as a qualification.

Councilor Pruette stated that as a councilor she needed to rely on staff and she supported the memo that was in front of them.

A contractor suggested adding pressure pipe to the pre-qualifications. The compromise was discussed.

Consensus: **TO USE THE MEMO CITY MANAGER LINN AND JIM MILLER OF PBS&J SUMMITTED TO GO OUT TO BID BUT CHANGING IT TO AND/OR DIRECTIONAL DRILLING / OPENCUT. AND ADDING PRESSURE PIPE TO THE PREQUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS.**

City Manager Linn recognized Donna Kaluzniak of Atlantic Beach and Gary Quick of Jacksonville Beach.

Lynda Padrta thanked the council for all of their efforts.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

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Richard A. Brown, Mayor

Attest:

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Lisa Volpe, CMC, City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_