



**MINUTES**  
**SPECIAL WORKSHOP CITY COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HOPKINS CREEK OUTFALL PROJECT**  
**JUNE 23, 2003, AT 10:30 P.M.**  
**CITY HALL, 116 FIRST STREET**  
**NEPTUNE BEACH, FLORIDA**

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Pursuant to proper notice a Special Workshop Meeting of the City Council of the City of Neptune Beach was held June 23, 2003, at 10:30 p.m., in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 116 First Street, Neptune Beach, Florida.

Attendance

The following Council members and staff were in attendance:

Mayor Richard Brown	City Clerk Lisa Volpe, CMC
Vice Mayor James Gilbert	Director of Public Services Leon Smith
Councilor Harriet Pruette	
Councilor Larry Shealy	Absent:
Councilor John Weldon	City Attorney Christopher White
City Manager Richard A. Linn	

Order & Roll Call

Mayor Brown called the special workshop meeting to order at 10:30 p.m. and announced the purpose of the meeting was to discuss the offer from the Florida Department of Transportation to transfer ownership of a portion of Hopkins Creek to Neptune Beach along with the 3.5 million dollar allocation for the planned culvert project.

Mayor Brown asked City Manager Linn to report on the opinion of PBS&J and the City of Jacksonville Public Works Department.

City Manager Linn reported he walked the portion of Hopkins Creek with Jim Miller and Bruce Myhre, engineers from PBS&J, Chief Engineer John Pathus and other employees of the Jacksonville Public Works Department. The overall opinion was the Florida Department of Transportation plans for the culvert would be the best solution.

Councilor Weldon had asked at the last meeting to have a consultant provide a real cost estimate for the repairs and future maintenance. City Manager Linn stated PBS&J proposed conducting a feasibility study. The study would take 30 days and would cost \$9,200. Mr. Linn felt the study was necessary to determine if it would be in the best interest of the city to take on the obligation.

Jim Miller, PBS&J, stated during his walk, he observed a considerable amount of areas that needed substantial repair. His concern was there was not adequate right-of-way for access to make the repairs or provide future maintenance. The city would need to create an easement for access and also purchase equipment. Mr. Miller was also concerned about future liability. The study would provide information and cost for repairing the ditch without eliminating the trees and buffer zone and would also consider liabilities.

Councilor Weldon asked if gabion baskets or sandbag reinforcement could be performed from the base. Mr. Miller replied his biggest concern was the maintenance. He suggested acquiring a right-of-way from the apartments and school.

Councilor Pruette asked if a bulkhead would work. Mr. Miller responded there was not room for a bulkhead because houses and swimming pools backed right up to the fence.

Councilor Weldon asked Mr. Miller if the study would be worth it. Mr. Miller stated whatever repairs the city did they would have to provide the maintenance and there was no access. He added the city would still be liable for erosion. PBS&J would be happy to conduct the study.

Councilor Weldon suggested taking liability for only 1,000 feet of the ditch.

Mayor Brown felt it would be nice to obtain the property, spend a half million of the 3.5 million dollars for repairs and use the remainder for future maintenance. Mr. Miller stated there was still the liability issue.

Vice Mayor Gilbert felt sandbagging starting from the bottom and using retaining walls in certain areas could make the repairs. He suggested if the city assumed responsibility for 1,000 feet the property owners of the apartments and owners of properties that backed up to the ditch could be asked to sign a waiver giving the city relief from future liabilities.

Mr. Miller questioned if FDOT would be willing to transfer ownership of only 1,000 feet along with the 3.5 million.

Councilor Weldon questioned if the study should be done. Mr. Miller replied the study could provide options for repairs and cost of maintenance. Mr. Miller added it would be good sense to have a regular maintenance schedule for every six months to a year.

Councilor Shealy stated it was his opinion that the state was trying to unload a burden. He was concerned about the cost of maintenance and liability.

Councilor Weldon felt the city owed it to the residents to determine if there were any alternatives. He would be willing to vote for the study based on the experiences and expertise of the manufacturers of gabion baskets and companies that had experience building sandbag bulkheads from the creek level up.

Mr. Miller stated the intent of the study was to look at alternatives for repairs and maintenance and estimate the costs.

City Manager Linn stated the responsibility and maintenance would be forever and recommended PBS&J conduct the study.

Public Services Director Leon Smith stated with only two people in the stormwater department it would be difficult to maintain. He also felt the liability was great.

Councilor Weldon suggested bargaining with the state for ownership of 1,000 feet of the ditch for the 3.5 million dollar allotment plus guaranteed revenues for maintenance before paying for the study.

Councilor Pruette questioned where the \$9,200 to pay for the study would come from. City Manager Linn stated the money would have to come out of the contingency fund.

Councilor Weldon asked Jim Miller, PBS&J to conduct the study based on traditional sheet piling or sandbags talk to the manufacturers and report on the findings. Mr. Miller responded he would provide the information at the July 7, 2003, Regular Council Meeting.

Councilor Pruette felt unless the Florida Department of Transportation was willing to give ownership of just the 1,000 feet there was no need for the study.

Councilor Weldon stated the area on east side and behind Fletcher High School was an eyesore and needed to be cleaned up regardless.

City Manager Linn added the city used to clean that area until FDOT erected a fence for liability purposes and we no longer had access.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:30 p.m.

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Richard Brown, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Lisa Volpe, CMC, City Clerk

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