Mo's Minutes

A) ANRC funding process.

1) **Water/Wastewater Advisory Committee, which is a group of representatives from 6 agencies, that meets the first Wednesday of each month to recommend project financing to communities that have submitted applications. Funding source recommendation from WWAC has to be received before applying for funds.**
2) **Prior to WWAC recommendation, the Arkansas Department of Health also reviews the initial application and sends a letter to the WWAC and City stating any comments that will need to be addressed before funding can move forward.**
3) **Each project must receive a "Categorical Exclusion" from the Natural Resources Division concerning the Environmental Review requirement. If a project does not "individually or cumulatively have significant effects on the human environment", it may be deemed a CE. If a project does not qualify for exemption, a Environmental Information Document is required.**
4) **Once a recommendation for a funding source is made by WWAC, you are able to move forward with the proper funding application. We typically will only be recommended to apply for funding from the ANRC. The ANRC commission meets 6 times a year, and applications must be submitted 30 days before each commission date to make the meeting for the next agenda.**
5) **Before the commission date, the ANRC sends an offer letter to the City and the consulting engineer on the project, and the City has a certain amount of time to accept/deny the offer.**
6) **Each project must also be placed on a funding priority list. This list shows the score awarded to each project and ranks the projects within the state. There is a priority list for the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (wastewater) and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund. (water) This is a separate questionnaire that must be submitted to the ANRC/ADH.**
7) **Offers typically come in the form of low interest rate loans. These loans are: 10 year repayment period (0% interest, 1% fee), 20 year repayment period (.75% interest, 1% fee), and a 30 year repayment period (1.25% interest, 1% fee). Most offers come in the form of the 20 year repayment period. There is also a 3% loan origination fee that can be paid from loan proceeds.**

B) Current ANRC Asks:

1) **Meters: $1,774,405 (all steps are complete/approved. Awaiting offer letter) (City's cost contribution of $1,774,405)**
2) **Lea Circle: $983,162 (all steps are complete/approved. Awaiting offer letter)**

C) Projected ANRC ASKS:

1) **Cool Springs: $2,203,575 (all steps approved/completed. Awaiting priority list score/ANRC application submission)**
2) **Southplain: $5,861,496 (this project is on the waiting list for ARPA funds. If ARPA funds are awarded, we will apply for $2,930,748 in ANRC funds to cover the 50% cost share required by ARPA. Any funds budgeted by the City for this project will be deducted from the ANRC ask.)**
3) **Springhill Road Capacity Increase: $1,950,045 (this project was submitted for funding, and the ADH/WWAC requested a PER be presented. McClelland has recently completed the PER, and we are moving forward with the funding process.)**
4) **Lead Service Line Replacement: TBD. LeadCast will give us more information regarding our lead service line replacement plan. LSL funding comes from a separate source and is 0% interest and 0% fee. (all steps approved/completed. Awaiting LeadCast data before submitting ANRC application)**

D) Master Plans:

The purpose of a City's master plan is to evaluate the City's existing infrastructure and need for future infrastructure, capacity fees, impact fees, connection fees, growth patterns, planning for future customers and expansions, evaluating the current state of the City's system while making adjustments for the future. The City's current wastewater master plan was done in 2008 by Crist Engineering. Between the current growth rate, the amount of projects completed since 2008, the current fees compared to inflation rates, and the ever-changing system rules and regulations, we have outgrown the current master plan. A scope of work was created for what we need to see in a master plan. We met with two engineering firms and made adjustments to the scopes to better suit the City's needs. After much consideration and conversation, we feel the best and most efficient decision for the Wastewater Master Plan is to move forward with Crist Engineering. They have worked closely with the city for many years and have the advantage of knowing the ins and outs of the system, and they produced the 2008 Master Plan. While having two master plans was originally our request, there are projects that need to be completed that take precedence over the cost of two master plans. We feel confident that Crist can work with the City and provide us with the master plan that we will use for many years.

Our wastewater connection and impact fees have not been addressed since 2006. (ordinance 2006-02) In order to correctly address impact/connection fees, a master/capital plan which is defined by Arkansas Code as "a description of new capital improvements to existing public facilities that continue to provide capacity available for new development that includes cost estimates and capacity available to serve new development" must be adopted by the governing body of a municipality.

While the 2008 master plan has served it's purpose, it is no longer beneficial in terms of estimating growth, fees, and necessary improvements. Impact and connection fees are meant to grow and change as the City grows and changes. We can not bring the fees up to the standard that is required to ensure capacity for continued growth within our system until we have a current master plan adopted. The seriousness of the master plan and the usefulness it brings to the City for many years to come make it of paramount importance to ensure we are receiving all angles and all options that we have regarding our wastewater plant and infrastructure.

E) Projects Required for Continued Growth: (estimated 3 years)

Water:

1) **Cool Springs Waterline Replacement and Rehab: $2,203,575. This project will be the replacement of approximately 13,000 linear feet of deteriorating water lines within the Cool Springs Trailer Park. This area has shown all signs of rapid deterioration, and we are frequently called out for breaks and leaks. This project went out for bid (originally in phases) in August of 2020, but due to lack of funding, the project was not able to be completed. The lines have reached their usefulness, and this project is in desperate need of completion. Fire protection within the trailer park will also be increased. This project has received all approvals, and project plans are complete by McClelland Engineering. We will be submitting a funding application to the ANRC to assist in the completion of the replacement. The ANRC was offering principal forgiveness loans and infrastructure grants through the Infrastructure Bill, but all of those funds have been placed on hold for the time being. If those funds become available again, this project is qualifies that category of funding.**
2) **Meters: $3,548,810. This project has already begun. The Metron-Farnier cellular meters are being installed city wide. This project will greatly improve the City's ability to monitor water loss, detect leaks and breaks within the system, allow customers the ability to monitor their daily water usage while encouraging them to partake in water conservation efforts, reduce customer frustration through increased usage visibility, reduce manual reads, increase security and emergency preparedness, and increase the water registration. $1,774,405 of the City's ARPA funds were allocated to this project, and the remaining $1,774,405 has been requested through ANRC funds.**
3) **South Plain: $5,861,496. This project is the demolition of the existing South Plain ground storage tank, construction of a new 1,000,000 gallon elevated storage tank, elimination of Bryant's south plain resulting in all Bryant customers being served from the higher elevation North plain, and the installation of 15,000 linear feet of 12-inch water line to supply the proposed new water storage tank and proposed 102 lot subdivision from the existing I-**

30 pump station. This project is currently being engineered by GarNat engineering, and it was submitted for ARPA funds. It was placed on the ARPA waitlist. If this project receives ARPA funds, we will apply for ANRC funds to cover the remaining 50% cost share requirement or fund it internally. This project is crucial for extended growth within the city and ensuring minimum system pressure requirements are met.

4) **Lead Service Line Replacement: Est. $250,000 This project has somewhat begun. We have started working with Trinnex using a software called LeadCast that does the Lead Service Line Inventory that is required by 2024. The report should be complete in March, and we will evaluate a project scope and begin gathering prices and submitting funding requests.**

Wastewater:

1) **Springhill Gravity Sewer Capacity Increase: Est. $1,950,045. This project will reroute the existing 8" Springhill force main from its current termination point into manhole 30285 on Brookwood Drive into a new 12" gravity sewer main that will convey the wastewater flow southeastward to manhole 300010, at which point a 15" gravity sewer line will convey the flow to the south beneath Interstate I-30.**
2) **Lea Circle Parallel Gravity Sewer Installation: $983,162. This project is the installation/relocation of a new 24" parallel gravity sewer. The current line's models done by RJN as apart of our 2017 Sanitary Sewer Evaluation and Capacity Assurance Plan (SECAP) show a grade of .02% with a capacity of 1.59 MGD at 100% utilization. Models show that wet weather peak flow through this line is 1.76 MGD which puts the line at 111% utilization. This makes the line susceptible to SSO's, air pockets, health risks, environmental risks, and potential property damage. The new line will have a grade of .1% which increases the capacity to ~4.18 MGD at 90% utilization. This project is crucial to the future growth of the city. Crist Engineering has been working with us on this project, and we are hoping to complete this project with funds rewarded by the ANRC.**
3) **Re-Route of Lift Station 20: Est. $1,000,000**
4) **West Pointe Emergency Repair Continuation: Est. $500,000. The remainder of this project will need to be contracted out due to the complexity and inability to easily access the lines. We are working with different firms to solidify prices and remaining project scope.**
5) **Owen Creek Trunk Line: Est. $250,000**
6) **Bethel Lift Station Improvements: Est. $500,000**
7) **Lift Station 5 Upgrade: Est. $1,500,000**

All of these projects are just what we foresee being necessary to start within 3 years to allow for development and ensuring we remain in compliance with all regulatory agency requirements. The total ESTIMATED cost, just for the listed projects, is

$18,547,118. A new master plan that includes our options, cost estimates, possible revenue sources, possible funding sources, anticipated regulatory changes, and other crucial system data from an experienced point of view that knows the uniqueness of our system that can only be acquired through many years of experience working with the City is exactly the route that makes certain all of our bases are covered for many years to come.

Partnership for Safe Water Participation: **The City has joined the AWWA's Partnership for Safe Water Distribution Program. This program has a fundamental approach to improving performance by optimizing system operations rather than relying solely on significant capital improvements. With the AWWA's assistance and use of their programs, we will be working over the next few years collecting data and trends and narrowing down the weak parts of the distribution system. This partnership allows us to remain in the loop on regulatory laws, updated compliance rules, and tools to ensure we are getting the most out of our system. It is a voluntary partnership that we opted to be apart of to ensure that our system is distributing the highest quality of water in the most efficient manner. While this program is something that takes awhile to see results from, we are confident that we will see the benefits of the partnership. We are always exploring all avenues moving forward regarding capital improvements projects and planning for the future, and this Partnership provides alternative methods to achieve the goals we have set. The Partnership includes six prestigious drinking water organizations such as the American Water Works Association, Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, National Association of Water Companies, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the Water Research Foundation. Those 6 organizations are at the fore-front of the water industry, and our involvement in the Partnership for Safe Water will be incredibly beneficial for all future endeavors.**

Timelines:

ANRC Funding:

Meter/Lea Circle: City acceptance/rejection by February 27th

Commission meeting: March 15th (February 13th)

Other commission dates: May 17th (April 17th), July 12th (June 12th), September 20th (August 21st), and November 15th (October 16th)