

**MINUTES OF THE ESAD SEWER WORKSHOP FOR THE JOINT CITY /
COUNTY COMMISSION MEETING OF THE BOARD OF CITY COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE CITY OF PORT ST. JOE FLORIDA AND THE GULF COUNTY BOARD
OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HELD IN THE COUNTY COMMISSION
CHAMBERS**

September 21, 2022 at 5:00 P.M.

The following were present: Mayor Buzzett, Commissioners Ashbrook, Hoffman, Langston, and Lowry. City Manager Jim Anderson, City Clerk Charlotte Pierce, City Attorney Clinton McCahill, and Public Works Director John Grantland were also present. Representing the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners were Chairman Sandy Quinn, Commissioners Ward McDaniel, Patrick Ferrell, Phil McCroan, David Rich, and County Attorney Jeremy Novak. Other County Staff present were: Leanna Roberts, County Administrator Michael L. Hammond, and Assistant County Administrator Clay Smallwood.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the ESAD and Beacon Hill Sewer Project.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Quinn at 5:00 P.M. He expressed his appreciation for the joint meeting of the Boards and welcomed those present to the meeting.

Chairman Quinn asked Mayor Buzzett if he would like to say anything and he responded that he had nothing to add.

Aaron Little asked what the hold up to the project was and stated that the project has been going on for a long time. Mayor Buzzett responded that the project is a big puzzle, there are a lot of missing pieces, the City sent an MOU to the County in July which has not be executed as of today, the City provided a Task Order to Dewberry in February and is waiting on the lift station plans to be completed, and noted that the City could have already gone to bid if everything had been provided.

Michael Hammond shared that an amended Interlocal Agreement has been prepared and Beacon Hill Sewer is all contingent upon the City purchasing the private sewer ESAD, accepting the time line provided and the system has to be on line by June 2, 2023. He stated there is a dry line nearby, and he doesn't want to wait any longer for the project to be completed.

Commissioner McDaniel shared information on the number of hookups the City would acquire through the purchase of the systems.

Mayor Buzzett responded that without the lift station and Beacon Hill System, there would not be enough flow to accept the ESAD System. He read a statement from the Memorandum from Mr. Hammond that was provided as the meeting started.

Commissioner McCroan stated that as a former City Commissioners, he had opposed the purchase, but did not want to see the City take on a boondoggle and asked what the drop dead dates would be.

Clay Smallwood shared that it is a very straightforward solution, add a few pumps, take the lift station from ESAD and get the project on line.

Attorney Novak and McCahill had an exchange of opinions on items 1 – 4 on the Memorandum from Michael Hammond.

John Grantland shared that he had ordered a control panel today and was told that there would be a 6 months delay in getting it. He noted there are a lot of moving parts to this project. The ESAD System has issues with the state, there are I & I, as well as control issues, and during heavy rains, the system overflows. The City wants to walk into this, give time for everything to be checked out and it appears the County is pushing for acceptance of the ESAD System. The ESAD System should be purchased and brought on line after the property is available to the City.

Attorney Novak noted there is a narrow scope, the agreement should be signed with ESAD, and the County pledge is good until June 2, 2023.

Mr. Hammond reiterated that the County is not going to wait for 3 years to bring the ESAD System on line, the City has 9 months, 3 years is not acceptable and the Easement will be available only if the City signs with ESAD.

City Manager Jim Anderson shared that the City is waiting on Dewberry, and the City must have the Easement from the County to get the grant funds for the Beacon Hill Sewer Project.

Mayor Buzzett reminded everyone the City has no reason to delay the project and is waiting on the engineers and the lift station.

Mr. Hammond feels that nothing should happen until the ESAD Agreement is signed, and the City just needs to let the County know if they plan to move forward with the project or not.

Commissioner Hoffman shared his understanding of the issue, stressed the need to understand who would own the facility, Dewberry and the County need to sign off on the discussed documents, and the project needs to happen in a reasonable length of time when all issues have been resolved.

Commissioner Lowry feels the City needs to vote on the deadline provided by the County and decide whether to move forward with the project or not.

Mr. Hammond continued to stress the need to meet the deadlines set by the County, purchase the ESAD System before the Beacon Hill System, and get the septic tanks off the coast.

Mr. Novak reiterated the time line on the revisions and MOU that has been ongoing.

There was no further information to be shared and Chairman Quinn adjourned the meeting at 5:55 P.M.

Approved this 4th day of October 2022.



Rex Buzzett, Mayor

10/4/22

Date



Charlotte M. Pierce, City Clerk

10/4/22

Date