

TOWN OF HUDSON
MEETING TYPE: Special Public Hearing
333 SOUTH MAIN STREET
HUDSON, WY 82515
August 25, 2022

Mayor Anderson called the Public Hearing to order at 6:03 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call was announced.

Governing Body Present: Mayor Mike Anderson, Councilmembers, Brady Hamilton, Archie Hanson, and Zeke Bonella were present. Councilmember Mary Anne Robeson was excused.

City Staff Present: Clerk-Treasurer, Kathy Shoopman.

Audience: Tony Scott, Jeff Gee, Jim Gores, Heather Minnich, Helen Gordon, Scott Lee

Public Hearing

A Public Hearing was held to allow citizens to review and comment on the following project:

An update the Hudson Water Treatment Plant with current standard equipment and to complete a study to determine the source of unlocated leakage. This will replace 30–35-year-old water meters that are getting hard to find and help with the efficiencies of the system. We have updated our SCADA system and found many of the meters associated with the SCADA system were outdated and needed to be replaced with modern meters. During the last twelve years, several design flaws in the plant have become obvious and need to be corrected. As the equipment needs to be replaced some of these flaws should be corrected. We are currently depositing \$20,000 per year for the replacement of the actual filters of the system. A review by GE (plant suppliers) has indicated that we have 3-5 years left on the filters. We replaced the original filters approximately five years ago. The distribution system is approximately 30 years old, and we have started experiencing some apparent leaks and breaks over the last couple of years. We are currently dedicating an increase in the loss ratios and plan to use sonar to identify leaks and fix the system where leaks are determined to be.

Based on current cost estimates, the Town of Hudson plans to borrow Five Hundred Twenty-five Thousand dollars (\$525,000) from the Wyoming Clean Water and/or Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund administered by the Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investments. Increased user fees will repay the loan. The average rate increase is estimated to be four to five dollars (\$4.00 - \$5.00) per user (6%) to repay the loan. Loan terms will be 2.5% interest rate and 20 years.

Mayor Anderson opened the meeting by welcoming those present and read the Legal Notice that was published. He then explained the needs of the project and opened the floor to public comments.

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Tony Scott asked if the quality of the water will improve with these improvements and upgrades. Mayor Anderson explained that they hope the water quality will improve and noted that the reverse osmosis system at the plant is nonfunctional and it would take even more money to refurbish it and bills would increase even more.

Tony then asked if the entire system needs to be refabricated and if research has been done to ensure good water after the repairs are made.

Mike stated that the chemicals should help with the water quality. Councilman Bonella interjected that the water right out of plant is not that bad. The water coming out of peoples' taps is worse. The town needs to clean the tanks first, which the cost of is included in the loan, then flush all the hydrants to clean out the main lines of sediment, and then you should see a significant improvement in the water.

Tony asked if just anyone could clean the tanks. Councilman Hamilton advised that it must be done by a certified diver and inspected afterward.

Heather Minnich questioned why the tank cleaning has not been completed before now. Mike stated that it has been done before several years ago but needs to be on a more regular basis.

Mayor Anderson explained how the cleaning is completed and that there is a possibility that one tank may be down for approximately a week, but that the second tank will remain operational. Mike further explained that the water treatment plant puts out approximately two million (2M) gallons of water each month. There are leaks in the system and this loan will also provide leak detection with sonar to locate the leaks and fix them. He also stated that the meters currently being used by the town are from the 1980's and the loan will provide enough monies to replace the current meters with new ones from Ferguson. Town Attorney, Rick Sollars, said that the new meters will be radio read and take less employee time for meter reading.

Tony asked if the new system and meters has been researched by anyone. Mike informed him that the needed improvements have been thoroughly researched and recommended by HDR Engineering.

Helen Gordon asked if, once the tanks and cleaned and the hydrants flushed, will the water be better. Councilman Bonella stated that the hydrants should be flushed four (4) times per year, and once that regular maintenance is being done, the water should be better. Helen then asked if lines would be replaced as well. The answer was not currently.

Helen Gordon then asked how long the increase would go on and stated she is not comfortable with the constant increases in the rates.

Mayor Anderson explained that the Town is statutorily bound to pay for the water treatment plant from proceeds from water bills so the increases will likely increase every six months as they have been. He further explained that to make the necessary maintenance and repairs to the plant, the town needs to make at least twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) per year. Last year, the town lost money due to necessary repairs. He stated that general maintenance on the plant is high and that fixed costs associated with the plant cannot be paid by this loan, it is allocated for certain items only.

Rick Sollars stated that the fifty cent increases every six months is a built-in increase for inflation.

Helen asked how long the filters in the plant last. Mike explained that the filters are very specialized and not available in the United States. Four (4) years ago, filters were ordered from

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the Netherlands and had to be shipped through Canada. Two (2) filters were replaced at a cost of just over one hundred thirty-eight thousand dollars (\$138,000). Treatment Plant Operator/Director Don Rood says the current filters are good for another three to five (3-5) years. Helen asked if this loan would cover the cost of replacing filters. The answer was no. The Town saves as much as it can to prepared for replacing filters.

Tony Scott asked about personnel at the plant and who is the blame for the lack of maintenance and mishandling of the reverse osmosis system and how it can be prevented from happening again.

Mike explained that we currently have a Level IV operator and are currently training a Level II operator. He further stated we plan to keep Don Rood on and continue training. Tony advised those present that he stopped by the Treatment Plant and was given a tour of the plant and remarked how clean and efficient it is. He advised anyone with questions to go look at the plant. Mike agreed and asked that anyone wanting a tour of the plant contact Town Hall to arrange a time that works, and it will be set up.

Helen and Heather asked how long the estimated four-to-five-dollar (\$4-\$5) increase will stay in effect. Will it end when the loan is paid off? Mike explained that it would stay in place because there is always something to maintain at the water treatment plant. He further advised that the state provides a rate setting survey and we are working to have one done for Hudson. Mike further explained about the revenue chart for small towns similar to Hudson across Wyoming and that we are right in the middle with them and what they are charging. Lander and Pavillion are currently having huge problems with their water systems and bids for repairs are coming in millions of dollars over the estimate.

Helen asked how the problems with the delivery system will be worked through. Will this loan help with that at all? The answer is no, but Mike explained that once the repairs are made, the Town can apply for a grant from the Water Quality System. The problem with grants is that the Town must match a portion of the funds received and we cannot over stretch our funds by matching grants.

Right now, the payments will be just over thirty-three thousand dollars (\$33,000) per year.

Helen asked that if the loan is approved, how soon will the work start. Mayor Anderson advised that it would likely start within sixty (60) days. Meters will not be put in until the spring. The meters include installation from Ferguson. He also noted that cost of installation went up almost double since 2020, right now it is between one and two hundred dollars (\$100-\$200) per meter.

Tony asked about a warranty on the new meters. Mayor Anderson advised that the new meters come with a twenty (20) year warranty. The new meters have a better design and that the current meters have been in use for around forty (40) years. The other towns that have installed these same meters are pleased with them.

Heather asked if the install would bring a bump in readings. Mike advised that it should not.

Helen asked if this new equipment would cost more in personnel and a learning curve. Mike advised that it should not and should actually be easier with everything running correctly and more efficiently. The meters will read directly to Town Hall through a tower on top of the water tanks so there will be savings in personnel time from not having to walk the town reading

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meters. These new meters will also show if there is a rush of water and send an alarm notice to help locate leaks and problems faster.

Helen asked that when they get ready to clean the tanks that there be a notice sent out to residents with plenty of time to prepare. The tanks will still operate while being cleaned. There will be no loss of water to residents.

Councilman Hanson asked how many stages will be included in the repairs and loan. Mayor Anderson reported that there should be three (3) phases: 1) plant repair; 2) meter installation; and 3) leak detection. Given the estimated amounts for each phase, the town should not have to go through the bid process for much of the work to be performed.

Heather asked if there will be enough water for everyone once the line is installed for Frank's Butcher Shop. Mayor Anderson stated that there will be plenty of water for everyone. Heather asked if the reverse osmosis system would ever be used in the plant. Mike stated that it is highly unlikely that would happen because all the tubes are shot and full of hardened chemicals and would have to be replaced. Replacement would more than double the cost of water for residents.

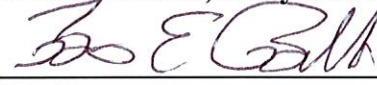
It was agreed that, while no one likes the idea of a raise in their utility bill, the repairs are necessary and must be done. There was a consensus of agreement to move forward with the loan.

There being no other comments or questions from the audience, Councilman Zeke Bonella moved to adjourn the Public Hearing, seconded by Councilman Archie Hanson. Hearing adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Attest:


Clerk/Treasurer, Kathy Shoopman

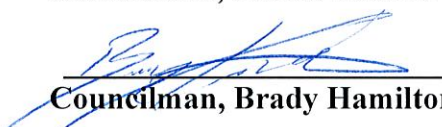
Excused
Councilwoman, Mary Anne Robeson


Councilman, Zeke Bonella

Approved:


Mayor, Mike Anderson


Councilman, Archie Hanson


Councilman, Brady Hamilton