

Village considers new direction on lagoon

Written by Deb Egenberger

Wednesday, 21 November 2012 15:57 -

Board will discuss engineering contract, proposed repair plan next month

Members of the Brady board of trustees feel they may have been bull rushed by an engineering firm that has been guiding the village toward a larger area and expensive remedies to state-mandated repairs at the town's sewer lagoons.

"Based on new information, I will go on the record to say I am not at all impressed with Miller & Associates," said trustee Todd Roe during the regular trustee meeting on Nov. 14. "There are things going on here that they should have caught from day one, stuff a regular plumber has told us. They're wanting a 'yes' board and I feel that needs to stop."

Miller & Associates of Kearney has been the engineering firm guiding Brady through the process of making required repairs to the sewer lagoon.

The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality issued a violation notice in September 2009, stating that data showed wastewater seeping from the sewer lagoons far beyond the allowable eighth-inch per day.

Study after study has been completed and reports filed with the NDEQ by the firm leading Brady to a \$1.4 million low-interest loan through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The loan would not only pay for proposed expansion of the lagoon but also residential water meters.

The village has already spent \$40,000 or more for various aspects of the project, Roe said, and trustees just found out last month that two valves in the wastewater discharge system are faulty.

"We've got water pumping back and forth through there several times," he said. "That definitely affects the data used to calculate seepage rate. Why didn't we know about that before we spent beau-coup dollars? If that had been me at my job, I'd have been fired."

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Village board chairman Jeff Miller agreed with Roe. He said he feels the 56,000 gallons of wastewater that was recorded pumping into the lagoon system is inaccurate and data should be re-evaluated once the new check valves are installed.

He also disagreed with Miller & Associates' recommendation to expand the lagoon to nine cells.

"This just simply doesn't feel like it should be a \$1.4 million project," Miller said. "That's more than three years of our total village budget."

Miller & Associates has already compiled a construction timeline for addressing the lagoon repairs with construction bids to be let next fall and the project completed by December 2014.

The village board will consider the engineering contract as well as other options for the lagoon at their December meeting.

In other business, the board of trustees:

approved purchasing land for the new the fire hall with cash on hand rather than financing the \$19,000 due as previously agreed. The board also authorized signing the closing statements between the village and Patricia Egenberger for the land adjacent to the existing fire hall.

agreed to sign closing statements between the village and Jason and Sharon Axthelm for the sale of the old city hall building on the corner of Commercial and Main streets.

approved the annual roads report as presented by village roads superintendent Carla O'Dell. It includes an estimated \$40,000 for the annual highway allocation, which is based on total state fuel tax.

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discussed with Greg O'Brien of Nebraska Machinery of North Platte the lease of a new payloader but delayed a decision. Because of the cost, the village is required to accept bids. The item will be discussed again at a future meeting.

conducted a brief closed session to discuss possible litigation.

delayed crack sealing and street repair on Market Street between Commercial and Popleton at least 30 days. O'Dell told the board the ground needs to be much colder for the project to be effective.

voted to purchase a Weber barbecue grill from Jim Booth for \$125 and authorized clerk Pam Diehl to research the cost of a new office chair.