

Council hears request for waterline repair procurement

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
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Project moving forward faster than anticipated

A 6-inch waterline running alongside Highway 66 between the intersections of Highway 66 and Ford Street experienced a series of breaks Jan. 24, rendering the line irreparable and requiring a replacement.

Dennis Romero, water and sanitation director for the City of Gallup, spoke to the City Council during their Feb. 25 meeting about the project to replace the line.

The council previously approved a line replacement project for this fiscal year for \$432,000. A design was completed, and a bid package was being assembled for a larger section of line when the break occurred in January.

However, Romero said the line was not going to be able to last until the next fiscal year, and the Water and Sanitation Department requested permission to move forward with the emergency procurement for replacing the line.

The city is working with DePauli Engineering Services to develop a scope of work and bid sheet

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for Murphy Builders, who will provide equipment and labor for the project. The estimated cost is about \$187,000, which will come from the original project funds. The rest of the waterline work is slated to continue this spring.

While the City Council was open to moving forward with the emergency procurement, there were questions about the way the city goes about some major projects.

“Are we ever going to get to the point where we’re more proactive than reactive?” Dist. 4 Councilor Fran Palochak asked.

Romero said funding is a major factor in deciding when these projects are done.

“This is one of those items that kept getting pushed back last year,” Romero said. “At a certain point, we have to say we’re moving forward with it.”

The issue of funding was emphasized by Mayor Jackie McKinney.

“It’d be great if we could be proactive, but that unfortunate dollar sign hangs at the top of everything that happens,” McKinney said.

Prior to the council’s motion, McKinney took a moment to voice his appreciation to Romero and his department for their efforts.

“The reactive part, your crews, I can’t thank you enough. What you’ve done to accommodate, to get all the citizens back online, I want to thank you for all your work,” he said.

The retroactive request was approved with a 5-0 vote.

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