

Gallup Council approves new wastewater treatment pact

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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City not in unchartered waters with new plant operator

The Gallup City Council unanimously approved a design, build and operating contract Nov. 22 with CH2M of Colorado in connection with the wastewater treatment plant. The action took place at the regular city meeting. The council vote puts into place an eight-year deal with the firm and replaces a previous treatment plant pact with Severn Trent of Pennsylvania.

“We feel very good about the new contract,” city water and sanitation director Dennis Romero said after the meeting. “We are eager to get to work with CH2M.”

Romero, hired into the wastewater job in July, said fixed construction costs with the contract are set at \$1,948,636, which may be spread out over a period of the pact. Another component of the contract is called pass-through costs, which amount to \$398,774 per year, Romero explained. An annual service fee is \$1,355,162, Romero noted.

Most of the costs come from the electricity required to run the plant, Romero said. City Councilor Allan Landavazo asked City Attorney George Kozeliski what the city pays for plant electricity. Richard Shirley, general manager at Continental Divide Co-Op, explained that the city pays an amount which is considered just above cost.

Romero said one of the ideal components of the new contract will save the city thousands of dollars down the road. He said once a gas sludge dryer is put into operation that the city will save some funds. He said for the sludge device to be brought online is a one-time cost of \$100,000 and after that upwards of \$10,000 per month will be saved by the city with respect to transport costs to the landfill in Thoreau.

“This is a money-saver for sure,” Romero said. “I consider that aspect a big part of the contract as far as long-term costs go.”

- Also at the meeting, council members unanimously approved a reconstruction contract award

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for the Allison Bridge Reconstruction. An existing bridge that runs north and south over the Rio Puerco River will be replaced as the first phase of the planned Allison Corridor Project. That project, estimated to cost around \$40 million, includes a new interchange and a Highway 66 rail overpass, city public works director Stan Henderson told council members.

The estimated cost of the bridge, which will be constructed several feet to the west of the current bridge, is \$5 million. Bids on the project went out in October 2016 and FNF Construction of Albuquerque won the bid.

- A construction contract award was unanimously approved for Oliva Park on Basilio Drive. The planned park is near the Red Rock Mobile Home Park on the east end of Gallup. The total cost for the park, which will include a basketball court, playground equipment and picnic areas, is around \$336,000.
- A skate board reconstruction contract was unanimously approved. The planned skate park will be located near the Gallup Cultural Center and costs \$582,000. Bids on the skate board project went out Nov. 8 and H.O. Construction of Albuquerque won the bid, Henderson said.
- A sidewalk improvement project was unanimously approved by council members. Marcy Park is part of the Debra Drive Public Housing area and is administered by the Gallup Housing Authority. GHA requested city assistance in paying for sidewalk improvements, Henderson stated. Henderson said this was an agenda item because council approval was needed for the project to move forward regarding creating a projected budget.
- Mayor Jackie McKinney awarded the construction contract awards and said that taken together with the various curb and gutter and other public works projects add up to more than 15 million.

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