

BIG BREAK

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
Friday, 28 October 2016 05:07



Gallup's Aging Infrastructure Revealed, Again

The residential area at the intersection of Fifth Street and Hill Avenue in Chihuahuita suffered another devastating water line break Oct. 25, officials confirmed at this week's Gallup City Council regular meeting.

The break was to the 16-inch water main that feeds the Grandview tank, which supplies water throughout the city, City Water and Sanitation Director Dennis Romero told council members.

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“There was another break,” he said. “We are working practically around the clock to get things repaired.”

An initial break on Sept. 14 saw water sprout from the ground and seep into the lower levels of a residence owned by Melissa Ramirez. The Ramirez family was displaced due to the break and the city is working with them on insurance matters.

LOOKING BACK

After the September break, the Gallup City Council authorized \$122,000 worth of emergency repairs to a 12-inch line at the Second Street rail crossing area. Then on Oct. 11, the full council OK'd a \$334,700 contract, which was part of an emergency bid process to fix the Ellison water-line crossing.

“Both of these lines provide an alternate route to provide water to the Grandview tank and these projects must be completed prior to completing the Fifth Street water lines,” Romero told council members.

Romero said the immediate plan is to go to bid Nov. 12 to replace the Fifth Street 16-inch water line.

“It is believed that the Second Street and Ellison crossing projects will be completed in a few weeks, and the Fifth Street line can then be replaced in its entirety,” Romero explained.

Ramirez said her family appreciates the work being done by the city, particularly the assistance with insurance adjusters, but said the second break didn't help matters. She said the city's insurance carrier moves slowly in terms of rectifying matters, and she alleged “foot dragging” on the part of the city.

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Mayor Jackie McKinney assured Ramirez that the matter is moving at its proper pace. He said he'd monitor the situation on a daily basis and make sure the proper people at the city were in constant communication with her to make sure things are taken care of.

"The city will follow through with the insurance carrier," McKinney said. "It's going to take time."

The latest break created sidewalk and street cracks and threw mud and rocks on the Ramirez front porch.

City Councilor Yogash Kumar, a hotelier, said he was assisting in providing temporary housing for the Ramirez family.

***By Bernie Dotson
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