

**River Bend Town Council
Special Meeting Minutes
March 11, 2025
Town Hall
4:00 p.m.**

Present Council Members: Mayor Mark Bledsoe
Buddy Sheffield
Lisa Benton
Brian Leonard
Kathy Noonan
Jeff Weaver

Town Manager: Delane Jackson
Public Works Director: Brandon Mills
Rivers & Associates: Greg Churchill
Members of the Public Present: 9

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Bledsoe called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at the River Bend Town Hall with a quorum present.

Mayor Bledsoe then called on Town Manager, Delane Jackson to make a presentation. The Town Manager presented and discussed various funding sources and related details for the town's wastewater treatment plant and water treatment plant projects.

After his presentation, he asked the Council for direction on which path to choose for the water treatment plant's engineering. The two options were to proceed with the originally planned project which only included a water treatment plant with a process water discharge to the town's sewer collection system at an estimated cost of \$16,000,000 or proceed with a plan that included a water treatment plant and two new water wells, and a direct discharge of process water to the Trent River at an estimated cost of \$19,500,000. During the presentation the Town Manager stated that when combined with the current \$9,000,000 grant, the recent grant of \$3,500,000 and a 0% loan of \$7,000,000 could be used to fully fund the \$19,500,000 option, based on current cost estimates. One variable discussed was whether or not the town wanted to take on \$350,000 per year in debt service for 20 years for the loan. The Town Manager also stated that he is currently working on other grant options to eliminate or reduce the need for the loan. He also stated that he needed a consultant to help him with developing a Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA) which is required for two of the grants that he is working on.

Councilwoman Benton asked the Town Manager if he knew the cost to hire someone to assist with the Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA). The Town Manager stated that he was not sure at this time, and would need to do a RFQ for the services. Councilman Sheffield stated that he is not in favor of applying a huge debt on customers. Councilman Weaver stated that he was in favor of the Water Treatment Plant with wells and feels it is better for the towns' residents. He asked if there was a timeline and the Town Manager stated that October 31, 2025, is the HMGP deadline for shovel ready projects. Councilman Weaver also asked if the town does anything with the funds that the town currently holds, would that change the BCA or the points the town currently has. The Town Manager stated that he did not think that spending the funds on other components would impact the BCA. Councilman Weaver asked if they could scale Phase I of sewer back to a smaller Phase I and the Town Manager stated that it was discussed at the prebid meeting held earlier today. Mr. Churchill stated that they are doing everything they can within reason to reduce cost as much as possible. The Mayor asked what the financial difference is between one well or

two and Mr. Churchill stated that it may be one million dollars. The Town Manager stated that revising the scope of work could also impact the amount of grant the town has been awarded due to the points the town received. Councilman Leonard stated that he recommends the option with the two wells. The Town Manager stated that he needs direction from the Council as to which path to take. Councilwoman Benton stated that she is for the two wells and that the old wells are in a flood zone also. She stated that it would be an increase for the town's customers, and she estimated about \$200 per year per home. Councilman Leonard stated that he felt this was the best option and would like to do it right the first time as Bud Van Slyke would say.

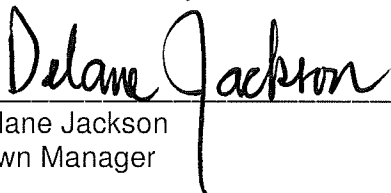
Councilman Leonard motioned to proceed with developing engineering plans for the Water Treatment Plant, including 2 new wells and a waste discharge line to the Trent River. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Sheffield motioned to authorize the Town Manager to secure professional assistance to develop a Benefit Cost Analysis for two grants. The motion carried unanimously.

The Town Manager then called on Mr. Churchill for his closing remarks. Mr. Churchill stated that he felt this was well planned and well thought-out. He commended the Council on the efforts that they are making to fund this project, because these types of opportunities do not come along that often.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, *Councilman Leonard moved to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously.* The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m.



Delane Jackson
Town Manager