



HSVPOA Asturias Water Line Replacement Discussion – 2-2-22

Description

At the February 2, 2022 Board Discussion Session, Jason Temple, Hot Springs Village POA Director of Public Services, addressed the Board about the replacement of the Asturias Water Line. [There is some confusion in my mind as to whether this is Asturias Way or Drive.] Disclaimer: This is NOT a full transcription. Some statements were paraphrased to the best of my ability. I have made every attempt to report accurately and honestly.

After Mr. Temple brought up the need for this project, the conversation veered a little into how the bidding process works and also the need for transparency in this process, and additionally how to improve communication with Villagers.

Temple Discusses Public Utilities Repayment of Monies to the Reserve Finds

Temple: “Good morning, everyone. Just to give you a little bit of context of where we are at today in public utilities. For the past six years, public utilities have been paying back reserve funds – \$500,000 a year.” This is related to the water treatment plant. “Also, building up a Utility Reserve Fund, for themselves, as well, \$1.8 Million.”

Temple: This was all fulfilled as of the end of business last year. \$800,000 a year has been going towards funding reserve funds per year. “2022 is the first year that now we can start investing more money into our infrastructure and doing things that weren’t [aren’t] completely reactive – actually being a little bit more proactive. This is an example of that. [Asturias Water Line Replacement]

Asturias Needs 1,500 Foot Linear Areas Water Line Replacement

Temple: “Asturias Way recently had four leaks in a short 1,500-foot linear area. When you have a section that has frequent leaks. I think I also remember on Ponce de Leon, we have a couple of blowups every year, that piece of pipe apparently was bad material at some point in time and now it is failing frequently. It needs to be replaced and that is what this project is about.” This section starts close to Carmona and goes east about three intersections.

Temple: “What we are asking for in discussion is to authorize the GM to execute an agreement in the amount of the bid price, \$108,323.38 to Juan Valadez Construction to include any change orders that increase or decrease the project price, not to exceed the total project budget of \$130,000.”

Temple: “This is a combined budget project of 2021 and 2022. We took bids from four vendors and the prices there are listed.” Bids ranged from \$108,000 up to \$196,000.

Temple: We contacted Juan Valadez Construction Company to determine if the price was still good because we are currently in an inflationary period. The company said the bid was still good.

Was This Item in the 7-Year O and M Plan?

Board Vice-chair, Tucker Omohundro: “Was this in the plan?”

Temple: “No. The plan was to spend some money on water replacement. We haven’t done any large length of line replacement for years. So now this is the first year that we actually can afford to do some of these things...”

Omohundro: “This was not listed in the 7 Year O and M. It was listed?”

Superintendent of Water and Wastewater, Chris Boutzale: “Not by name, but by ‘Water Main Replacement’. We looked at it [indecipherable due to others talking] Way had about – they have at least one every six months...” We had nine one year on that street. “We’re losing 100’s of thousands of gallons [of water] at a time. In the first few months of 2021, we had four large water main breaks on that line.”

Temple: “Chris is right. It has been a line item.”

Omohundro: “That is my question. We didn’t necessarily have a specific set of pipes we were going to replace.”

Boutzale: “We have a list of them, but we didn’t have a specific place for that money to go until we figured out which one had the most leaks at that point in time.”

Omohundro: “So, we are making decisions as we go based on the problems we have. I just want it to be clear and everybody else to be clear that this is a part of the process.”

Controller, Coreena Fetterhoff: “It was budgeted to spend. They just had not identified the location at that point in time.”

Omohundro: “Sometimes I ask questions just so everybody else gets the answer.”

Temple: “You will see more of this as we get more information. But every year we are going to plan a contingency fund for waterline replacements.”

Discussion Regarding the Vendor Choice

Board Director, Gary Belair: “You mentioned a pretty big difference in the bids. Have you had experience with this company?”

Temple: “I have not.”

Boutzale: “The engineer we’re using has had dealings with this company before.”

Board Chair, Joanie Corry: “Positive dealings?”

Boutzale: “Yes, positive dealings.”

Omohundro: “Out of the bids, we are looking at going with the least expensive. Right?”

Temple: “That is correct.”

Omohundro: “Sometimes we don’t do that because of reasons, obviously.”

General Manager, Kelly Hale: “Our plan is to go through and put a priority order. This is a good example, right here, of one of the things I have asked Jason and his team to do. Coreena and I will go through as well with not only Tom, but Jason and make sure that we get these listed out.”

Hale: “To Jason’s point, there are some unseen things that are going to happen, we know.” Hale said we can use historical data to “get a good line of sight.” At the same time, I ask the same question. The scope of the agreement on the bid being the lowest? What is it? Does it meet the needs? Do we have recourse, so on and so on? I am going to ask Jason to take a look at the scope of the agreement with this vendor, as well.”

Hale: “I want to be able to sit and go through line-by-line that we’ve identified and make it to where we put dates on when we are going to start bringing folks in to do things.”

Discussion on How to Make These Types of Things More Transparent to the Public

Omohundro: “Question about that. This is a ‘could you’ or ‘should we’. Could we or should we. A lot of people understand that we get bids on basically everything we do if we can get anybody to bid on it. Should we or could we somehow publicize the fact that we did that in some type of forum. Internet, Eblast, someplace on our website, [Explore](#), so people do actually understand. I don’t know how many times I hear people say, ‘well, did we get a bid on that?’ Well, sure we did. Is there a process of doing that?”

Temple: “Other cities on their city websites will post project status and they’ll post what the bid summary was...and who it was awarded to.”

Omohundro: “Is that something we want to look at doing, is my question? I am not suggesting we do it. I am suggesting we think about it.”

Belair: “Also, the best I can remember, our policies require, our written policies posted on our website in the Policy Guide, require that.”

Fetterhoff: "I believe Tucker what you are referring to is, 'are we going out and soliciting to the public so that it is not just the vendors that we have gone to?..."

Omohundro: "No, I am not questioning our process there. I know we do our process. Villagers do not know we do that. They question, 'well, did we get a bid on that?' Yes, we did, but they don't know it and unfortunately, they don't watch this [the board meetings and discussions]."

Fetterhoff: "Everything over \$10,000 requires us to go out and solicit three bids, at a minimum. Any project over \$10,000 requires us to go through the RFQ or the RFP process. What I thought you were asking was, do we advertise it so...other ones as well. And we do in some cases. But yes, everything over \$10,000 has to go through the full process. Everything between \$5,000 and \$10,000 has to be submitted with three quotes to show that we have done our price shopping. When you get into these projects, and you are talking \$130,000, yes, they did their homework."

Omohundro: Maybe we need a section of "Frequently Asked Questions" on the Explore the Village Website.

Corry: "And this is after the bid has been...?"

Omohundro: "No, this is just during the normal business process and a lot of people do not think we get bids on anything."

Board Director Bob McLeod: "They are pet projects?"

Omohundro: "Yeah, they are pet projects or 'I'm being paid under the table or something.'"

Corry: "What I am talking about, the bid has been let already. You can't have open bids and you know what everyone else is bidding."

Omohundro: "I am talking about communicating what we have done."

Avila and Omohundro agreed that the sheet they are looking at [I don't know the name of it] should be posted on the Explore Website.

Hale: "This is the transparency piece. We just need to come up with a format/platform to put it out there." Hale mentions needing a separate tab on the Explore website or a separate site so this type of information is kept separate.

Hale: "This is one of the things I have talked to Jason and Tom about is that as we do work out in the community, get pictures and put them out there so the public can see because a lot of times we put addresses or longitudes/latitudes coordinates or whatever. But the point is, people are more familiar and they can touch something and say, 'oh, yeah...-I've been going over that doggone pothole and now it is gone'...Or, 'they finally got that lightbulb replaced on my streetlight. That's good...'"

Hale: People can relate more with photos. I also want to involve the people in the community – the neighbors. Get them out. Get the employees that did the work. People like to see themselves in pictures but it is more of a community forum – kind of unity. This is our home. This is our Village. Let's take care of it. Here's what we are doing with our money. We're being responsible with it." Hale wants

everything to be an open book. “We’ve got a lot of work to do. Let’s put it that way. And I’ve only been in the chair for 48 hours. We’ve got to strategically take a look at what needs to be immediately looked at to run our day-to-day homes and lifestyle here and where is the money coming from revenue-wise to how we look at for the future because we’ve got an infrastructure here – it’s no joke, 50 years old, 30 years old, 20 years old. We’ve got to be very smart but people just want to know what’s going on. Now at the same time, I would just ask that we get the community behind whatever we do and push people to that information and help with so I’ve also reviewed my staff on going out to all these websites that love to post positive things about what the POA does and put the information out there that they can read it. It’s a no reply, but the same thing that we put out on the Eblast, we’ll put out on Nextdoor that people are more comfortable and gravitate toward. They’ll at least be able to see the information. It’s an open book test and if you don’t get it, ‘sorry, you should have been paying attention. We’ll be more than happy to go over it again. We’re going to hit it from every angle that we can where we can say, ‘we really did try. Sorry, you are upset.’ We’ll go from there. Are you good with that, Joanie?”

Corry: “Yes, I am.”

As this was a Discussion Session, no motions were made or votes were taken on this issue.

Corry asked Katrina to put this item on the agenda for the next Regular Board Meeting.

Click [here](#) to see the Public Service crew repairing a leak across the street from our house one Saturday evening in July 2021.

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