



PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MINUTES

4:15 PM June 10, 2020
Microsoft Teams Virtual Meeting
City Hall 1st Floor Large Conference Room

1. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Scott Korthuis; Councilors Ron De Valois, Jerry Kuiken and Nick Laninga

Members Absent: Gary Bode, with notice

Staff Present: City Administrator Mike Martin, Public Works Director Steve Banham, Programs Manger Mark Sandal, Plants Superintendent Mike Kim

Public Present: None

2. ACTION ITEMS

A. **Covid-19 Monitoring Plan**

Banham stated that there is currently no way for communities to monitor the presence of COVID-19 other than indirectly through information received on positive cases seen by medical personnel. He presented a proposal, provided by Exact Scientific Services, of a draft COVID-19 Monitoring Plan which included three different options for testing. One of those options is testing sewage samples for the presence of COVID-19. There is research being done in this area at a variety of locations, and City staff contacted Tacoma Public Works staff who are currently allowing samples to be taken for testing at its wastewater treatment facilities. Staff also received information on other testing being conducted nationwide and viewed EPA website information on wastewater testing. After reviewing this information and after discussions with local Department of Health and Ecology personnel, Banham thinks that supplying daily composite effluent samples to Exact Scientific Services would help assist researchers to establish a possible link between COVID cases and wastewater test results that could possibly serve as an early warning of health threats. He feels testing should begin as soon as possible to establish a baseline before planned COVID phases. All this work will be funded using federal CARES funding intended for cities to use in response to COVID.

The Committee also discussed other possible uses of additional testing at wastewater pump stations, and possibly at sites near the schools. This would require identifying good testing protocols but would allow more granular information on potential higher risk populations within the community. The Committee discussed having staff continue to explore these options to bring back a more comprehensive professional services agreement that would include some of these additional options to City Council.

Action

The Public Works Committee concurred to recommend that City Council approve a simplified agreement with Exact Scientific Services for COVID-19 testing of WWTP effluent and to continue to explore additional testing under a broader agreement not to exceed \$150,000 and to be funded with federal CARES funding.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m.