



Whitehouse hosts water workshop

Officials from Bullard and Troup joined the Whitehouse City Council for a water workshop Monday evening at city council chambers. Discussion centered around future water and wastewater projects as well as new development fees.

The council also discussed a rate study or combination rate/impact fee study to be conducted by Dan Jackson of Economist.com.

The discussion of future water projects primarily concerned the next phase in the Lake Striker project initiated by Whitehouse and Troup. The two cities have entered into a 10-year water option contract, reserving the rights to almost four million gallons of water per day. With a \$150,000 annual contract in place, the negotiation for cost of water and details of pipeline/plant construction and timeline are the next steps.

Neal Holland of Stokes & Associates informed those attending that the Lake Striker governing board had initiated a yield study indicating that another two million gallons of water per day may be available.

Although Bullard chose not to join Whitehouse and Troup in their

water option contract, the possibility that a greater supply could be available was of interest to all parties.

"We are struggling to figure out what to do ... trying to plan 20 years down the road," said Bullard City Manager Larry Morgan. "I know it may seem like you can't get us off dead center," he said, adding that for now the city would continue "watching and waiting."

Whitehouse Mayor Jake Jacobson asked what needed to be done to be ready for the next step, and Holland said there were three keys: determine how much water you want, determine the size of water plant and start negotiations with Lake Striker for a water purchasing price.

In considering rate and impact fee studies, Jackson said the information gathered would help the city achieve what's best for the rate payers in terms of plan alternatives, pricing and implementation.

Although a rate study alone would normally cost about \$25,000, Jackson said it could be done for Whitehouse for \$15,000 because his work with the city had already provided a lot of information that would normally be part

of the study.

An impact fee study would also be about \$25,000, but he said the two together could be done for roughly \$23,000.

Jackson said a question to consider in the need for higher development fees is who should pay.

"Is it the people coming in or the people already here?" he asked. An impact study would help the city determine a maximum impact fee and then allow the council to set a price no higher than that for developments to pay with connection. Jackson said the average for Texas was \$2,300 per connection.

Jackson also said the fees for the studies could be deferred until the beginning of the next fiscal year, as they are not currently budgeted items, and that the cost of the studies could be factored into any development fees that are assessed.

In terms of wastewater, the completion of projects in the north end of town is a priority, said Phil Elledge, citing the new school construction as a factor in the need for completion.

On a positive note, the completion of these upgrades should bring the city's wastewater infrastructure up to speed.

Whitehouse Floors & More has agreed to be William Seal's official sponsor. William represents Whitehouse High School on the high school rodeo circuit and has recently begun competing as a professional in the United Professional Rodeo Association. Pictured above with William are (left to right) Warren Cooper, salesperson; Carroll Cooper, general manager; Jason Roman, owner; and Aaron Soto, carpet care manager. William bucked off in his first pro outing in Sulphur Springs and then placed fifth (one spot out of the money) at Hemphill. He has an upcoming professional appearance at the Lindale rodeo May 17-19 and the finals of the high school competition June 2-3. The son of Ben and Jan Seal, William currently has an overwhelming lead in the 4 States Division of the High School Rodeo Association's bull-riding competition.

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