Commissioners Court

REQUEST FOR AGEN	NDA PLACEMENT FORM 001 13 201
Submission Deadline - Tueso	lay, 12:00 PM before Court Dates
SUBMITTED BY: Commissioner La TODAY'S DATE:	
DEPARTMENT: Precinct 4	
SIGNATURE OF DEPARTMENT F	HEAD:
REQUESTED AGENDA DATE: Oc	tober 13, 2017
	Consideration of County Road Cuts on to accommodate City of Cleburne Sewer – Precinct 4.
PERSON(S) TO PRESENT ITEM: (Commissioner Larry Woolley
SUPPORT MATERIAL: (Must enc	lose supporting documentation)
TIME: <u>10 min</u>	ACTION ITEM: _X WORKSHOP
(Anticipated number of minutes needed to di	EXECUTIVE:
STAFF NOTICE:	
COUNTY ATTORNEY:X	
AUDITOR: PERSONNEL:	
BUDGET COORDINATOR:	OTHER:
***********This Section to be Comp.	leted by County Judge's Office*******
ASSIC	GNED AGENDA DATE:
REQUEST RECEIVED BY (COUNTY JUDGE'S OFFICE
COURT MEMBER APPROVAL	Date



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Fredrick "Fritz" Quast fquast@toase.com Ext. 219

Direct: (817) 806-5219

September 22, 2017

Via Email: Steve.Polasek@cleburne.net

Steve Polasek, City Manager City of Cleburne P.O. Box 677 10 North Robinson Street Cleburne, Texas 76033

Re: Highway 174 North Sewer Interceptor; Aerial Creek Crossing

Dear Steve:

You have asked me to opine on an issue that has arisen concerning the above-referenced sanitary sewer line project. A relatively small portion of the line is located outside the City of Cleburne's limits in the extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ). A section of the line in the City's ETJ intersects a creek and the attendant floodplain. As designed, there is an aerial crossing of the creek by the proposed line.

Construction on the project has commenced, but Johnson County's public works director, Mr. Thomas Disheroon, has threatened to stop work on the project. He takes the position the county's and Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) floodplain regulations require all sanitary sewer lines located in a floodplain to be buried a minimum of four feet. I have been informed lowering the sewer line to this extent would require installing a lift station at considerable additional expense (as much as \$200,000.00) to the City's taxpayers.

I am quite familiar with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) administered by FEMA and the regulations local jurisdictions must impose and enforce to participate in the program. In addition, I have performed considerable research of the current federal regulations and cases and administrative decisions interpreting them, and FEMA publications and other guidance documents under the NFIP. I have been unable to find any regulation or other document that even suggests burying sewer lines in a floodplain is required, much less at the depth suggested.

The NFIP regulations only generally require that: (1) new development is reviewed to ensure utilities are built in a manner to minimize or eliminate flood damage; (2) new sanitary sewer systems be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the sewer system and discharge from the system into flood waters. Specifically:

(4) If ... proposed new development is in a flood-prone area, any such proposals shall be reviewed to assure that ... all public utilities and facilities, such as sewer,

gas, electrical, and water systems are located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage.

. . . .

(6) Require within flood-prone areas (i) new and replacement sanitary sewage systems to be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration of flood waters into the systems and discharges from the systems into flood waters.

44 C.F.R. § 60.3(a)(4)(ii) & (a)(6)(i). Consistent with these federal regulations, Johnson County has adopted regulations which essentially mimic these regulations. There is nothing in the county's regulations which mandate what is now demanded by Mr. Disheroon. And there is no question the City's project can adhere to the FEMA and county regulations without burying the line.

It now appears the standard referenced by Mr. Disheroon was a standard the county imposed on *pressurized* gas pipelines, not gravity-driven sanitary sewer lines. If we are unable to have Mr. Disheroon reconsider his interpretation of the county's floodplain regulations, then the City has several options:

- (1) the City may appeal or seek a variance of the county floodplain regulations from the county commissioners court;
- (2) if relief is not granted by the commissioners court, further challenge the interpretation in district court; or
- (3) the City could avoid the county's floodplain regulations and Mr. Disheroon's interpretation of them by simply annexing the property where the crossing is located.

If you have any questions regarding this matter please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Sincerely,

Fredrick "Fritz" Quast,

City Attorney

¹ See Johnson County Commissioners Court Order No. 2012-29, Johnson County Flood Damage Prevention Order of 2012 (passed November 26, 2012).

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Notes: 1. Businesses and residents must NOTICE 1. Businesses and residents must NOT INTERDED TO RELIEVE THE CONTRACTOR FROM THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTRACT DOCUMENTS, THE MOST CURRENT VERSION OF THE TEXAS MUTCD AND ALL OTHER APPLICABLE REQUIREMENTS ANY CHANGES TO THIS PLAN, WORK ZONE CONDITIONS, OR TRAFFIC CONDITIONS, ALSO DO NOT RELIEVE THE CONTRACTOR FROM MAINTAINING PROPER WORK ZONE SAFETY AND THE SAFETY OF THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY CHANGES SHALL MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GUIDBLINES AND SPECIFICATIONS.	Sign Squared Sign States of Sign Sta	Burgess Rd
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