



LIBERTY HILL LH20 TASK FORCE
Wednesday, September 6, 2023 - 6:00 PM
Meeting Minutes
Liberty Hill Council Chamber / Municipal Court Building
2801 Ranch Road 1869, Liberty Hill, TX 78642

Task Force Members Present:

Brian Williams, Chair
Steve Messana
Chris Pezold
Tom Golden

Task Force Members Absent:

Chad Cormack
Angela Jones
Christy Gessler

City Staff:

Paul Brandenburg, City Manager
Elaine Simpson, City Secretary
James Herrera, Public Works Project Manager
Trey Evans, Water Superintendent
David Thomison, Public Works Director
Carol Gyergyo, Administrative Assistant Public Works/Utilities
Perry Steger, Steger and Bizzell Engineers

Additional:

Liz Branigan, Mayor
Jeff Mayes, President of Liberty Hill Chamber of Commerce

2) Call to Order / Welcome / Introductions

Brian Williams called the LH20 Task Force Meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

3) Staff Announcements

There were no staff announcements.

4) Public Comments

Regarding items not on this agenda Public Comments: Those desiring to speak on a topic not listed on the agenda, please complete a speaker form and present to the City Secretary before the meeting. Speakers will have three minutes each to speak, this time cannot be transferred or shared. Task Force members may not act during this item and any responses will be limited to factual statements, recitation of existing policy, or request for the topic to be placed on a future agenda. Regarding topics listed as an agenda item During specific agenda item: The Task Force members request that speakers complete a speaker form, indicate which agenda item they are interested in speaking about, and submit form to the City Secretary before the agenda item is addressed. Speaker forms may be emailed to the City Secretary before the meeting at esimpson@libertyhilltx.gov.

Jeff Mayes, Henry Mayes Company: spoke in his capacity as a commercial real estate developer. He expressed interest in the work of the Task Force and offered to provide any assistance he could.

5) Regular Items

a) Discussion, consideration and possible action regarding August 2, 2023, Regular Called Meeting minutes. (E. Simpson)

Steve Messana moved, and Tom Golden seconded, to approve, as presented, the August 2, 2023, Regular Called Meeting minutes. Vote on the Motion: the motion carried unanimously by a 4-0 vote. Ayes: Williams, Messana, Pezold, Golden. Nays: None.

b) Update and discussion on Angel Springs. (D. Thomison)

Public Works Director Thomison explained:

- They have been on a field trip to this site and set up the weir.
- So far, calculations are that the spring is producing 115,000 gallons per day, a great amount considering this drought.
- We are doing some clearing in this area, but not taking the hard woods.
- City Engineer Steger is working on determining areas where silt fence will be needed.
- The water quality tests are done.
- Right now, they are trying to figure out if this water is only groundwater, or if it is under the influence of surface water. If it is under the influence, it will be more expensive/difficult to treat.
- There are no 'Water Rights Issues' here.
- The city is working carefully so as not to do any damage to the ecosystem.

There was no formal action taken.

c) Update and discussion on Hidden Lane Glenn. (D. Thomison)

Director Thomison explained that this well did not produce as the city had hoped it would. It appears that it is a 'No Go' for this well.

There was no formal action taken.

d) Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding Water Conservation Efforts. (D. Thomison)

Director Thomison explained that the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) requires that this plan be on file for the city, so that we may qualify for TWDB funds. After the LH20 Task Force considers this plan tonight, it will go to the City Council at their meeting of September 13, 2023. for official approval.

The plan was well received by the Task Force.

Discussions of the conservation efforts listed in the plan spurred questions regarding whether the city could expand these conservation efforts with technology such as 'purple pipe' (reuse water).

The Task Force discussed the figures in the report/plan regarding Water Loss by Year data.

There was a discussion of the need to flush some lines which are 'dead end lines', and the unfortunate waste of potable water that goes to doing this required flushing. In the future, the Task Force recommended that options be investigated for ways to 'loop' the system, so that this type of flushing is no longer required. There was a brief discussion of moving hydrant meters to the ends of these types of lines, so that the water is sold and doesn't not get wasted as runoff.

There was a discussion of possible theories that in the future, possibly the water could be 're-captured'. There was a brief discussion regarding whether increased demand in the Butler Farms area could offset the need to flush the water.

There was no formal action taken.

e) Discussion, consideration, and possible action on future water conservation initiatives. (P. Brandenburg)

Chair Williams discussed that there are many ideas in discussion. The goal is to collect all possible options/ideas and put them together in a plan. The leadership of the City Council will be required if these ambitious goals are to be met.

There was a brief discussion of the following ideas:

- Xeriscaping
- Crediting utility customers for installation of water saving appliances and plumbing equipment.
- Possible Ordinance to prohibit potable water being put on the ground.
- Remain at 1x a week irrigation schedule all year, not just during droughts.
- Prohibit irrigation during the heat of the day.
- Working with Homeowners Associations (HOAs) on water smart landscaping and removing the requirement for traditional landscaping before a certificate of occupancy (C.O.) is issued.
- Requiring rain sensors on irrigation systems.
- Intensive Education campaign / continual communication with the customers on need for conservation.
- Automatic enrollment of new city utility customers into Smart Water system. (They will automatically 'opt in').

It was decided by consensus that the city staff would consider all these ideas and formulate a strategy to propose to the City Council.

There was no formal action taken.

f) Discussion, consideration, and possible action regarding the Living Unit Equivalent (LUE) report. (D. Thomison)

Senior Administrative Assistant Carol Gyergyo introduced the item and presented the staff report. She explained that the first report in the packet is the original, the second one has some revisions requested by Angela Jones.

The group discussed the ongoing concern about the need for more LUEs. They also discussed the historic 'major users' data. It would be great if the usage for these businesses could be re-visited to see how similar it still is.

The group discussed options for communicating with high use businesses about ways to conserve water.

There was no formal action taken.

g) Update on new well coming on-line. (D. Thomison)

James Herrera, Public Works Project Manager introduced this item and presented the staff report. The well called '6A' is coming on-line, but there has been some delay caused by coordination of the electrical with Pedernales Electric Coop (PEC).

The city staff hopes to have this well on-line by first half of October.

Manager Herrera also reported that he has discussed water conservation issues recently with the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) and with some individual developers. The city is trying to keep everyone updated on the water situation.

6) Future Agenda Items

During this time, the Task Force members may identify items that they wish to discuss during a future meeting. These items cannot be discussed or acted upon until they are posted in compliance with the Texas Open Meetings Act.

Water Wise Program. – C. Pezold.

Commercial Businesses; review of their water usage data.


Current Usage data on biggest users/customers.

Report showing the breakdown of how many customers fall into each 'tier' category of water usage, preferably with 'Commercial' and 'Residential' customers identified by category.

7) Adjournment

With no further items on the agenda, and hearing no objections from the Task Force, Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 7:42 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE LH20 Task Force of the City of Liberty Hill, Texas on October 23, 2023 on vote of 3 ayes, 0 nays, and 1 abstentions.


Chair Brian Williams


Elaine Simpson, City Secretary



Meeting minutes from September 6, 2023, Regular Called meeting of LH20 Task Force.