



REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

ITEM NO. 15.

DATE OF MEETING: May 4, 2009

REQUESTED BY: Rick Benton

SHORT TITLE: Resolution Authorizing Acquisition of Properties for Maple Hill Water and Sewer District and Amending the Project Ordinance

BACKGROUND: In 2006 the Board initiated a project to establish a public sewer system in Maple Hill. The project cost is estimated at \$4.2 million. The project requires the acquisition of suitable land for a spray irrigation field. After an extensive search by project engineers within the project area, uplands land suitable for the spray irrigation field has been identified and negotiations have been underway to secure the properties. The properties are identified as PIN 3392-99-5312 (135 acres) and a portion of PIN 3393-61-8913 (60 acres). The 135 acre tract purchase price is \$175,000, and is composed of wet lowlands. The 60 acre tract is largely uplands and contains soils suitable for the spray irrigation field, and the purchase price is \$60,000 plus an exchange for the 135 acre tract. Because of the central location of the tract to be acquired, it is anticipated that there will be project savings because of limited pipeline and pumping costs. The project budget set aside \$200,000 for land acquisition (the ordinance adopted in 2007 reflected \$82,500 for land acquisition), however the actual acquisition cost is \$235,000 (excluding closing costs). A project ordinance amendment is necessary to reflect the cost of the acquisition, as the original project ordinance adopted in January, 2007 and both expected revenues and expenditures have changed since that time.

SPECIFIC ACTION REQUESTED: To adopt a resolution authorizing the acquisition of properties identified as PIN 3392-99-5312 and PIN 3393-61-8913 (portion of), and amending the project budget ordinance.

COUNTY MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION

Respectfully recommend approval.

 JB
Initial

RESOLUTION

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Pender County Board of Commissioners that:

the County Manager and County Attorney are authorized to acquire the following properties for the Maple Hill Water and Sewer District sewer project: PIN 3392-99-5312 and PIN 3393-61-8913 (portion of); and the project ordinance amending the project budget is hereby approved. The County Manager and County Attorney are authorized to execute any/all documents necessary to implement this resolution.

AMENDMENTS:

MOVED _____ SECONDED _____

APPROVED _____ DENIED _____ UNANIMOUS

YEA VOTES: Tate ___ Brown ___ Blanchard ___ Rivenbark ___ Williams ___

Jimmy T. Tate, Chairman

Date

ATTEST

Date

BUDGET ORDINANCE AMENDMENT TITLE: Maple Hill Sewer Project: \$4,282,364:

Introduced by: Rick Benton, County Manager

Date: 2009-05-04

Item #: _____

Fund: Maple Hill W&S

Department: Utilities

Division: _____



PENDER COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

FY 2008-2009

Budget Amendment # _____

Date Approved: _____

2009-05-04

Appropriations

REVENUES		EXPENDITURES	
Increase: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decrease: <input type="checkbox"/>	Increase: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Decrease: <input type="checkbox"/>
Account # and Title	Amount	Account # and Title	Amount (leave off \$ sign)
82-387010 NC Rural Center Grant	\$2,774,614.00	82-404505 Contr. Svcs-Engineering	\$141,500.00
82-387011 Clean Water Trust Fund	\$1,463,000.00	82-404507 Contr. Svcs-Inspection	\$132,000.00
82-348012 Cape Fear RC&D	\$2,000.00	82-404502 Contr. Svcs-Attny	\$5,364.00
82-330500 Tap Fees	\$42,750.00	82-404578 Contr. Svcs.-Grant Admin.	\$40,000.00
		82-407433 Land	\$235,000.00
		82-403601 Supplies/Sampling	\$203,500.00
		82-407434 Capital Outlay/Construction	\$3,330,000.00
		82-409600 Contingency	\$195,000.00
Total:	\$4,282,364.00	Total:	\$4,282,364.00

Reason and Justification for Request:

Funding sources and costs have changed since 2007. This budget more accurately reflects the current project.

Dept Mgr. Approval: _____ Date: _____

Finance Officer Approval: _____ Date: _____

Budget Officer Approval: _____ Date: _____

Board Approval (When Applicable)

Item # _____

Date of Minutes _____

Email Finance Office - Copy

Revision 8.4 (8/13/08)

Print Department Copy



Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates, P.A.

Consulting Engineers

8262 Market St. - Suite 201 • Wilmington, NC 28411

April 29, 2009

Mr. Rick Benton
County Manager
Pender County
PO Box 5
Burgaw, North Carolina 28425

SUBJ: Maple Hill Wastewater System
Land Application Site

Dear Mr. Benton,

As you know, the Maple Hill Wastewater System has been a topic of discussion for a number of years. In 2007, Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates (HUA) was hired to develop design drawings and specifications for a stand alone wastewater collection and treatment system to serve the Maple Hill Community.

The scope of our proposal at that time understood that a previously identified tract was to be used as an application site for the treated wastewater. This previously identified site has since been referred to as The Nature Conservancy tract (TNC). The TNC property consists of approximately 135 acres of a much larger tract previously owned by TNC, the remainder of which has been transferred to the North Carolina State Parks System.

The first step in designing a wastewater irrigation site is to establish the boundaries of any feature requiring a regulatory setback. The first task at HUA was to establish wetland delineation, apply the setbacks, and layout the irrigation field on the remaining property. However, upon delineating the wetlands on the TNC tract, it was discovered that approximately 80% of the tract was covered in wetlands and that the remaining 20% was not a contiguous shape such that a feasible irrigation system could be laid out. At this point, HUA began to work with various interested stakeholders in an effort to locate a satisfactory tract of land to construct the irrigation site. Without an area to dispose of the treated wastewater, the Maple Hill Wastewater System could not move forward.

Subsequent to this initial project setback, several alternate properties were investigated. The controlling factors in a land application site for Maple Hill are the presence of wetlands, existing soil infiltration rates and the proximity to the project. With these three criteria in mind, three alternate properties were evaluated.

The first was immediately adjacent to the TNC tract and consisted of three 10-acre parcels, one of which belonged to a church in Maple Hill. The consultant team felt that these parcels were promising due to their being located on the dry side of the TNC tract. However, once a field investigation was made it was discovered that this area was also covered in wetlands.

Mr. Rick Benton, Pender County
April 29, 2009
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I then began to review soil survey maps and USGS topographic maps to try to locate land in the area that would be at a higher natural elevation and thus have fewer wetlands. I did locate a piece of property that was approximately 15-20 feet higher in elevation and had excellent soil characteristics. However, this property was located just to the north of Maple Hill, actually in Onslow County. This property was determined to be unfavorable due to its great distance from the Maple Hill service area, the fact that it was tied up in an estate dispute, and that the owners were interested in developing the property. The cost would have been too great for this project's budget.

The next property belongs to Mr. Jeff Morris who is currently redeveloping a pre-existing blueberry farm. This particular property is in the geographic center of the Maple Hill service area and adjacent to Maple Hill School Road. I contacted Mr. Morris who seemed marginally interested in selling a portion of his property to the County for use as a wastewater irrigation site with the stipulation that it would not be used for development purposes, rather strictly used as a disposal site for treated wastewater.

I have met with Mr. Morris several times over the last year during which he has allowed the consultant team to delineate the wetlands which has been accepted by the Corps of Engineers. We have performed a preliminary soils analysis which indicates that the property will provide adequate infiltration rates. We have received preliminary approval from the NCDENR soil scientists on the application of wastewater to this property and we have tentatively agreed with Mr. Morris on a preliminary layout of the proposed property lines.

It is the opinion of the consultant team that this property is the best of all properties evaluated thus far. Not only are the soils and wetlands conditions favorable on this property but the proximity to the Maple Hill service area and its being adjacent to Maple Hill School Road will provide a cost savings to the project.

Even if we continue our search and were able to locate another satisfactory property, the cost of transporting wastewater to a property further away is estimated to be approximately \$10 to \$15 per foot which would total about \$50-75,000 for every mile. Of course, once you go much beyond a mile the additional costs would be even greater due to pumping requirements. In addition, any other property would have to be fully evaluated as the previous properties have been, incurring an additional cost for consultants.

I am aware that Mr. Morris is asking for approximately \$60,000 in addition to the TNC tract which was previously budgeted. It is my opinion that if we have to move the irrigation site we will quickly exceed this difference with additional construction and consulting costs.

It is my official recommendation that the County continue to negotiate with Mr. Morris in hopes that he would accept less than the \$60,000 in cash. However, this property is certainly worth that additional money to the project for the reasons described above. If you should have any additional questions or concerns with this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,
Hobbs, Upchurch & Associates



Jeff Thompson, PE