

THE REGION

Public hearing due on sewerage pact

Westside Bureau

PLAQUEMINE — The Iberville Parish Police Jury voted Tuesday night to hold a public hearing on a proposal to contract with a private company to provide sewerage operations for four parish subdivisions.

Jury Secretary-Treasurer Carl Grant said the parish has been maintaining the privately built system without charging residents, but "We don't have the funds to maintain these systems."

The subdivisions of St. Louis and Timberlane near Plaquemine and St. Gabriel and Sunshine Acres are covered by the proposed contract.

Under the proposal, ATS Services would charge a residential rate of \$12 per month. The contract also calls for other fees to cover connections and service calls.

Juror Melvin Lodge objected to a proposed \$150 reconnection fee. "That's ridiculous," he said.

After the meeting, Lodge said he expected a heavy turnout of residents opposed to the plan at the public hearing.

Juror Nicky Miglacio told Lodge he would help "stop this thing."

No date for the hearing has been set, but Grant said he expects it to be held before a regular jury meeting in late January or early February.

The jury also voted:

— To sell back to Georgia Gulf for \$1,001 a piece of property sold to the parish in 1968 under a development plan. The jury leased the property back to Georgia Gulf under a 20-year contract. District Attorney Houston C. "Hammy" Gascon III said the jury was finalizing a deal worked out in 1968.

— To put the parish's new Emergency Operating Center in the Gascon/Wintz Building. Juror Willie Hurdle said the building would house necessary equipment for the emergency preparedness director and would help make the parish eligible for matching federal funds.

— To pay a range rider \$30 a month to round up stray livestock in East Iberville. The position is temporary until the jury receives an opinion from the district attorney on the legality of hiring a range rider.

Sheriff assumes ownership of jail

By The Associated Press

MARKSVILLE — The Avoyelles Parish government has voted to turn over ownership of the parish jail to the sheriff — apparently the first time this has ever happened in Louisiana.

Sheriff Bill Belt offered to take over the jail to help the financially strapped Avoyelles Parish Police Jury, said Belt's attorney, Mike Johnson.

"Sheriff Belt understood that the police jury was under tremendous financial pressures. His goal was to relieve them . . . of any pressures whenever and wherever he could."

State Attorney General William

Guste must approve the transfer, but Johnson said he didn't expect any problem. He said a new law, sponsored by Rep. Raymond Laborde, D-Marksville, authorizes the sheriff to do whatever is needed to properly maintain and house prisoners, including purchasing property for a jail.

Guste also has been asked for an opinion on whether the agreement would be binding on the sheriff if Belt leaves office.

The police jury officially owns the Marksville jail although the sheriff's office has paid all jail expenses for the past year.

Reindeer feeding



Associated Press photo

Rayburn May feeds lichen to one of two reindeer at his Lazy Acres Christmas Tree Farm in Chunky, Miss., recently. May imported the reindeer from Alaska and is feeding them lichen native to Alaska.

Jail architect cites construction woes

By James Minton
Baker-Zachary Bureau

CLINTON — Excuses, rather than solutions, are being given to complaints about the construction of the new \$4 million East Feliciana Parish Prison, the building's architect said Tuesday.

The East Feliciana Parish Police Jury had stopped short on Dec. 5 of voting to file suit against Woodrow Wilson Construction Co. of Baton Rouge after learning of a leaking roof. On Tuesday, it learned of additional problems.

According to a report of a Dec. 8 inspection by architect Lionel Abshire, kitchen sink drains are leaking, lips and drip edges were not visible on hot-water heater flashings and mounting bolts for heating and air conditioning equipment are vibrating loose.

Abshire's report, which also covered the company's response to the leaking roof, said the contractor requested "adequate time to make corrections before the owner considers drastic measures."

Correspondence distributed Tuesday indicated a pump for a hot-water circulating system failed recently. However, in a Dec. 14 letter, Woodrow Wilson project coordinator Andrew McLindon blamed the problem on the failure of a jail maintenance worker to properly oil the pump.

"Mr. McLindon seems to find excuses rather than answers to the problems," Abshire said. The architect said he had written a "stiff letter" in reply, adding that "excuses won't do the job."

McLindon's letter said all pumps in the prison are supposed to be oiled every

30 days, but the "burned-out" pump had not been oiled since the building was accepted last summer.

However, Abshire told the jury the various pumps have different oiling schedules, and the contractor failed to provide maintenance information framed under glass as required by the construction contract.

Abshire said he would continue to push for a resolution of the complaints if the jury supports him.

The jury voted unanimously, on a motion by Buck Richardson, to replace the pump motor, if necessary, and deduct its cost from \$10,000 the jury is withholding from Woodrow Wilson.

"We didn't pay for excuses," Richardson said.

"We didn't pay for a five-gallon bucket of tar, either," said Juror Myron Hall, referring to his earlier complaints about tar being used to repair roof leaks.

Hall noted the contractor's attorney singled him out in a Dec. 7 letter criticizing the jury for "unfounded and unwarranted allegations" against the contractor "as were reported in the newspaper."

Attorney George K. Anding Jr. said the roof problems reported by the jail maintenance worker had been repaired prior to Hall's remarks.

Anding asked jury President Charles Coleman to advise the jurors "that their election to political office does not give them carte blanche authority to defame those with whom the police jury contracts. If such spurious attacks on the reputation of our client continue, we shall take whatever action may be necessary to protect our client's reputation and interests."

LEDA opposes sale of site in industrial park for medical waste incinerator

LAFAYETTE — The Lafayette Economic Development Authority decided Tuesday to oppose the sale of industrial-park land to a medical waste incineration firm.

The Lafayette City Council also considered the proposal Tuesday, but opted to remain neutral on the company's plans. The council agreed that an assessment should be made of the area's medical-waste-disposal needs.

State regulations are expected to take effect in July to regulate medical waste disposal. A Department of Environmental Quality official has said that most hospitals are burning the material in obsolete incinerators, and physicians and dentists usually dispose of the wastes in landfills.

The authority agreed 7-3 against selling property in Southpark to Medical and Dental Waste Inc., headed by Indiana pharmacist Howard Bell.

At first, the company had expressed interest in buying land in the Northpark High Technology Center, but it was announced Tuesday that the company had decided it wanted a site in Southpark instead, for its planned \$3.5 million facility.

Authority President Roland Dugas said the major industries in Southpark had no objection to a medical waste disposal firm.

However, Dr. Ray Authement,

University of Southwestern Louisiana president and a LEDA member, spoke out against selling property to a company that he said probably would bring in wastes from other areas.

Authement said two of the five major hospitals in Lafayette are considering a joint venture, possibly establishing a cooperative incinerator unit.

They say they would like to control their own destiny," Authement said.

Without the large hospitals, a medical waste facility would have to import wastes to pay for itself, Authement contended.

LEDA member Dr. Kenneth Brown said hospitals would only have to make minimal changes to upgrade their own incinerators to meet anticipated DEQ regulations.

LEDA member Gene Fortier also spoke against selling land to the company.

"Do we want Lafayette to be known as a net importer of infectious wastes?" Fortier asked.

However, member Harry delatHoussaye favored the sale. He noted that one of LEDA's goals is to

make Lafayette a complete regional medical facility.

If the company is denied access to an industrial park, it can just as easily seek land elsewhere in the parish, he said.

At its meeting Tuesday, the city council has no say-so to prevent a person with a permit from coming into Lafayette with an incinerator. He said the decision is entirely up to DEQ.

Dr. Walter Comeaux, president of the parish medical society, said local physicians will need disposal solutions

because of new state regulations.

He added that he is appalled by the sudden outcry here against the proposed incinerator when "we've got live hospitals in residential areas burning the same material you don't want burning here."

Jacques Privat of the area Sierra Club supported the council's decision to look further into the issue, adding: "It is encouraging to see you are going to be more careful with this."

An accident occurred on November 11, 1987, on I-10, near the Grosse Tete Railroad Overpass, at 11:30 a.m., when an oilfield 18-wheeler jack-knifed and went over the side of the bridge, onto the ground. Anyone with information concerning this accident should call Joe Frannino, collect at 504-837-5480.

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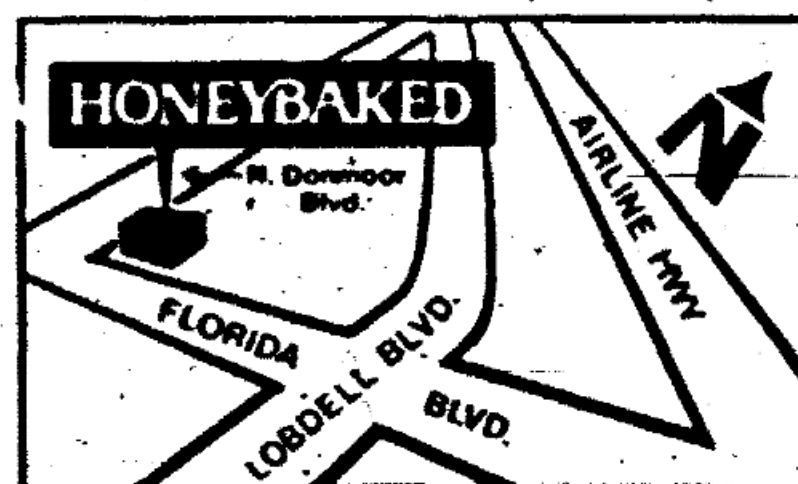
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