

**GRAND JUNCTION CITY COUNCIL  
and  
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR MESA COUNTY**

**JOINT PERSIGO MEETING MINUTES  
September 18, 2012**

**Call to Order**

The Grand Junction City Council and the Mesa County Commissioners Joint Persigo meeting was called to order by Council President Bill Pitts at 2:00 p.m. on September 18, 2012 in the City Auditorium, City Hall, 250 N. 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

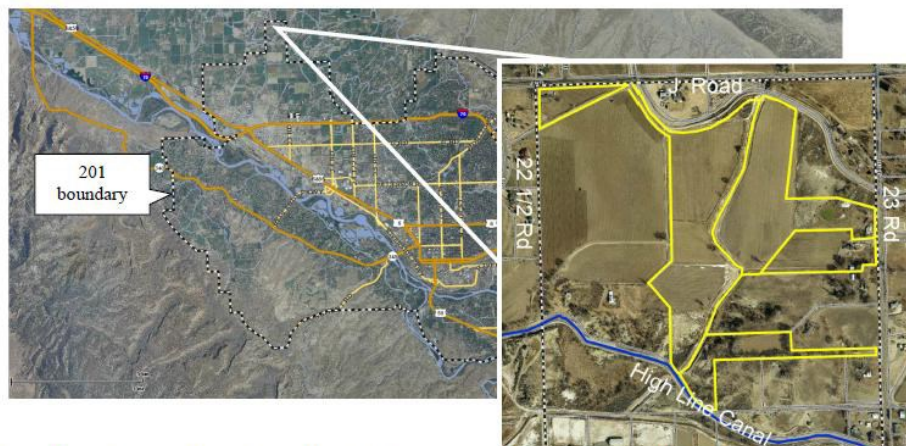
City Councilmembers present were Bennett Boeschstein, Teresa Coons, Jim Doody, Tom Kenyon, Laura Luke, Sam Susuras, and Council President Bill Pitts. County Commissioners present were Janet Rowland and Chair Craig Meis. Commissioner Steve Acquafresca was absent.

Also present were City Staffers City Manager Rich Englehart, City Attorney John Shaver, Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Director Greg Trainor, Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Deputy Director Terry Franklin, Utilities Engineer Bret Guillory, Principal Planner Dave Thornton, and City Clerk Stephanie Tuin.

County Staffers present were County Administrator Chantal Unfug, County Attorney Lyle Dechant, Public Works Director Pete Baier, Planning Director Linda Dannenberger, Assistant County Attorney David Frankel, and Clerk to the Board Bert Raley.

**Public Hearing – Consideration of Exclusion for:**

- a. **at least five specific properties, 959 23 Rd., 973 23 Rd., 977 23 Rd., 2251 J Rd., and 2271 J Rd.**
- b. **the entire area between the Grand Valley Irrigation Company Highline Canal, north to J Rd., between 22 ½ Rd. to 23 Rd.**



**Area Map - Properties requesting to be removed from Persigo 201 Boundary**

Council President Pitts opened the public hearing at 2:00 p.m.

Greg Trainor, Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Director, presented this item. He reviewed the history of the Persigo Waste Water Treatment Plant which was completed in 1984. Prior to the completion of the Persigo Plant, there were capacity issues with the existing sewer plant and there was development occurring in the Redlands area. The Persigo Plant was a showpiece for the Grand Valley then, and continues to be so 28 years later thanks to the support of the City Council and County Commissioners.

Regarding the exclusion request, Mr. Trainor said they received a request from five property owners in an area from 22 ½ Road to 23 Road and south of J Road bounded by the Grand Valley Highline Canal to the south. Notices were published and mailed to all property owners in the area. Notices also were sent to property owners within five hundred feet of the area being discussed. Mr. Trainor spoke to six individuals and invited them to attend the hearing. The individuals he spoke with did not seem to object to the exclusion proposal.

He described the area for exclusion and said the area sits at the top of a hill with agriculture and is characterized with deep ravines and crossed by the canals. Some development has occurred to the west. One street is named Priscilla's Way and north of J Road is Pritchard Mesa Way, both areas with large lots. The properties under consideration are owned by the Roper family.

The current zoning for the area is Rural, RSF-R, where the minimum lot size is five acres. The Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Designation is Rural which is five to ten acres per unit.

The two options for consideration are to exclude the five properties that specifically requested exclusion or to exclude the entire area that includes 17 properties and is bounded by J Road to the north, 22 ½ Road to the west, 23 Road to the east, and the Grand Valley Highline Canal to the south. The nearest sewer is two miles to the south and west of the area. If the area were ever to be sewered, it would be done by either property owners or developers and with the current zoning and the future zoning, it is doubtful that it would be developed to a density that would pay for extension of the sewer. Staff is recommending either option. He noted the applicants are present.

Councilmember Coons asked why the area was initially included in the boundary two years ago as part of a large inclusion. Mr. Trainor deferred to Staff to answer the question.

David Thornton, Principal Planner, advised that between 2007 and 2010 there were many Comprehensive Plan meetings and the public was asked if they wanted to be included in the Urban Planning Area. In this area there were some that expressed interest. With the finalization of the Comprehensive Plan it was determined that the canal made sense as a boundary for the Urban Growth Area so the area north of the canal was not included in the Urban Growth Boundary. That area remained a Rural designation in the Comprehensive Plan.

Councilmember Boeschstein asked where the nearest sewer line to these properties is located. Mr. Trainor said the drainage basin runs to the southwest and the current sewer line ends at 22 Road and H Road. Councilmember Boeschstein noted there is some development. Mr. Trainor concurred but noted they are all large lots.

Councilmember Kenyon asked if the other property owners in the area were contacted and if they are ok with being excluded. Mr. Trainor said they were sent notice. He spoke with no one within the boundary that hadn't requested the exclusion, with the exception of one couple in the audience. The couple advised they are outside of the area being considered.

Council President Pitts asked for public comments.

Dave Roper, 2251 J Road and also 2271 J Road, said he was aware he was in the 201 sewer boundary but did not understand the implications of it. It was recently brought to light that a term in his parents' will required a five acre parcel be split off in order to divide the land among the four siblings. They have no plans to develop but the cost to subdivide would require sewerage and that would be too costly. Therefore, they are asking for exclusion. No one he spoke to in the area was opposed to exclusion and most did not even realize they were in the boundary.

Darrel Sartin, 989 Priscilla's Way, lives just to the west of the area for exclusion. He reiterated that he would be happy to see the exclusion take place. Most of the lots in his area are five acres. Urban development to the east would be significant and undesirable. There is a loop to the north which is the Highline Canal; the canal being referred to on the maps displayed is actually the Main Line Canal.

Kelsy Sharp, 995 Priscilla's Way, thought it would not be prudent to just exclude a few of the parcels. She would rather the whole area be excluded to make the area grow the way that it is, rural, larger lot setting. She agreed the canal is a better and more natural barrier for ongoing development.

There were no other public comments.

Commission Chair Meis said he was concerned that there is no clear reason to include or exclude these properties. He is also concerned that there has been no dialog with the other property owners being considered for exclusion.

Mr. Trainor concurred this is a valid point. They were notified, however, and the notice included both options: excluding the five properties or excluding the entire area.

Commission Chair Meis suggested a provisional motion be made to exclude the five properties and then contact the others and bring those properties up for exclusion later.

Commissioner Rowland voiced concerns that the comment was made that some did not even know they were included in the 201 boundary.

Councilmember Boeschstein asked how the others were notified; was it certified mail, return receipt? Mr. Trainor stated they were mailed a copy of the notice that was in the newspaper, not return receipt.

Commissioner Rowland asked what type of notice was mailed, noting that without an envelope it might be perceived as junk mail and not read. Mr. Trainor advised the notices were not within an envelope.

Commission Chair Meis asked County Attorney Lyle Dechant if such a motion could be made. He and City Attorney John Shaver agreed it would be better to exclude the five properties and then bring the others back for consideration at another meeting.

Councilmember Doody recognized Mr. Sartin in the audience and allowed him to speak.

Mr. Sartin explained his recollection on how the inclusion came about 2 ½ years ago.

Councilmember Boeschstein suggested tabling the issue until each of the other owners are sent a notice by return receipt to ensure they all receive the notice.

Councilmember Doody suggested the five be considered at this time and then bring the others back at the next annual meeting.

Councilmember Coons agreed. These five have requested exclusion and there is no reason to delay that.

Councilmember Kenyon agreed. He said it is rarely prudent to wrap everything in one package. The five that have requested exclusion, that is fine, but he would like to see more process before the others are excluded.

Councilmember Luke said it would be presumptuous to exclude the whole area; she would rather just exclude the five being requested.

Councilmember Susuras also agreed with choosing option a) the option to exclude the five specific properties. He asked if any of the property lines extend past the canal. Mr. Trainor said the canal is the boundary.

Commissioner Rowland moved to exclude the five properties: 959 23 Rd., 973 23 Rd., 977 23 Rd., 2251 J Rd., and 2271 J Rd. Commission Chair Meis seconded. Motion carried.

Councilmember Susuras moved to exclude the five properties; 959 23 Rd., 973 23 Rd., 977 23 Rd., 2251 J Rd., and 2271 J Rd. from the Persigo boundary. Councilmember Coons seconded the motion. Motion carried by roll call vote with Councilmember Boeschstein voting NO.

**System updates:**

Greg Trainor, Utility, Streets, and Facilities Director, introduced these items.

a. Compressed Natural Gas Project

Mr. Trainor advised that they have met with Xcel Energy several times to determine the quality of natural gas in order to place the City gas from the Persigo Plant into the Xcel Energy system. The Plant Manager has been working on pricing the cost of equipment in order to scrub the gas. The information is not complete yet. There are options, to place into the Xcel Energy system, or place into the system and then use it to fuel the natural gas vehicles in the fleet, or use the gas directly at the treatment plant for the coal fired generators. A grant application was made to the Bloomberg Foundation for one million dollars; the grant will be for using alternative energy sources with the plan to use the gas in the Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) vehicles in the City's and County's fleet.

Councilmember Luke asked about the coal fired equipment mentioned. Mr. Trainor clarified the methane would fuel gas powered generators.

b. Additional Solar at Persigo

Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Deputy Director Terry Franklin said they are using up to 7,000 gallons of CNG each month for the fleet at a cost of about 80 to 85 cents per gallon so it has been a really good investment.

Regarding the solar project, there have been numerous attempts to complete projects on their own but to a small degree. In July 2011 he presented a proposal from Sunsense Solar who went out and applied through Xcel for energy credits and that system has since been installed, a 100 kW system, and that is working very well. The newest proposal is to add another 400 kW to the Persigo System. Sunsense Solar submitted an application to obtain energy credits. There is potential savings of \$10,000 per year in kilowatt demand. That, with other savings, is \$354,000 savings in 20 years. On the other hand, if the plant were to buy the system, the savings would be a potential savings of \$944,000 over 20 years especially by shaving off the demand peak. Even borrowing the money from another fund at 2% interest would still be a big savings.

Councilmember Coons asked about the timeline on responding to the proposal. Mr. Franklin replied it would be June of 2013.

Mr. Trainor noted that electricity is one of the biggest expenses at the plant so they are always looking for ways to save those costs.

c. UV Disinfection and other Plant Improvements

Mr. Trainor spoke to the improvements that have been made at the plant, specifically a change to UV disinfection thereby eliminating the use of chlorine gas. There have been upgrades of supervisory controls at the Wastewater Treatment Plant which will help in energy savings. With the help of the County, the charges for disposing of bio-solids at the landfill have been renegotiated for a significant savings. Mr. Trainor then addressed other upcoming improvements including a new TV camera and an operator in the next budget cycle.

d. Future Nutrient Standards and Responses to Comply with Standards

Mr. Trainor spoke regarding meeting the nutrients standards. It is not known what the standards will be, what technology will be available to remove those nutrients, and as a result it is unknown what the cost will be. They have added significant funding in the long range business plan in order to meet those forthcoming standards. They plan to have eleven million dollars set aside by 2023 to comply with the new standards. There is a small pilot project to modify aeration basins at the Wastewater Plant to reduce the amount of ammonia that is ending up in the river; this would also apply to nutrient removal as well.

e. Dissolution of Central Grand Valley Sanitation District

Mr. Trainor advised that for the November election, voters on the Central Grand Valley Special Sanitation District will be voting whether to dissolve the special district. There was a special meeting chaired by Central Grand Valley asking for support of the dissolution. The Persigo Plant currently treats the waste and with the dissolution will also manage that portion of the collection system.

Commission Chair Meis asked about rates in that area. Mr. Trainor said they would pay the same as other Persigo customers which will be a \$2.90 per month reduction from their current bill and the tap fees would also be reduced by \$2,300.

### **Review of Draft Financial Plan and Sewer Rate Recommendations**

Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Director Greg Trainor noted that the long range financial planning has really been a valuable tool. There have been no rate increases during the economic downturn. They are proposing a modest increase in 2013, i.e., \$2.02 per month for residential rates. As a result of the lack of increases in the last few years there has been a down spending of the fund balance. Without an increase, the fund balance would be depleted in the future. The target fund balance is \$1.5 million.

Mr. Trainor showed a comparison of the rates for other entities for sewer services across the Western Slope; the Persigo Plant is still the lowest. One reason that low rates were maintained was because of federal government participation in the initial construction of the plant and there is no debt payment.

### **Schedule for Budget Review and Adoption**

Utilities, Streets, and Facilities Director Greg Trainor said sometime in October, County Public Works Director Pete Baier will schedule time with the Commissioners to review the budget for the Persigo Plant.

### **Other Business**

There was none.

**Adjournment**

Council President Pitts adjourned the meeting at 3:15 p.m.

Stephanie Tuin, MMC  
City Clerk