

INFORMAL HEARING OF THE COUNCIL
BROOKINGS-HARBOR HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM
September 28, 1964

Meeting called to order at 8:15 P. M. City Attorney W. W. Balderree presiding. In attendance were Mayor Byron L. Brimm; Councilmen; Henry Kerr, Ben Franklin Jr., Ernest Christensen and LeRoy Weideman. Also present were Engineer Ralph Martin, and city auditor B. E. Smith. Approximately 160 persons were in attendance.

Mr. Balderree introduced himself, the mayor and councilmen, and explained that he had been asked to preside over the meeting to conduct the same in a manner he thought best for the interests of the city and the community. He explained the legislation passed by the council as the most logical approach in determining by vote whether a municipal water system was desired by the majority. He stated that, if the bond issue passed, it was his opinion that the city should enter into negotiations with the owner of the present private water system to determine if an agreement could be reached toward the acquisition of the present system which would be fair to everyone concerned. If such procedure proves unsuccessful, then court condemnation should be undertaken and the court would arrive at a fair price. The city would then consider the construction of a new system, if an agreement could not be decided upon.

Engineer, Ralph Martin, explained that his firm had been employed by the council to make a study and write the current report pertaining to a new water system that would be adequate, and safe for the community and adjacent areas. He explained the firms' findings and recommendations as noted in said report, emphasizing that a cost of \$1,300,000 as estimated, is a top figure for the proposed system. He explained several film slides relative to the exhibits in the report.

Fire Chief, Robert Kerr, noted the fire underwriters recommendations for safe and adequate fire protection and noted the distant spacing of fire hydrants and the low pressure and flow in high value districts of the City.

some 20 questions pertaining to the report and to the proposed bond issue were asked. Mr. Balderree answered a number of questions and called upon the engineer and auditor to answer others.

Mr. Bill Landis asked the opinion of the Mayor and Councilmen individually as to their position concerning the matter.


Councilman Henry Kerr stated that he was on the council to represent the people of the community to the best of his ability. He explained that he was not fond of paying more taxes, that he would do as the people desired and in accordance with majority vote. If the measure passes he would spend the very least possible for the best interests of the community, would deal reasonably with Mr. Bankus and has no reason why he would be inclined to spend the entire bond issue or pay too much for the existing system or for the construction of a new system. He stated that the council would search out every available means to obtain federal funds for as much of the cost as possible. He said he felt that to purchase the present system at the price offered would not be feasible and would entail a greater expenditure than if a new system is constructed, by the time necessary improvements and expansions were completed. He pointed out that a previous meeting had been held and that Mr. Bankus had informed those present that he had a price in his pocket but would not talk price until the city is in a position to talk business. Mr. Kerr agreed with Mr. Bankus on this point. He explained that he is working for the people in the best way that he knows how and has their full interests at heart while acting as councilman.

Mayor Brimm stated that he was in accord with Mr. Kerr's views, but that he did not intend to make the proposal for a new water system a political issue and would have no further statement to make until after November 3rd.

Councilman Ben Franklin, Jr. stated that there is a strong possibility of establishing a municipal system at less than the maximum cost stated in the engineering report and that the council would make every effort to keep the cost down. He pointed out that the special election would be a free and open election and if the people of the community desired a municipal system, he would work with the mayor and council toward that end and do the very best possible for the public interest.

Mr. Balderree thanked the audience and expressed appreciation for the manner in which the meeting was conducted.

Meeting closed at 10:30 P. M.


DON PAGE SMITH
RECORDER