

More troubles show up at Fred Endert Pool

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The struggle continues for the Fred Endert Pool. A contractor who promised to improve it, Johnson Controls, has requested the city cancel the agreement saying if it's not also bundled with a water meter upgrade for \$4 million, they aren't able to do it.

The city will now have to go back to an engineering firm for the design and then put it out to bid for the actual work. It will lengthen the process and cost more on a pool that's already contentious.

The pool was closed in May due to pieces of the ceiling falling off into the water and in June a contractor was brought in to fix it. In the process, City Manager Eric Weir discovered some insufficiencies he wanted to address: installing new higher-efficiency boilers, new spa pumps, a new heat exchanger and a new dehumidification system. Weir stated that the dehumidifiers would address the moisture concerns which led to the ceiling situation.

At a September meeting regarding pool improvements Councilor Raymon Altman quipped, "I feel like we have a \$40 million mansion we have to pour money into all the time," he continued, "Is it 22 citizens? How

many people are using this thing from our community?” Councilor Blake Inscore answered by saying pools are costly and rarely pay for themselves but they’re community assets.

And there were others who warned that the city’s sales tax, Measure S, which would partly fund pool improvements might not pass.

But, Measure S did pass and despite the expressed irritation of staff and council with the contractor, it was agreed to let Johnson Controls out of their agreement with Weir stating they don’t want to work with someone who doesn’t want the job.

Mayor Isaiah Wright, Councilors Jason Greenough, Blake Inscore and Altman ultimately agreed it was disappointing that Johnson made the decision, but they approved the city manager moving forward with an engineering firm to complete a design for the pool before agreeing on next steps.

And the pool is prominently featured in numerous marketing projects brought forward to the council in order to continue attracting tourists to the city. Councilors viewed website updates, print advertisements in the Triple A magazine and several digital ad products. The council approved rolling over \$15,000 not used last year to finalize those projects at a total cost of less than \$25,000.

The Crescent City Council also approved moving forward with the 160 unit Battery Point Apartments behind Joe Hamilton School. 40 apartments will be for seniors, 30 for low income families and the rest will be unrestricted.

“This is really something our community needs,” Councilor Jason Greenough, “We’re doing everything we can to encourage new building here.”

The rest of the councilors had similar sentiments with an emphasis on timing. Councilor Blake Inscore asked how quickly the units could be built. Bill Wright from Synergy, the developer, indicated they could begin as early as next February. “This is a great opportunity for seniors and families. We love the fact that it’s near two schools.”

The Battery Point Apartments will have one, two, three and four bedroom apartments and they will be priced at workforce levels to accommodate the so called “missing middle” in home markets where working people who are not low income but also not earning enough to buy or rent a home need housing.

By the council approving 70 “project vouchers” in advance of the apartment complex being built, the city commits to that number of long term low income units and it makes the project attractive for funding.