

COMMITTEE ON CITIZEN
ENGAGEMENT MINUTES
October 9, 2018

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Citizen Engagement convened in a meeting on October 9, 2018 at 10:37 a.m. in the City Hall Conference Room at City Hall, 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Council Member Deb Armintor, Council Member Gerard Hudspeth, and Council Member Keely Briggs.

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Kuechler, Jessica Rogers, Sarah Fullwood, Justin Harmon, Kevin McGinnis, Stuart Birdseye, Charlie Rosendahl, Brad Lahart, Deborah Viera, Trey Lansford, Hayley Zagurski, Karisa Richards

A. Consider approval of the minutes of August 7, 2018.

Council Member Armintor motioned, and Council Member Hudspeth seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding gas well communications and notifications.

At the September 11, 2018 City Council meeting, staff presented a work session on the history of gas well ordinances and setback requirements. During this meeting, Council requested if gas well communications and notifications could be discussed at the next Committee on Citizen Engagement (COCE) meeting.

Kuechler gave an update on what is required by our current gas well ordinance for notifications by operators and developers and what additional communications and information the City has made available through the City's website.

The current ordinance governing Gas Well Drilling and Production is 2015-233 which was adopted August 4, 2015. The following notifications are required by the current ordinance.

Operator Notifications:

Written Notifications: At least 20 days prior to filing a Gas Well Development Site Plan application, notify each surface property owner within 1,000 feet of the site by US mail.

Briggs asked if the 1,000 feet was because our ordinance requires it or if the notifications could go out further.

Kuechler stated that it is required by ordinance. Lansford also added that the 1,000 feet is the minimum but that the operator could go further.

Armintor asked if there was a way to have a policy to require property owners to notify tenants.

Lansford stated that there would be no legal way that they City could mandate property owners to notify tenants.

At least 20 days prior to filing a Gas Well Development Site Plan application, publish a notice in the Denton Record Chronicle for 10 consecutive days.

No later than five days after filing a Gas Well Development Site Plan application, place a sign of no less than three feet by three feet in size at the proposed location.

For activities that include drilling, completing or re-completing, plugging and abandonment (P&A), activity that requires removal of the wellhead, or seismic exploration not involving explosive charges, the operator is required to provide written notice to all dwellings within 1,000 feet of the boundary of the site between 10-30 days from the start of the activities. This notification is sent through the US mail.

Signage:

A sign must be posted at the entrance of the site when the operator will be drilling, completing or re-completing, P&A, or any other activity that requires removal of the wellhead. The sign must include the date and time activities begin, and 24-hour contact information.

A sign shall be displayed on each side of the fence surrounding the site notifying the public that it is a gas well drilling and production site with site specific information and safety notices.

Emergency Notification:

Immediate notification to the City of fires, blowouts, release of hazardous materials, injury, or other incident outside normal operating procedures.

Developer Notification Requirements:

For a Plat that proposes single- or multi-family residential lots that will be within 1,000 feet of one or more Drilling and Production Sites, except for those Drilling and Production Sites and their subsurface mineral interests which are eliminated through plugging and abandonment, the Developer shall be required to provide all of the following disclosure notifications to all lot purchasers as summarized below:

A note shall be placed on the Plat identifying the site and those proposed lots that are within 1,000 feet of the site. The note includes a statement that advises lot purchasers of the existence of producing wells on the site and the potential that new wells that may be drilled and fracture stimulated on the site, as well as the possibility that the site may be re-drilled and/or re-fractured in the future.

There shall be depicted on the Plat, and on a lot survey submitted as part of a building permit application, the location of the Drilling and Production Site(s) in relation to the lots that are within 1,000 feet of a Drilling and Production Site(s).

Include a provision in the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants that advises lot purchasers of the existence of producing wells on the site.

A Notice document that advises lot purchasers of the existence of producing wells on the drilling sites that is recorded with the Denton County Clerk's Office.

Additional Information Provided by the City

Kuechler reviewed recent efforts to enhance communication and transparency of gas well inspections information.

Per the Ordinance, in addition to mailing written notices to all dwellings within 1,000 feet of the boundary of the site between 10-30 days from the start of the activities, operators are required to report Notice of Activities to the City for inspection. Activities that require reporting to the City are Site Preparation, Drilling, Completion, Rework/Workover, Setting Surface Casing, and General Maintenance. Once the City receives notification, the notice is posted in the Notification of Gas Well Activity portal that is found on the Gas Well Inspections page of the City's website.

Also found on the Gas Well Inspections page is a tool created by staff and revised in spring 2018 called the Gas Well Locator Map which shows the location of all gas wells. Once inside the map, users can type in their address and choose a search radius to find out how many gas well sites are in the vicinity. The map also provides information on an individual-well basis, including operator info, permits issued, status of the well, and reports from inspections performed by the City and its contractor, Modern Geosciences. Reports from the contractor are formatted to include a cover letter with any action items noted, inspection results, photographic documentation, and a pad site map. Technology Services will investigate if current software, or software planned to be purchased for development and permitting, could provide the functionality to allow residents the ability to enable notifications through the website for any activity at a chosen gas well site.

The online availability of gas well information was recently highlighted in both the June/July 2018 Resident Update and the October/November 2018 Resident Update. An additional gas well article is scheduled for an upcoming edition of the Citizen Connection, the newsletter that is included in all utility bills. A quick link was also recently added from the main page of the City's website to the Gas Well Inspections page for easy navigation and increased awareness.

Staff has also received a citizen suggestion to develop a video explaining and demonstrating the various resources and features on the Gas Well Inspections website page and a video presenting an overview of what the Gas Well Inspections Division does.

Staff developed a video for the first suggestion to explain the website and map tool and is working on a second video of an overview of the division.

Emergency Notifications

Residents are also encouraged to sign up for the City of Denton's CodeRed system. CodeRed signups are promoted through a quick link on the City's homepage, social media posts, a feature graphic in the August/September 2018 Resident Update, and handouts during Denton Public Safety Day and other information tables throughout the year. In addition to notifying the public during severe weather updates and other emergencies, staff is able to utilize this system in case of a gas well emergency. In the event of a gas well emergency, staff is able to identify the well site on the map and capture anyone signed up for CodeRed within a specified boundary. Public Safety can send out the necessary information to the residents directly affected.

Briggs asked if the Code Red notifications are by zip code.

Lahart stated that they could send out notifications within a radius of an emergency situation or send something out to the entire City. It can also let the City know the number of citizens contacted.

Additional Option

In addition to increased promotion and awareness of the tools available online through the City's website, staff drafted another option for discussion to send an annual notification targeted to residents that are within 1,000 feet of a Gas Well site. The letter would serve to simply notify residents that they are located near a gas well, and explain the online resources for them to be able to gather additional information. There is a map showing the 3,389 intercepted parcels of land that fall within those parameters. Within these parcels, staff would gather mailing information for both the property owners on file with the County and tenant information from utility billing in an effort to send the letter to both parties. Although this would capture a majority of the addresses, it does not guarantee that every single address may receive. The estimated cost of mailing this one-page letter via regular U.S. mail based upon the estimated amount of addresses is \$4,500 to \$5,500, but could vary depending on the format of the notice, postage rates, and mailing services.

Briggs mentioned using the Denton County Realtors Association or the Texas Realtor Association to help the City with sending out notifications and checking to see if a line could be added to the disclosure statements when someone purchases a house.

Kuechler stated that we could look into that.

Armintor stated that she strongly supported that idea.

Hudspeth asked who the target area is for notifications.

Kuechler and Rogers stated that right now the target is the general public but notifications

and letters will also be targeted to areas directly in the 1,000 feet set back area. Kuechler asked if the committee would like staff to bring back an example of a post card and letter that could be used for notifications.

Briggs stated that would be helpful.

C. Receive a report, hold a discussion, and give staff direction regarding citizen engagement, communication, and transparency initiatives.

Kuechler and Rogers gave an update on the following items:

Citizen Survey Update – Staff has been working with National Research Center over the last two months to complete a citizen survey. The survey was mailed to 1,600 randomly selected households in late August and an online opt-in survey for all residents opened Sept. 24. Data collection for both surveys will run through Oct.15. The opt-in results will be provided in a separate report, so the randomly sampled group remains statistically valid. Marketing for the opt-in survey was done through a press release, social media, DTV newsbreak, and the information is also available on the City's website at www.cityofdenton.com/2018citizensurvey. NRC will provide a draft report in November. NRC is scheduled to present the final results to the COCE on Dec. 4.

Engage Denton Update – An Informal Staff Report providing a summary of the Engage Denton application since its launch 3 months ago was provided to City Council on Sept. 28, 2018. Staff is continuing to work on adding and improving functions and will be promoting the app more.

Briggs stated that as a user, sometimes it will say that the item is open and then it will close with no explanation.

Kuechler stated that they are working with staff to provide more details on the status of a request.

Armintor asked if a template could be added for departments to use that has a more detailed response and who to contact that is specific to each department.

Rosendahl stated that there are currently templates set up but they will work with staff to make sure that they provide more details on a request.

Website Main Page – The homepage of the City's website has been updated to improve customer service. As previously detailed to the COCE, the City and our web developer, Imaginuity, worked together to implement changes based on the results and responses provided through a heat map and survey widget. The changes implemented include: Removing the background graphic box from the homepage hero to reduce visual clutter. Moving the "Icons" section up to the top of the page. Reducing the text visible under the Quick Links and moving the Quick Links further up the page. Moving the Featured News and Events section below the Quick Links. Adding a Departments section to highlight

various departments. The goal of the changes is to simplify the homepage navigation. Staff continue to work with departments to simplify their content and present information that is easy to find and use.

Improving Denton – Communications is working with Capital Projects in preparing for several upcoming projects. Staff is also working on direct notifications, emails, distribution list, public meetings, etc. and looking to expand what is being done there. Staff is also working on communication with DCTA, DISD, and other entities.

Armintor asked if there was a way to notify people who the contact person is for each specific project, either on Engage Denton or on the City's website.

Kuechler said that staff can check into that.

Birdseye added that staff is working on public meetings and those items could be included then.

Rogers added that the street construction report also has the contact information included.

Briggs asked if sidewalk projects can be added to the Bike and Walk page.

Kuechler stated that yes, staff can add that information.

3rd Annual State of the City – Staff is currently gathering quotes from the Embassy Suites Denton Convention Center and the Monroe Pearson Event Center for the 3rd Annual State of the City. Staff is finding availability for space on a Thursday evening in mid- to late-January to hold the event, and will coordinate schedules as pricing and availability are obtained. Once the details are confirmed, the event will be publicized through the December/January Resident Update, the City's website, and social media posts.

Hudspeth asked that there be two rooms, a department room and a Mayor's speech room. He stated that it was difficult to visit the booths when the Mayor was speaking.

Kuechler stated that staff would look at the event layout and space.

Armintor asked if there was time to find out about the swag items and how much was spent on it last year. She understands that some departments have items laying around but would like to know how much was ordered new.

Kuechler stated that staff can check into that but that most departments order items in bulk for community events throughout the year.

Armintor asked that if staff were out of swag items to just order one thing when ordering new items. She stated that she really liked the reusable shopping bags that were given out by Sustainability. It would be great if each department had their own bag which

promotes sustainability and helps with the landfill.

Briggs stated that those expenses are included in the department budgets and that the kids really enjoy other items like the fire hats and coloring books.

Set Future Meeting Dates and Topics.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

The next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 4, 2018 at 10:30 am.

KEELY G. BRIGGS
COMMITTEE CHAIR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS

KARISA RICHARDS
RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS