

Kinston Officials on Horns of Consultant Engineering Dilemma

Kinston officials have a tiger by the tail.

Under orders from the State Stream Sanitation Commission to stop dumping untreated sewage in Neuse River by 1969, Kinston officials have spent long and difficult months studying, visiting, consulting and coming up with the method they feel is best for the immediate and long range needs of the city in this vital area.

But the city has struck out twice in efforts to convince different sets of consulting engineers that their plan is the best plan.

Kinston officials, supported by on-the-scene visits to numerous lagoon treatment systems and by the strong recommendations of highly placed public health officials, are committed to a system of treatment lagoons.

But the city's first engineer, W. C. Olsen Company of Raleigh, threw millions of dollars worth of cold water on the lagoon system and insisted that the extended aeration system be used.

After orders from the city council Olsen's engineers did design a 26-acre experimental lagoon, but the design was so poor and the system so inadequate city officials paid Olsen off and hired a new engineer.

The new engineering firm is L. E. Wooten and Company of Raleigh. The report Wooten's boys were asked to make is now in the hands of city officials and it is a repeat performance of that filed by Olsen.

Just as Olsen, Wooten outlines preliminary planning for both the lagoon and extended aeration systems, but separates them in the Olsen fashion by putting a price tag of \$1,704,000 on the aeration system and a price tag of \$2,884,000 on the lagoon system.

The only variation in the two proposals is that Olsen recommended location of the lagoons five miles south of Kinston in the general vicinity of Simon Jackson's home. This was too ridiculous and too costly to merit even a second glance by Kinston officials.

Wooten's recommendation is slightly less absurd than Olsen's but it also suggests putting the major lagoon areas over three miles east of Kinston in the general vicinity of Oak Bridge — at least more than half way downstream from the existing lagoon to Oak Bridge.

The cost of force mains and pumping stations to move the city's sewage these great distances and the cost of acquiring land in both proposals are the items that inflate the cost of lagoon systems out of proportion to reality.

Wooten's report says, "The principal disadvantage of Alternate No. 1 (the lagoons) are; it is the most expensive of the two plans proposed, the lagoon plan is not as flexible as the extended aeration process in treating possible future industrial waste,

a large amount of land will have to be purchased to take care of present and foreseeable future needs and lagoons are subject to occasional upsets which could at times result in disagreeable odors in the immediate area.

Officials Answer

Countering Wooten's arguments Kinston officials offer these contradictions:

"If the unnecessary costs Wooten has added to the lagoon system are subtracted the cost for lagoons will be far less than for extended aeration."

These subtractions include \$30,000 for clearing borrow pits, which is already largely completed, \$30,000 for clearing present lagoon site area, this also is within a matter of weeks being completed, \$300,000 for additions to the dike around this area, \$92,500 for concrete lining up to the water level of the proposed lagoons, \$27,000 for fencing and \$9,000 for sewing grass seeds.

These deductions are not made at random by city officials but are done on the basis of what they have seen in other cities and on the basis of what they have been told by highly competent people in the public health

field. The total estimated cost referred to above include collector mains that extend from Frosty Morn Packing Company to whichever systems eventually are built.

The total estimated costs Wooten comes up with for the actual sewage treatment plants are \$1,298,000 for lagoons which includes nothing for land acquisition and \$674,000 for the extended aeration system.

Further countering Wooten's opposition to lagoons, Kinston officials say the city already has enough land at its present site to provide all the lagoons the city needs now and for the foreseeable future. The basis of this is the fact that Goldsboro — considerably larger than Kinston — is now nearing completion of a lagoon system that will include 200 acres and Goldsboro officials say they believe and their engineers tell them this will take care of Goldsboro's needs in this category for 200 years on the basis of present population growth.

Kinston owns approximately 400 acres in the area where the experimental lagoon is now located and can obtain more just across the railroad if more land

is needed. Kinston officials deny the necessity of running force mains half way to Oak Bridge and buying more land and more easements when they already have far more land than Goldsboro is using for its treatment area.

Kinston officials insist that a system with six to eight lagoons would be much more flexible than a single extended aeration plant that might suffer a mechanical breakdown or industrial sewage "upset" that would knock it out of operation for unforeseeable lengths of time. The Goldsboro plant is designed so any of its lagoons may be taken out of use and the flow directed to either or all depending upon the day-by-day needs.

The final answer about disagreeable odors is that lagoons cannot be built within 1000 feet of any inhabited areas, and officials say they have visited numerous lagoon areas, including the one in La Grange which has been visited under every conceivable kind of weather condition and have not yet been confronted by any disagreeable odors.

One official said the apparent difference is that Goldsboro

employed an out-of-state engineer to design its lagoon system and he was not dominated by the State Stream Sanitation Commission in Raleigh to the extent that both Olsen and Wooten are.

But a decision must be made in the very near future because the target date for completion of Kinston's sewage treatment system — of whatever kind — is December 31, 1968 and such projects are not built with magic wands.

Barry Jones on Duty in Thailand

Airman Third Class Barry W. Jones of Trenton is now on duty with the Air Force in Thailand.

Airman Jones, son of Mr. and Mrs. Aiken E. Jones of Route 1, Trenton, serves as a weapons mechanic with Air Force advisory personnel who support aerospace defense and training activities — closely coordinated with the Royal Thai Air Force.

The airman, a graduate of Jones Central High School, attended Chowan College.

His wife, Marian, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harris E. Dail of Route 2, Trenton.

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