

Water Supply Engineering Survey For Cost Estimates Receives Approval

By John J. Corrigan

Launching of engineering studies on three potential dam sites was authorized by the city council last night in accordance with geological findings and water commission recommendations.

The San Francisco engineering firm of Brown & Caldwell will come up with cost estimates for building dams at Doyle gulch, Upper Soquel and Glenwood.

Two other possibilities—which have not entered the city's dealings with Brown & Caldwell—were discussed, but councilmen decided to postpone further talk of studying Zayante creek and Scotts creek until budget sessions next week.

Both creeks were mentioned in the state water resources board report of 1953 but were not included in the Brown & Caldwell contract because of their distance from the city.

In recommending for engineering survey the three sites given a green light last night, Geologist Chester Marliave also advised that a fourth one—Bald Mountain school on Laguna creek—be rejected for insufficient volume of water and high construction costs.

This recommendation was followed insofar as councilmen okayed engineering inspection of the other three sites only. No action, however, was taken to eliminate Bald Mountain school from all future consideration.

Engineer Kenneth Brown appeared at the session, adjourned from last week, and said frankly that none of the sites surveyed geologically thus far "is anything to get excited about."

His statement led Wallace Richey, chairman of the water commission, to point out that the city had not included Scotts creek, an admittedly good water supply, in the survey contract because the water department already has a coast pipeline and because costs would be high—"four or five million dollars by the time the transmission line is built."

The discussion to bring Scotts creek and Zayante creek into the survey picture arose when it was observed that both the Doyle gulch and the combined Glenwood-Upper Soquel projects would produce a limited yield of water.

Councilman George Penniman opposed looking too far into the future—he suggested a 25-year program—because "I think we are going to be able to reclaim sea water within 50 years at a reasonable price." He said he didn't want to burden taxpayers with an unnecessary program.

In agreement was Councilman Cliff Dysle, who said the navy converts ocean water to fresh water aboard ship. The cost is too high for municipal adaptation at present, but advances in the future may solve the problem, he said.

Water commissioners withdrew from the council chamber and arrived at their recommendation to start engineering studies at the three sites. The council promptly approved the recommendation.

The second item on last night's agenda—clarification of the status of a proposed neighborhood park in the new Westlake subdivision—received a thorough discussion, thanks to Walnut avenue residents who complained that draining of a lake in the subdivision had reduced to a trickle a brook that flows through their backyards.

Subdivider Victor Bogard said the lake had been emptied to clean out tules and would be refilled today. Bogard previously had offered a plan to cut the lake to one-third its present area to form the nucleus of a 2½-acre park he would donate to the city.

Bogard has stipulated that the city must assume liability and maintenance—provisions that the city recreation commission didn't go for, even though commissioners expressed enthusiasm for a park in the area.

City Manager Robert Klein estimated initial cost to the city at "\$5000 to \$7000" and "possibly \$10,000 to \$15,000" for landscaping and put probable maintenance costs at "\$3500 to \$4000" annually. The costs involved caused some councilmen to question the desirability of the idea.

With the park issue still up in the air, the council voted to reach an agreement with Bogard whereby the map of that portion of the subdivision being developed at present can be accepted. This would exclude the lake area—a necessity, since the city's agreement with the subdivider states

that an understanding must be reached on the park before final acceptance of the entire subdivision.

The proposed Cowell's beach restroom building came up for discussion when a resident, Glenn Oliver, asked the council to reconsider erecting a building that will house showers, a lunch counter and lockers. There were hundreds of regular users of the beach who would pay "\$10 to \$20 a year" for the use of such a building, he said.

Such a building was originally planned but the council switched in recent weeks to consideration of lavatory facilities only. City Manager Klein said that plan had been changed "because only the people who were against it" registered opinions.

"If more of the people who are for things will come to the council meetings constructive things will happen," he added.