

Council picks new gas regulator site

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MIDWAY — By a 4 to 2 vote, the city council Monday chose a piece of property next to Midway School Apartments for a new regulator station for Columbia Gas.

At a July 20 council meeting, company officials said that a new, larger facility was needed before winter to meet increased demand. Before the vote Monday, they said even if the council picked a spot that night, building the new station would probably not be possible before spring.

Council member Sara Hicks said the cemetery and city property committee she chairs considered three sites for the building and easement.

"The locations are next to Midway School Apartments, where the former library—that was Lot 1, and behind the library, where the old voting booth and recycling garage are. They (Columbia gas officials) first suggested locating behind the recycling garage, but we had some neighbors who expressed concerns. And then we looked at the old voting booth. We also own the park land below there — there's an old concession stand, there's a basketball court, there's an old (cistern) that used to be for the heat at the Midway School," Hicks said.

She said committee members visited the sites and "walked them off" to ensure the company would be able to access the station during winter, and requested it be inside a building, rather than a chain-link fence.

The committee voted 2 to 1 to recommend the station be installed where the voting booth is (which

is on city property) and Hicks said Columbia Gas will pay the city \$25,000 for the easement.

Council member Dan Roller said people who live near the present station (on Muffin Street) told him noises and odors emanate from the site, and that he favored putting the regulator on the site of the cistern.

"And I thought, 'What better place to put it than next to a dumpster, which there are odors from that and noises from that, and people are loading and unloading those things,'" Roller said.

Council member Libby Warfield said the cistern was the "most common-sense" location.

Company officials said the cistern site would be more expensive to build on.

Columbia Gas officials said the station would make no noise and any odor coming from it when it was being serviced would be negligible. (The odor comes from an additive to natural gas designed to let people know if they left the gas on or have a leak.)

After considerable debate, a motion by council member Steven Craig to accept the committee's recommended site passed. Roller and Warfield (who'd voted against it in committee) voted no.

Trick or treat set

The council unanimously passed a motion to set Trick or Treat hours for Saturday, Oct. 31, from 6 to 8 p.m. Mayor Grayson Vandegrift said he didn't believe having it the day before, with the Breeder's Cup underway along with high school football games, would be any safer.

ABC administrator

Vandegrift was unanimously chosen to replace Versailles Police Chief Johnny Wilhoit, who's retiring at the end of the month, as Midway's Alcoholic Bever-

age Control administrator. When Wilhoit was appointed in May, Vandegrift told the council the unpaid position was typically filled by the mayor. At the time, however, he owned a restaurant (815 Prime) and believed the ABC post would constitute a conflict of interest.

815 Prime recently closed and Vandegrift no longer has a liquor license.

In May, Vandegrift said the main job of the ABC administrator was to sign off on liquor licenses, with check-up duties performed by an ABC enforcement officer.

"Midway elders" lobby council

A new group of five women in their 80s who call themselves "The Midway Elders" attended the council meeting, with member Sara Porter speaking. They passed out an 11-page document asking the council to back their effort to ask state legislators to support an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to reverse recent Supreme Court rulings on campaign finance they say corrupt our government.

"This is a complicated subject impossible to simplify, but we know that corporations have used the first, fifth, fourteenth and other amendments to win cases that oppose the will of the people and the towns and cities that brought the cases to court," Porter said.

Porter submitted a petition supporting their position she said 108 Midway residents signed.

The handout also criticized world trade agreements, such as the Trans Pacific Partnership soon to be considered by Congress.

The council unanimously passed the resolution.