



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Wildwood Officials Provide Additional Updates on City Water**

Wildwood officials this morning presented an update and recommendations related to the municipal water system at the city commission's special meeting.

Jason McHugh, city manager, gave an overview of the elevated iron levels experienced recently in specific, limited areas of the city's system, followed by Mark Odell, utilities director, who presented work done to identify in detail and map various components in the system.

Odell displayed a map of older sections of galvanized pipes vulnerable to rust. He explained that connection of a new water main along US 301 ("the Peppertree Line") in early August significantly altered flow in older sections of the system and is believed to have dislodged accumulated rust deposits in those pipes, mixing iron into the water and causing the yellow, orange, or brownish color that some residents have reported.

The Peppertree Line also mixed water from the city's newer Oxford plant, not yet treated with corrosion inhibitors, with water from the city's older plants, which had been treated to mitigate rust in the older pipes.

To help remove deposits, flushing is routinely performed in older areas of the system. Odell reported that additional flushes of 175 fire hydrants were performed on August 26, and September 16, 2022, and the Peppertree Line has since been isolated from the affected areas.

Kimley Horn, consulting engineers, provided recommendations for updated sampling schedules and locations to identify water chemistry that may accelerate rust/corrosion in older pipes so it can be addressed proactively.

Odell further recommended implementing a multi-year replacement plan for the older sections of pipe, in order of priority, to provide a long-term solution while immediate action continues.

To address the inconvenience experienced by affected residents, staff recommended a 40-percent reduction in water and sewer charges for those customers in the affected areas who reported discoloration issues in August or September. Any resident who experienced discoloration during that time but did not report it is advised to notify the city immediately, as is any resident who experiences discoloration moving forward.

The commission voted unanimously to approve the recommendations, which will be implemented immediately.