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THE DRIPPING SPRINGS DISCHARGE PERMIT ALLOWING IT TO EXPAND THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT HAS BEEN REVERSED BY THE DISTRICT COURT

DRIPPING SPRINGS, TEXAS – October 30, 2020 – The 459th Texas District Court has reversed the discharge permit issued by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) commissioners to the City of Dripping Springs. The discharge permit was issued on February 27, 2019, to allow the City to begin the much-needed expansion of its wastewater treatment plant and address the area’s growing wastewater needs.

However, the Save Our Springs Alliance (SOS) filed a lawsuit against TCEQ claiming the permit violated a subset of Texas’s water quality standards that apply to Onion Creek. Following a hearing and arguments on both sides, District Court Judge Maya Guerra Gamble found this week that the TCEQ’s order approving the City’s wastewater discharge permit is not supported by the law or substantial evidence and should be reversed.

On June 25, 2020, this Court heard SOS’s arguments in the case and Judge Gamble’s decision was handed down yesterday. While the decision is an important one, City officials say they are looking at all options, including an appeal.

“While the District Court’s decision certainly is disappointing, we are confident in our ability to move forward,” says Dripping Springs Mayor Bill Foulds, Jr. “The City is doing everything in its power to accommodate the wastewater needs of our growing community in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible.”

While the permit is required to expand the treatment plant, the City has always had significant plans for beneficial reuse and has even committed itself by contract to assuring a robust beneficial reuse program.

Per Foulds, “SOS refuses to acknowledge the City’s contractual commitments that will minimize if not eliminate the possibility of an actual discharge. Despite the added costs and time associated with having to appeal this decision prompted by SOS’s involvement, the City is committed to providing superior wastewater service to its citizens in a timely manner and in a way that allows it to reuse the effluent. The TCEQ Permit is one aspect of the expansion. We will continue to push forward on all aspects of our South Regional Water Reclamation Expansion Project.”

For more information, email communications@cityofdrippingsprings.com or call the city at 512-858-4725.