

Consultant retained for Lake Helen City engineer finalizing design

Written by Elizabeth Barrett
Friday, 17 May 2013 14:30 -



As the rehabilitation of Lake Helen inches closer to the construction phase, a consultant has been re-hired to handle state and federal grants.

Gothenburg City Council members, at their May 7 meeting unanimously approved a contract with Lake Tech, Inc. consultant Paul Brakhage to administer grants received to re-construct the lake.

Brakhage, who worked for the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality for 23 years, will be paid \$37,900.

In January of 2012, the consultant was hired to help gather information for the grants and write them.

Of that amount, the city will pay \$24,400 and the Central Platte Natural Resources District will pick up \$15,000.

City administrator Bruce Clymer noted that Brakhage consults on lake and water projects throughout the United States.

The rehabilitation of Lake Helen was Brakhage's first project after leaving the NDEQ.

Clymer also said all grant agreements are in place except for the most recent donor—the Nebraska Environmental Trust board.

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The city received notification in April that the Lake Helen project would receive a \$416,431 grant from the board.

With the trust grant, and three others from the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission, the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and Central Platte NRD, the project will get \$1,235,563 in grant money.

Council members have budgeted \$284,761 in city funds to make up the difference needed to fund the estimated \$1.5 million project.

Clymer said the city's engineer, Miller & Associates Consulting Engineers of Kearney, is finishing up the final design to restore the lake.

Bids for companies to do the work will be opened in July with the awarding of a bid scheduled in August.

Construction is expected to begin in August and continue through February of 2014 after which the lake will be refilled.

Game fish will be added in August of 2014 followed by an alum treatment to seal phosphorous into the bottom.

The city began draining the lake last December before geese started migrating to the area.

A pump was installed in the southwest corner of the lake to help the process along and little water now remains in either of the two lobes of the lake.

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