

## City votes down land lease for refinery

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BY: Connie V. Scott, Herald Reporter

EVANSTON — The city council voted unanimously against leasing land on Union Road to Evanston Energy, Inc., a company hoping to build a crude oil refinery in the area. The company's project, however, wasn't completely shot down, as the council will discuss tonight the idea of selling land to the company.



*Wayne Heftye of Evanston Energy Group, Inc., addresses the Evanston City Council on Tuesday, June 2. Heftye had proposed to lease land from the city in order to build a crude oil refinery. (HERALD PHOTO/Connie V. Scott)*

Even though a right of termination was added to the lease/option agreement, which would have given greater protections to the city, Mayor Williams still had mixed feelings on the subject.

"I just don't know how it would impact the community and maybe we never will..." Williams said.

Community safety and employment opportunities were also questions on councilmembers' minds as they had been reviewing documentation from Evanston Energy Group since tabling the resolution during the May 5 council meeting.

"This is close to my backyard," Councilwoman Wendy Schuler said. "I'm hesitant toward this project. I know you have to meet certain standards, but I wonder if it is safe."

Councilman Evan Perkes said, "My concern is jobs. How will this impact employment?"

Evanston Energy Group representative Wayne Heftye approached the podium to comment and answer questions from the council. He said the \$200 million project would benefit the entire community.

Explaining the project would take just over a year before the plant was functional, Heftye said the company would employ approximately 12 people during the first half of the project and it would increase to around 36 during the second phase of the project.

As far as safety goes, Heftye said the refinery would be built to the highest and best standards.

"We've never had any safety or environmental issues on any of our projects," he said, "not even a paper cut."

The council also asked what the refinery itself would look like and how large it would be.

"Does it look like this picture in the documents or something different?" Councilman David Welling asked.

According to Heftye, the refinery will consist of three modules and a column, which is 60 feet tall and three feet in diameter.

“It gets pieced together like a Lego set,” he said. “The modules go in first and then the column is added at the end.”

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, Mayor Williams presented a special certificate and key to the city to the group 307 Long Range.

Nick Arnold, 307 founder, and several of the group’s leadership listened as all of the council members praised the group for their outstanding service to Evanston and Uinta County.

“307 Long Range has done a lot of good things for our city and county,” Williams said. “We decided it was right to acknowledge you.”

Making regional and national news for their service in cleaning up anti-military graffiti from an Evanston servicewoman’s apartment last month, 307 also participated in a recent land cleanup in Uinta County. Arnold updated the city on the cleanup event, stating they had cleared nearly 33 tons of trash from the two cleanup locations.

“When I was first asked about the group, admittedly I had never heard of you,” Schuler said. “Now I know more about the group and really appreciate what you’ve done.”

Perkes said as a business owner he is used to picking up trash from his parking lot, but he just can’t get used to seeing trash out in nature.

“Seems like no one cares anymore,” he said. “You all do, and I thank you for that.”

Councilwoman Sandra Meyer also thanked the group.

“You truly are an inspiration to all of us,” she said. “Thank you.”

The council also approved several street closures and open container permits for upcoming events.

Flare Construction won the bid on the Bear Meadows Project, which was approved by the council. The council and BEAR Project representatives were excited to see this 20-year project advance to its final stages.