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NEWS RELEASE

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Public Hearing Scheduled for Wastewater Treatment Facility Plan

DUBUQUE, Iowa – The Dubuque City Council will hold a public hearing on July 7, 2008 on the proposed facility plan for Dubuque’s water pollution control plant (WPCP). The public hearing will be part of the regular City Council meeting which begins at 6:30 p.m. and is held in the City Council Chambers at the Historic Federal Building, 350 W. 6th Street.

City Manager Michael Van Milligen is recommending that the City replace the biosolids management component of the WPCP. The existing process is incineration of the biosolids. The recommendation is to replace incineration with anaerobic digestion. The total capital cost of the project is estimated at \$48 million, the largest portion of which is the digestion at \$36.2 million.

The City Council has selected anaerobic digestion as the process to be followed through on. They unanimously voted at the May 19 council meeting to receive and file the documents, select the anaerobic digestion and land application process, and set the public hearing for July 7.

The City’s current incineration facilities are nearly 40 years old. At the time of their construction, a life span of 20-30 years was expected. The dewatering facilities (two centrifuges) are nearly 15 years old.

The City’s WPCP was established as a high priority by the City Council. A process of facility planning and Request for Proposals for the Water Pollution Control Facility Plan were approved by the City Council in February 2007. Consultant selection to prepare the plan was approved in May 2007 and Strand Associates of Madison was contracted to proceed with planning. Nine options were considered through a year-long study and planning process. Public input was encouraged, including a meeting with representatives of the business community on April 4, 2008, and three public information meetings, one on October 9, 2007, and two on December 12, 2007. A work session was held with the City Council on April 14, 2008, to review the options.

Of the nine options considered, three were chosen for further analysis based on initial capital costs, operating costs, and non-monitory issues including odor potential and other environmental issues: anaerobic digestion, incineration (lime back-up), and incineration (inc back-up).

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Of the three options considered, the anaerobic digestion option has the highest initial capital costs at \$26,788,000, but has the lowest annual operating and maintenance costs at \$791,000. Additionally, when the 30 year life of the anaerobic digestion option is taken into consideration, it proves to be the least expensive option at \$44,769,000, compared to a range of costs of \$47 million to \$56.5 million to maintain incineration.

Implementation of anaerobic digestion would require the construction of four new anaerobic digesters and a central control building, likely adjacent to Julien Dubuque Drive on the west side of the existing WPCP site. Each digester would be approximately 70-feet in diameter and 30 feet tall. A small structure would be constructed to temporarily store biosolids, and disposal would be by contract hauling to an off-site storage facility and ultimately to agricultural land application. The final design will determine the reuse of methane gas, possibly to create energy on-site.

The City Council will hold a public hearing on the facility plan at their regular meeting on Monday, July 7, 2008, at 6:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers at the Historic Federal Building at 350 W. 6th Street. The City Council is expected to vote on the recommendation following the public hearing.

The facility plan is available for viewing from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the WPCP at 795 Julien Dubuque Drive and at the Carnegie-Stout Public Library. The document can also be downloaded from the Water Pollution Control Department's section of the City of Dubuque website. A link is also available on the City's index page at www.cityofdubuque.org.

For additional information, please contact Water Pollution Control Plant Manager Jonathan Brown at (563)589-4176 or jobrown@cityofdubuque.org

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