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Water shares given to city

Whitney Benefits donation to help keep parks and greenways watered

By Pat Blair

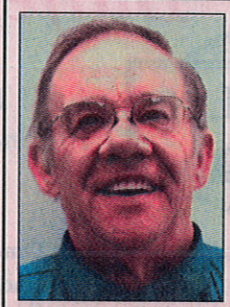
Senior Staff reporter

A gift from Whitney Benefits of 51 shares of water stored in Park Reservoir may be needed this summer, Sheridan City Council President Scott Severs said Monday night.

The Council voted 5-0 to approve a motion by Kathy Kennedy, seconded by Marc Ketcham, to accept an agreement under which the city would use 40 shares of Whitney's stock in Park Reservoir — 48 acre-feet of stored water — to irrigate designated parks and recreational areas in the city, plus another 11 shares of stock (13.2 AF of stored water) to irrigate Whitney Commons and "certain areas where activities supported by Whitney are conducted."

Severs noted the city might need that additional water for irrigation as early as this summer, following a report from Public Works Director Jackie Flowers that the snow-water equivalent in Goose Creek drainage is 61 percent of normal and only about 57 percent of what it was at this time last year.

Flowers told the Council she anticipates the water in Goose Creek may go into regulation early this year. If that happens, the city's



Scott Severs
City Council
President

rights to use water from Goose Creek — the primary source of municipal water — could be subject to cutoff in favor of senior water rights-holders. That would trigger another summer of water rationing.

Under the agreement with Whitney Benefits, the city will not make any payment to Whitney for the stored-water shares. In exchange, the

city will not charge Whitney Benefits for the 13.2 AF of water it would use to irrigate Whitney properties.

The city is required to "irrigate and keep green" the city parks of Kendrick, Washington, Sheltered Acres, Lions Club, Marshall, Mill, Crooks Campaign, Rotary and North Heights, Dow Street, Sheridan Avenue/Coffeen Avenue and Gould Street/Coffeen Avenue greenways plus Thorne-Rider Park and Oatts Field, which are operated by the Sheridan Recreation District.