

Utility district to pursue \$10 mil sewer plant

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Friday, April 1, 2016

The Valley Springs Public Utility District Board of Directors has decided to move its wastewater treatment plant north of town and build a new \$10 million facility.

The board voted 4-1 Wednesday evening in favor of Alternative No. 3, with the plant situated on the Coe property off Paloma Road, according to VSPUD General Manager Mike Fischer. Board President Lucille Allee cast a dissenting vote.

The board has been considering a variety of options including improving the existing plant or tying into the Calaveras County Water District's La Contenta Wastewater Treatment Plant.

CCWD recently mailed Fischer a letter lowering the estimated cost of expanding the La Contenta facility to handle VSPUD's wastewater from \$11.6 million to less than \$8 million.

However, CCWD's amended figures came in too late in the process and the VSPUD "board decided to continue the way we're going," Fischer said.

Construction of the new facility takes into consideration receiving government grants of \$7 million and a \$3 million 30-year, zero-interest loan from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to finance the project.

The yearly loan payment and additional operational operation and maintenance costs are projected at somewhere between \$87,433 and \$120,767 for a monthly rate increase of between \$16.56 and \$22.87 per dwelling.

Residents have questioned the need for a new facility since improvements were made to the existing facility, and it has not been cited for any violations in nearly a decade.