



CITY OF BLAIR

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 10/13/26

MEMO TO: City Council and Mayor

FROM: CJ Heaton, Deputy City Administrator of Public Works

RE: Sludge Ground Rental Agreement

SUMMARY: The Wastewater Treatment Plant has an estimated 5000 gallons of sludge waste that cannot be returned to the river each day; this has traditionally been land-applied on farmland in Iowa. Staff has been working through options to handle this waste in a cost-effective way.

PREVIOUS ACTION: No previous action on this item.

BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION: The Wastewater Treatment Facility has been working with S&S Pumping for many years to haul off our sludge waste, which is applied to farmland in Iowa. Over the past few years, it has become more difficult to find farmers that are willing to work with the city to take this waste product. Many of the adjoining property owners have raised concerns about the odors and stigma associated with the process. We have found a farmer in Iowa willing to work with us, but the cost to rent the ground is high. The field rental and the cost of hauling will total an estimated \$310,000 for the year, with the rental being \$130,000 alone.

Staff have also been working on two other options. One is working with the City of Fremont to take up to 5000 gallons of sludge per day; the estimated yearly cost for hauling and dumping at Fremont is \$240,000 - \$270,000. Fremont has agreed to take our waste on a trial basis, and so far things have been going well. However, Fremont has advised us that in the event of an emergency or issues at their plant, we will be turned away, and to have a backup option on hand. The farmland is our only backup at this point, and we must have a way to dispose of this at all times.

S&S Pumping is also working on a dewatering system that can handle our demands and essentially take the sludge waste and turn it into a dry compost-like product. This solution is the ideal option, but is still 6 – 12 months away from being constructed and approved by NDWEE; the annual estimate is \$130,000 - \$150,000 to handle our waste product.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: \$130,000 for farm rental for sludge disposal, plus hauling fees.

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of the rental agreement with Alex Meyer.

